



Transitions in the Colonial Hudson Valley: Capitalist, Bulk Goods, and Braudelian

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Abstract

A long debate about the American “transition to capitalism” has been settled via a rough consensus on the gradual prevalence of rural capitalism in the north; and that even small, subsistence-oriented farm households engaged in some market exchange, while market-oriented farm households engaged in some subsistence activities. Yet certain Marxist scholars argue that even prevalent market exchange did not necessarily signify a capitalist economy. Similarly, certain world-systems scholars see the debates as somewhat pointless, inasmuch as capitalism is a systemic characteristic that exists regardless of any individual identification. These latter notions derive in part from Braudel’s tripartite structure of early modern economic life, which sees self-sufficiency and basic daily survival existing alongside market economies and everyday forms of exchange, with the capitalist world-economy in turn overarching, yet not necessarily affecting, the other two levels. This paper posits that colonial America’s “transition” to capitalism was effectively the addition of Braudel’s second layer of economic life — the market economy — onto the first layer of self-sufficiency and basic material life. The paper explores the notion of geographically-uneven Braudelian economic structures and transitions within the late 17th and 18th century colonial Hudson Valley, demonstrating that even within relatively small geographical spaces it is possible to find different means of Braudelian economic life, and by extension, varying articulations with the world-economy and possible paths to eventual core emergence.

Keywords: Braudel, Hudson Valley, Capitalist Transition, Economic Structure



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Interpreting the American “transition to capitalism” occupied many economic and social historians of the northern colonial United States and early republican period during the 1970s-1990s, though the debate stems back to the early 20th century (Gilje 1996; Goldsworthy 2011; Post 2009). More recently, after about two decades of back-and-forth over the subsistence versus market orientation of colonial and early republic rural Euroamericans, as well as the timing of the market transition (Dunaway 1996a: 6-7), a rough consensus gradually emerged on several points: that rural capitalism in the north became more prevalent over time, especially during the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Lamoreaux 2003: 438); that there were regional differences in this transition’s timing, in part based on the crops grown in a given area (Hornsby 2005; Lemon 1987); and that even small, subsistence-oriented farm households engaged in a certain amount of market exchange, while market-oriented farm households engaged in at least some subsistence activities (Bushman 1998; Kulikoff 1993). Various Marxian participants concluded that even where market exchange became predominant in the British North American colonies and early United States, it wasn’t necessarily a capitalist economy (Merrill 1995: 317-25; Mutch 1980: 856; Post 2009). In doing so, they were following their classical definition of capitalism as a market economy ruled by, or in the interests of, capitalists, as well as echoing Braudel on the idea that “the market” and capitalism are not coterminous *per sé*.

As Dunaway (1996a: 9) points out, a world-systems perspective obviates these debates via a broader and “more inclusive definition of capitalism” that not only examines production relations but also governance structures, land tenure arrangements, and labor mechanisms. In this perspective, one can be engaged with—and therefore basically a part of—the capitalist world-system regardless of any self-conscious individual or group identification with capitalism: e.g. in a time-space such as 17th-18th century Appalachia, a major supplier of raw materials to the core from soon after Euro-indigenous first contact (Dunaway 1994), “it would have been almost impossible for... a subsistence producer to be totally free of the capitalist economy” (Dunaway 1996a: 231). This also implies the modern world-system’s inherent geographical unevenness (Chase-Dunn 1989: 41-42, 68). Beyond the basic core-semiperiphery-periphery structure, Dunaway acknowledges that local economic sectors could “remain outside the realm of capitalist relations,” despite the larger regional economy being articulated with the capitalist world-economy and more-or-less structured along capitalist lines (1996a: 232).

Dunaway borrows that notion from Braudel, based specifically on his tripartite conception of 15th-18th century economic life, comprised of: (1) self-sufficiency and basic daily survival, or “material life”; (2) the market economy and everyday forms of exchange; and (3) capitalism itself, or more specifically the capitalist world-economy (Braudel 1977: 39-40, 112; 1981: 23-24, 560-62; 1982: 229-30; also see Arrighi 2001: 113-14; Talbot 2011: 59-64). Indeed, what has been

viewed as a “transition” to capitalism in colonial America is effectively the gradual, often contested, and geographically uneven addition of Braudel’s second layer of economic life—the market economy—onto the first layer of self-sufficiency and basic material life. In turn, this process was arguably driven by the third layer of the larger capitalist economy (Bruegel 1996b: 257, 269; Merrill 1995: 317, 325; Talbot 2011: 63-64, 84-85).

It is of course also a part of the larger process identified by world-systems analysis as incorporation, by which an expanding world-system “absorb[s] new peoples, new territories, or both” (Hall 2012: 47), albeit often in fits and starts while being contested by those seeking to resist, or at least negotiate, their incorporation (Leitner 2013: 265, 267, 273, 281). While this phenomenon is more typically explored for indigenous groups, especially in North America (e.g. Bush 2005; Dunaway 1996b; Hall 1989), a version of it occurred with Euroamerican settlers, who while arguably already within the capitalist system (Dunaway 1996a: 16), still had to face its deepening, i.e. the expansion of the market into their local economies (cf. Wallerstein 1989: 130).

Given this Braudelian transition’s geographical unevenness, it is most accurately explored at a regional level, inasmuch as “regions are the sub-unit of the world-economy that may be best defined as engaging in core or peripheral activity (or both in the case of the semiperiphery)” (Driscoll and Kick 2013: 2). However, as Driscoll and Kick (2013: 7) later explain, regions are “spaces in which processes of production, labor, exchange, and consumption ‘hang together within an open system that nevertheless exhibits some kind of structural coherence’ [Harvey 2006: 102].” Terlouw (2011: 203) adds the *caveat* that regions are tricky analytic units, given that they “are not lasting entities, but are constantly created and destroyed”; he prefers instead to use cities as a proxy for regions. By extension, we should try to have a heightened sensitivity to the possible existence of subregions, i.e. smaller regions nested within larger spaces that exhibit some greater coherence of their own (cf. Chase-Dunn 1989: 209-10; Driscoll and Kick 2013: 2). To the extent that neighboring subregions are peripheral to the same core area, we might expect them to manifest different types of peripheral relationships, given such differences as, e.g., crops produced, resources extracted, land tenure, and the attendant social relations of production.

In a recent attempt at world-systems analysis of colonial American political-economic change, Leitner (2013) tries a broader regional approach. Adapting Chase-Dunn and Hall’s (1997) nested interaction networks approach to world-systems, he compared the relatively successful transition from a prestige goods economy to a bulk goods economy in colonial New York with the rather less successful transition thereof in colonial Canada/Quebec. However, while alluding to New York’s diverse economic geographies, his colony-to-colony comparison elides the colony’s “internal diversity” (Dunaway 1996a: 7) and the unevenness of the supposed transition to a grain-

growing, bulk-goods economy. Per Leitner (2013), as the fur trade declined, New York gradually became a bulk-goods economy, producing grain and other foodstuffs for the Caribbean colonies.

A closer examination reveals two different paths to a bulk goods economy, or indeed, two different paths to the core, and also different models of internal core-periphery relations. One of these paths posits an explicit and rather straightforward port-hinterland structure via which commodities were produced and exported to external markets (Earle 1992a; 1992b). The other path posits fairly complex “networks of regional exchange” between hinterland and port as largely dependent on the agricultural social structure, and dictated in part by individual farm families’ attempts to attain basic self-sufficiency prior to market engagement (Vickers 1996).

The Hudson Valley arguably contained both these models of northeastern colonial American economy and contained areas with varying degrees of Braudelian transition in close proximity in the decades before the Revolution. Even within relatively small geographical spaces, one can find different means of articulation with the world-economy and different levels of Braudelian economic life (cf. Braudel 1977: 44; Bruegel 1996b: 269; Dunaway 1996a: 232).

Staples vs. Social Structure:

Core-Periphery Models of the Colonial American Northeast

Indeed, Chase-Dunn (1980: 195n6) hints at this when, after commenting on the tenant-landlord class structure of the colonial Hudson Valley *vis à vis* the other American colonies, he notes “that in regions where soil productivity and climate is intermediate [in this case, between cold, stony New England and the warm, fertile southeast], political and institutional factors more easily affect the type of class structure that develops.” Given the relative complexity of the Hudson Valley’s agrarian tenure, he was perhaps more correct than he realized.¹

Earle’s regional comparisons are developed in some depth (1992a; 1992b). In an overview of English colonization efforts in mainland North America, he identifies ideal-typical spatial configurations of settlement in the four main eastern seaboard colonial regions: New England, the “middle” colonies, the Chesapeake colonies, and the South (Earle 1992b: 486-89). New England was marked by large coastal commercial centers, chiefly Boston, with merchants engaged in active overseas trade, while its interior locales were otherwise self-sufficient. By the mid-18th century in the middle colonies, the major coastal entrepôts of Philadelphia and New York City were linked with smaller inland towns via roads and rivers, by which grain was shipped to the major ports. Grain, especially wheat, a high-bulk, highly perishable raw commodity, promoted urbanization and later sustained industrialization and economic growth, because it required extensive transport

¹ Having also remarked that the landlord-tenant structure was an evolutionary process, while it was rather more a politically-drive one; see below.

and service infrastructure, along with pre-shipment processing. Middleman profits “accrued to the handlers” of wheat and other “bulky...perishable commodities”; and he identifies a radial geographic system of tributary “transport service centers” that became British North America’s “first sizable interior towns,” typically demarcated by distances of a quarter-, half-, and full-day (ca. 30 miles) wagon-journeys (Earle 1992a: 113-18, 138, 143; 1992b: 487-89; also Hornsby 2005: 156-57; Leitner 2013: 276-77; more generally, Bunker 1989; 2005: 224).

In contrast, low bulk, less perishable raw commodities, such as those found in the southern colonies, e.g. tobacco or rice (Earle 1992a: 98, 142-43)—or even non-food commodities like naval stores (Driscoll and Kick 2013: 14-16)—did not have the same infrastructural needs, and as a result did not have the linkages leading to later growth (Earle 1992a: 140-42). Due to tobacco planters’ geographic dispersal among the estuaries, and their subsequent self-sufficiency, Chesapeake settlement geography was “cellular,” with small tobacco ports “each linked directly with London and British outports” (Earle 1992b: 486; 1992a: 99-114).

Rather than a regionally-comparative staples approach, Vickers (1996) examines hinterland social structure and economic processes in the northern colonies, and posits a dynamic and burgeoning economy comprised of still largely self-sufficient yet surplus-producing agricultural households, local crafts- and tradespersons, and larger merchants in the coastal seaports. While acknowledging that “fertile soil allowed wheat to grow into an important staple export very soon after [European] settlement” in the Hudson Valley, as well as New Jersey and Pennsylvania, “even the most commercial” of grain farmers were still highly diversified in their agriculture (Vickers 1996: 219). In general, Vickers argues that the complex northern colonial economies weren’t solely the product of merchant-led staple trades (cf. Hornsby 2005: 193-96; McCusker and Menard 1985: 19-32), but rather were founded on the surplus produced for these trades by numerous, mostly self-sufficient farm households, which also provided local demand for consumer goods. Colonial merchants in turn gathered these households’ surplus; indeed, the merchants were there in the first place to satisfy the demand for goods by the numerous farm families that had come to settle the northern colonies, as well as coordinating early regional industries via “the manipulation of capital” (Vickers 1996: 230-31; also see Chase-Dunn 1980: 197-98; Hornsby 2005: 140; Matson 1998: 250-51; Mutch 1980: 851, 858). The agricultural hinterlands also provisioned the seaports, helping promote “a highly diversified service and manufacturing population” in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia (Vickers 1996: 221, 238).

While this model best fits Boston (see Vickers 1996: 231-32), in the middle colonies, especially Philadelphia, Vickers’ model converges somewhat with Earle (1992a; 1992b). Though acknowledging its rapid 18th century growth, thanks to its fertile hinterland and William Penn’s family-focused settlement policies to promote economic diversification, Vickers points out that

Philadelphia was “the least sophisticated of the major colonial seaports,” due to its near-exclusive focus on wheat. This was because a single staple could not by itself necessarily “guarantee the parallel development of port facilities, merchant exporters, or a thriving maritime sector”; these would have to wait for further British government investment in the 1750s, during the Seven Years’ War (Vickers 1996: 235-37).

Vickers (1996: 234) concludes similarly for Dutch New Amsterdam and its stunted mid-17th century single staple economy: because the main export (beaver fur) had a high value relative to its bulk—i.e. it was more economical to ship trade goods back to North America, not people, and the Dutch West India Company took an anti-settler stance for much of its tenure (also see Leitner 2013). Vickers (1996: 234) further points out that only after the English conquest did Old World-style family farming start becoming more prevalent in New York, thanks to greater immigration by family groups—ironically because of British agriculture’s “intensified commercialization,” which created a surplus population of expropriated peasants (Chase-Dunn 1980: 198). As found throughout the northern colonies, this allowed for a gendered household division of labor: men typically engaged in primary production (farming, trapping, hunting, and fishing) and women typically processed the acquired resources (Vickers 1996: 219-20). Local merchants were available to purchase surplus produce, and in turn trade with merchants in the larger ports, including New York, which became more commercially important after a slow start under the Dutch (Vickers 1996: 234-35; also Leitner 2013: 275-77; Wermuth 2001: 62-63).

Vickers also posits that certain actors in colonial America’s regional hinterlands were externally oriented via relations with their regional seaboard port, particularly local merchants who gathered the agricultural surplus from the numerous small producers (1996: 221-22, 230, 235). Others were more locally-focused, i.e. many of the small farmers actually producing a surplus; and while arguably they were more subsistence oriented, maintaining subsistence likely required at least some trading activity, putting them into larger networks of trade whether they realized it or not (Vickers 1996; also Matson 1998; Wermuth 2001; cf Dunaway 1996a: 24-50, 195-223). This is a conclusion that aligns with both structural Marxist and world-systems interpretations of port-hinterland relations in colonial America, which see local merchants in small, upriver ports as tying non-capitalist small farmers into larger multi-nodal capitalist trade networks, with upriver merchants in turn “dependent upon the import-export business of the seaport merchant for their supplies of goods” (Mutch 1980: 851; also Dunaway 1996a: 33, 197, 206-08).

The Hudson Valley’s Socioagroecconomic Subregions

Both Earle and Vickers posit a spatial gradient, whereby local economies nearer the coast tended to be more explicitly articulated with (or its actors perhaps just more aware of) the larger world-

economy, which apparently held for farmers as well as merchants: “[a]long the coast, near port towns, and adjacent to navigable rivers, farmers were attuned to Atlantic markets from the beginning,” with production for “the market” gradually coming to include inland farmers (Bushman 1998: 361). Indeed, the colonial Hudson Valley apparently had a geographic divide between export staples-oriented areas where economic actors were more-overtly/intentionally capitalist; and subsistence-oriented areas with generally less-overly/intentionally capitalist economic actors. While Vickers’ model may have been generally true west of the Hudson, which was settled largely by smallholders, east of the river were the manors and patents: large, privately-owned tracts of land, whose tenants were typically obligated to dispose of their agricultural surplus through their landlords. Stemming from contemporary 18th century policy debates (Countryman 1981: 15), there is a long tradition in New York historiography that sees the large private estates as having been essentially negative, both for the tenants’ well-being and for the colony’s socioeconomic development: the big landlords held concentrated political and economic power, and the estates suppressed the colony’s population growth by making New York unattractive to new settlers aspiring to a freehold farm (e.g. Archdeacon 1979; Greenberg 1978: 483-84; Humphrey 1998; Kammen 1975: 190; Lustig 1995: xvi-xviii; Matson 1998: 230-31).

Revisiting early-mid 20th century anti-landlord histories, Kim (1978: viii-x) argued they were limited in scope, period and data, with even the most “comprehensive” of these works (Mark 1940) distracted by some violent events, i.e. the various incidents of tenant riots in the 1750s-60s (see Kammen 1975: 302-04), impelling the author to ignore the many decades of quiet “order and prosperity” on the estates. Kim’s work also confronts the basic historical point of manorial holdings: to convert tenant surplus beyond “their subsistence and reproduction needs” into landlord income (Bruegel 1996a: 1402, quoting Rodney Hilton). This arguably held in the Hudson Valley as it did anywhere else (Humphrey 2004: 241-42). Seen in Braudelian tripartite perspective, the east-of-Hudson landlords, a group firmly ensconced in the second layer of economic life (“the market”) and aspiring to eventually ascend to the third layer (“capitalism”), were at the very least in a structural position that dictated keeping their tenants at a subsistence level (the first layer of economic life). Kim instead posited that landlords often had to grant very favorable terms (e.g. deferred rent for months at a time; lower rents overall; lenient rent collection; and the right to profit from improvements) in order to attract tenants, whom they needed for rental income (which itself was often difficult to collect and in arrears), land development, and agricultural surplus production (Kim 1966: 151; 1970: 597-612; 1978: 157-72, 223-36).

Yet even those who disagree with Kim (e.g. Archdeacon 1979; Greenberg 1978: 483-84; Humphrey 2004; Lustig 1995: xvi-xviii) are also focused on the major landholdings largely east of the Hudson, rather than the fee-simple smallholders west of the river (though some are: e.g.

Countryman 1981: 27-29; Smith 1979: 758-59). It was not until the 1990s that several works examined the society and economy of smaller private farms that developed on the Hudson's west bank, as well as parts of the east bank (e.g. Bruegel 1996b; Fabend 1991; Wermuth 2001). Despite institutional differences in landholding, both sides of the river had similar physical, agricultural, and geographical constraints, particularly in terms of climate and crops that could be grown (Bruegel 1996b). Again, the small freehold agriculture on which Vickers (1996) bases his interpretation likely holds better west of the Hudson (see Fabend 1991; Wermuth 2001) than on the east bank, where small farmers were more likely to be tenants (Kim 1970; 1978).² East of the Hudson, Earle's (1992a; 1992b) staple interpretation may be more apropos. The Braudelian context cuts across both models, with arguably all three levels of economic life occurring in the Valley; as well as his acknowledgement of cities driving regional economic change, as local cores with regional hinterlands (Braudel 1982: 188). In this instance the local context comes from New York City's role as the colony's official port—its physical and institutional link with the world-economy (Ciccantell and Bunker 1998: 1-4; Leitner 2013: 275-77)—and a major demand-source for foodstuffs in itself.

New York City and its Hudson Valley Hinterland

Braudel (1982: 188) indicates supply sources are the first of a city's catchments, and as the colony's official entrepôt, New York City ca. 1670-1760 was indeed "a port city highly dependent" on its surrounding "commercial farmers" (Matson 1998: 227). Though small by European standards, by 1680 New York City merchants were exporting over 60,000 bushels of grain and "gristing an equal amount of flour" annually, to supply Newfoundland's fisheries and the Caribbean plantation colonies (Burrows and Wallace 1999: 87; Matson 1998: 100). The merchants in turn took political steps to formalize the city's dominance within the colony and promote bulk goods trade, *vis à vis* Albany and the Hudson Valley's grain producers, not unlike Paris just a few decades earlier, with "a series of regulations" to ensure that its "markets were kept constantly supplied" (Braudel 1982: 38). In response, New York governors in the 1670s and '80s granted monopolies to the city merchants over certain bulk staples and transport, including: flour sifting and grading (known as "bolting"); wheat, beef, and pork packing; Hudson River carrying; and a customs tax and monopolies over both exports and imports (formalized by gubernatorial decree in 1686), making New York City "the colony's sole port of entry" (Leitner 2013: 275; Norton 1974: 84). Post-1680, the city's merchants "enjoyed a virtual stranglehold" on the colony's trade (Burrows and Wallace 1999: 85).

²In commenting on the manorial parts of the Hudson Valley, Vickers (1996: 225) basically agrees with Kim about low annual rents and easy credit allowing tenants "to operate much like freeholders."

In formal effect during 1678-92, the flour bolting monopoly “probably aided the city’s overall development,” as the number of houses nearly tripled (343 to 983), its commercial fleet nearly doubled, and the total number of merchants rose from 80 to 134 during 1674-95 (Matson 1994: 403-04; 1998: 104). Conversely, when the bolting monopoly was not in effect, new flour mills were noted to have been constructed in the colony’s outlying areas, “attesting to rising prosperity in the hinterlands” (Matson 1998: 102). Albany’s own agricultural hinterland grew thanks to early 18th century demand for wheat and wheat flour, the colony’s second city becoming both a trade center for farmers and city merchants and a port where “wheat and flour were certified, packed, and often exported directly to overseas markets” (Kim 1978: 112-13; Norton 1974: 93-94).

In much of the central Hudson Valley however, particularly west of the river, most communities lacked access to “good ports,” instead relying “on diversified farming,” rather than producing cash crops for long-distance trade (Wermuth 2001: 17). And yet, before the early 19th century construction of better roads and the Erie Canal, “a thinly populated stretch of the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys monopolized grain production and trade in New York” (Wermuth 2001: 34), prompted by demand from the Caribbean sugar colonies and European food shortages (Leitner 2013), in addition to New York City’s burgeoning needs. As a result, “[b]y the 1740s, almost every town in the colony had a grist-mill to which farmers brought grain” from where it might end up in the city to be consumed or exported (Matson 1994: 408). Regardless of which riverbank, farmers over 15 miles from the city brought summer “harvests to these country mills, paid [the millers] in grain, and consigned portions of the flour to middlemen or storekeepers at negotiated prices,” though some sold their flour directly at city markets, shipped via rented small boats (Matson 1994: 408). Manor tenants were generally obligated to turn over at least part of their produce to their landlord, who also typically controlled the manor’s mill (Matson 1994: 412; and see below).

In the colonial northeast, mills were in fact “social necessities...intimately connected to agricultural production” and “crucial to the welfare of the inhabitants,” who took “communal action” to support the mills (Henretta 1978: 11). On the other hand, a “‘mill seat’—land beside a waterfall suitable for powering a saw[-or any other-]mill”—could mean “prosperity and local power” for those acquiring it and building a mill alongside (Taylor 1989: 16). Mills also helped connect local producers and larger markets (and the market economy more generally)—and were thereby an indicator of Braudel’s second level of economic life—with gristmill operators a source of “both market information and a conduit to such markets,” similar to local merchants, many of whom were also mill operators (McCusker and Menard 1985: 321-22). For Hudson Valley landlords (mostly on the east bank), constructing both saw and grist mills for their tenants was

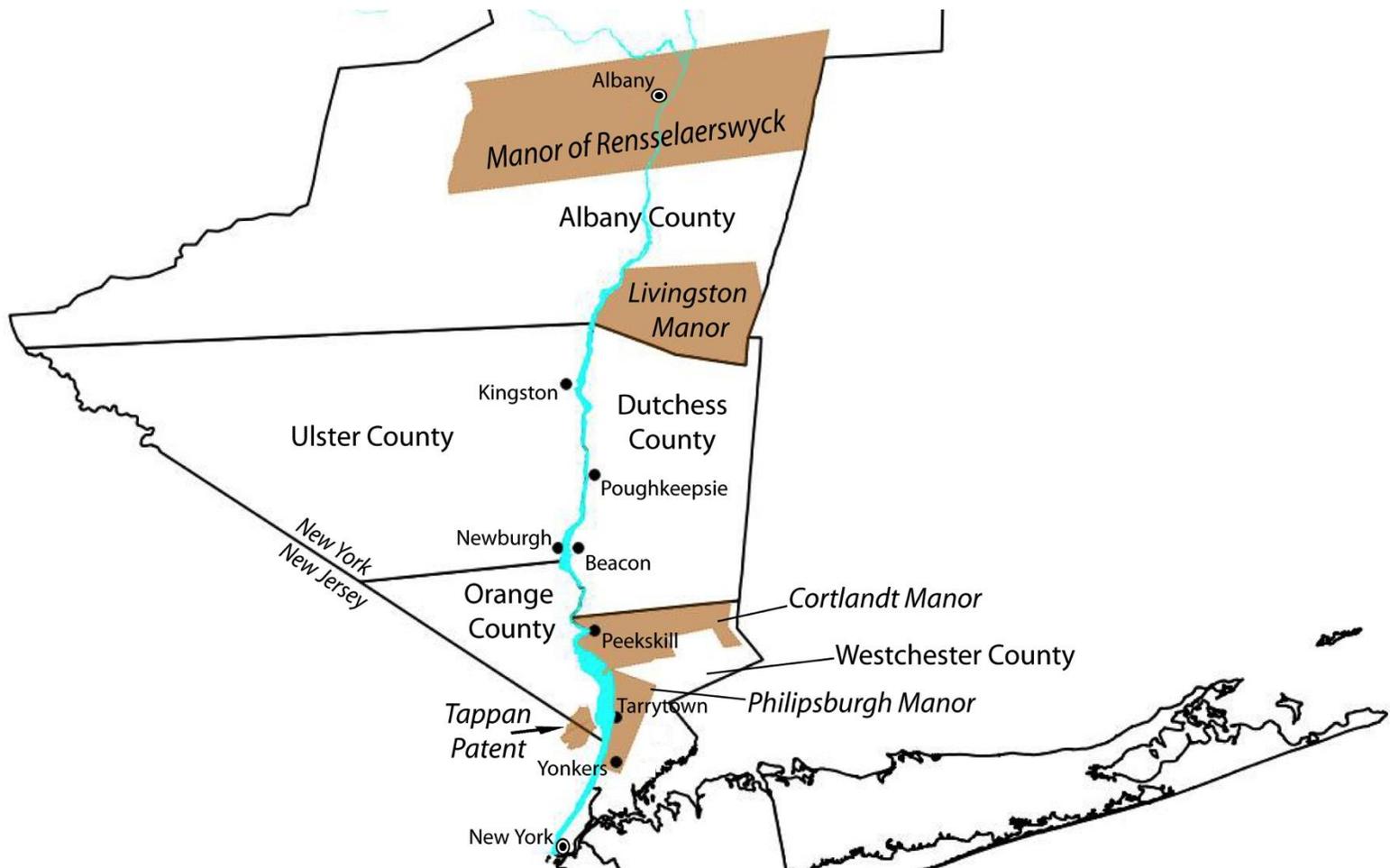
ostensibly a matter of “primary importance” that in turn enabled rent payment, increased the land’s value, turned wheat into revenue-generating flour, and encouraged settlement on manor lands by assuring prospective tenants of mill access (Kim 1970: 607-08; 1978: 229). Mills were therefore also promotional devices: a necessity for settlement and successful farming, and arguably “the concern of everyone in the community. Instead of being the instrument of a landlord’s exploitative impulses, a mill was an institution upon which the common economic welfare and even the survival of the community rested” (Kim 1978: 165-66). Most generally, the existence of a grist mill is a rough proxy of local colonial economic development—“the basis of early industrialization in British America” (McCusker and Menard 1985: 325)—whether grain was being ground locally for the subsistence needs of those who grew it, in line with Vickers (1996); or to turn it into flour for export, as Earle’s (1992a; 1992b) work implies. Both of these models have some truth to them in the colonial Hudson Valley, though the emphasis may be a matter of precisely where one looks.

Agriculture, Trade, and Development in Four Hudson Valley Subregions

We can identify four colonial Hudson Valley subregions, based on bank (east vs. west) and distance upriver (see Map 1). The river’s east bank had the very large estates and numerous tenants stereotypical of the colonial/early national Hudson Valley; while west of the river the farmers tended to be independent smallholders of just a few hundred acres, with tenantry much less common (Wermuth 2001: 46). To the north, near Albany, the estates east of the river specialized in wheat growing, whereas closer to New York City they were more diversified, in part due to topography and in part due to the city’s food demands. On the western bank, though marked by different tenure relationships, the area to the north was also marked by a specialization in wheat, with the areas closer to New York City engaged in daily trade in foodstuffs rather than export staples. These differences in land tenure as well as distance upriver helped create different subregions, each of which display different stages of Braudelian transition, and are amenable to differing historical interpretations.

West of Hudson, mid-valley: Small Family Farms of Ulster County/Kingston

A port on a major river, Kingston was more connected to New York City and larger markets beyond than were its neighboring inland towns: “an important market town” from the 1660s, Kingston in fact became provincial New York’s “granary” by 1670 (Wermuth 2001: 31). Kingston storekeepers gathered neighboring farmers’ surplus produce, then sold it to downstream merchants (Matson 1998: 138). Into the early 1700s, only a small part of this agricultural surplus was exported, because of “primitive” transport and communications systems; and even by the mid-1700s, only two sloops made the Kingston-New York run, and even then only every other week

Map 1: Selected Manors and Patents in the Colonial Hudson Valley

in the spring and fall—a shortcoming that larger, more commercially-oriented farmers circumvented by hiring sloops to ship their produce directly to New York City (Wermuth 2001: 53-54). Though no more than 30 percent of Kingston-area farmers in the 1700s were major agricultural exporters (Bruegel 1996b: 254; Wermuth 2001: 58-62), Ulster County farmers in general “supported attempts to promote the export of their surplus grain [and flour],” which along with the trade in wood and barrel staves “in turn stimulated the emergence of related service industries, creating a demand for day laborers and small manufacturers,” thereby promoting economic diversification (Wermuth 2001: 31, 53). For their part, Kingston-based interests in the 18th century “encourag[ed] the production of its rural hinterland for trade downriver” (Wermuth 2001: 17). As a formally corporate community, Kingston officials engaged in a sort of local mercantilism “to facilitate internal economic development... [albeit] reconciled with the social needs and demands of the local community” (Wermuth 2001: 29-30).

With very little external competition, Kingston's economic interests were generally unified, resulting in both formal and informal promotion and regulation; day-to-day economic workings were "not left to the vagaries of the free market" (Wermuth 2001: 32, 35). Yet 18th century Ulster County agriculture was comprised of mostly small, privately-held family farms, with a local economy focused on household production in a "community-oriented trade system" linking "agricultural, service, and mercantile trades" in an interdependent web (Wermuth 2001: 30, 62-65). This local trade web was not isolated from larger markets, especially "since shopkeepers traded many of the goods they accumulated from the myriad of small exchanges downriver to New York City" (Wermuth 2001: 61); but neither was it yet controlled by these larger markets. If it was perhaps a market economy, it was not yet a "market society" (Wermuth 2001: 34; also Bruegel 1996b: 269; 2002; cf. Kulikoff 2003). Based on Wermuth (2001), Kingston and much of surrounding Ulster County appears to align with Vickers' (1996) network model of the rural northeastern colonies. From a Braudelian standpoint, starting from a pre-1700 locale in which most were concerned with securing their material existence, over the decades an increasing number were at least occasionally engaged in market exchanges (Matson 1998: 110, 227), albeit not as major long-distance trading/finance capitalists. Rather, these were mostly "comfortably subsisting" family farmers, who were typically not interested in producing for commercial markets, though still needed cash for taxes, land purchases, and certain manufactured goods (Wermuth 2001: 46-47, 51-52).

Table 1: Ulster Co. Population

(includes black and white residents, except as noted)

1703	3,372
1723	2,923
1731	3,728
1737	4,870
1746	5,265
1749	4,810
1756	8,105
1771	13,950
1782	*15,747

*white residents only

Source: O'Callaghan (1849-51: 1: 694, 695, 696, 697; 3: 996)

And yet, while maybe not precisely the sort of industrial and infrastructural development Earle (1992a; 1992b) posits for grain producing and exporting regions, there was at least basic growth in Ulster County, which more than quadrupled its settler population between 1700 and the 1770s (see table 1), being considered “well inhabited” by a 1774 gubernatorial report to the Board of Trade in London (O’Callaghan 1853-61: VIII: 441). But manufacturing development was weak even post-independence in the late 18th century, because of few markets (which also faced British competition) and local merchant investment in financial instruments, real estate, and sectors other than manufacturing or even just rural outwork (Wermuth 2001: 87). Despite the end of its flour bolting monopoly (see above), it may just have been New York City’s sheer size relative to the rest of the colony, and the demands for hinterland agricultural surpluses that its growth generated, that suppressed grain/flour-based industrialization in the mid-Hudson Valley of the kind Earle (1992a; 1992b) details for the southern and mid-Atlantic colonies.

Indeed, by the 1720s, “New York’s merchants aggressively sought exportable surpluses from a large region that radiated along waterways and wagon paths,” and it became thereby a “favored place of export” in place of more provincial/local ports for grain millers all over the northern colonies, including the Hudson Valley (Matson 1994: 406). Even so, though most export (and consumption) was still via the city, New Jersey and Hudson Valley farmers eventually “took greater control of processing and marketing their commodities,” thanks to the construction of increasingly complicated local grist mills in “almost every town in the colony” by the 1740s (Matson 1994: 408). Ulster County probate records in fact mention grist mills as early as 1743, with mills in Kingston proper by 1744 (Anjou 1906: 130, 143, 155; Foote 2007: 361-62).

We see therefore the gradual movement of those who a few decades previously would have been fully involved with securing their daily material existence now becoming more involved in the regional market economy (cf. Braudel 1982: 21)—and via the regional entrepôt, with other markets elsewhere in the world-economy (cf. Dunaway 1996a: 198, 206-08). Yet this was still an inherently uneven process. In the Catskill Mountain foothills a few miles west, “poor but industrious” small farmers in the 1780s-90s were still more focused on subsistence, despite the occasional market engagement; per Bruegel, “it was a rural population who, in Fernand Braudel’s architectural conception of economic activities in society, lived below the threshold of a market economy” (1996b: 257).

West of Hudson, downriver: Independent Patentees in southern Orange County

Located mostly in far southern Orange County and partly in New Jersey, the 16,000-acre (or 25-square mile) Tappan Patent was purchased from the Tappaen Indians by a group of 14 ethnic Dutch New Yorkers in 1682, who then further subdivided and sold large parts of the land to smaller

farmers (Fabend 1991: 15-19; Nordstrom 1973: 29). It was not purely a speculative venture, “being one of the very few patents [in what would become Rockland County]...which was bought with the idea of a permanent settlement,” with most of the new patentees homesteading the land (Green 1886: 39). Those settling the patent wanted relief from New York’s port duties by becoming New Jersey residents, which would thereby enable them to export crops and timber (and probably fur, traded by local indigenous peoples; Greene 1886: 39) via the free ports of Philadelphia, Burlington, and Perth Amboy. These hopes were frustrated by most of the patent’s actual location within the colony of New York (and its requirement to export all goods via New York City), as well as New York’s temporary annexation of East Jersey in the mid-1680s; and the outlawing of direct trade with Amsterdam, on which many ethnic Dutch residents had relied even after the English conquest (Fabend 1991: 18-21; Matson 1998: 52).

Much like the rest of the colony, wheat was the main export crop for the Tappan-area farmers (Fabend 1991: 84-85, 210-11), but proximity made them important food suppliers to New York City. The Tappan Patent was in fact close enough for daily traffic to the city, sending a “fleet of small boats, filled with foodstuffs” downriver, which “usually return[ed] with the flood tide” later in the day (Fabend 1991: 85; Nordstrom 1973: 28). Despite their regular trade with New York City, Fabend (1991: 56-57, 78-80, 84-85) splits the difference between Vickers’ and Earle’s models (or, conversely, between the various Braudelian levels of economic life) and views the Tappan patentees along a subsistence-market continuum, similar to how Wermuth (2001) sees the contemporary Ulster County agricultural economy. She concludes they were driven by circumstance: the patentees would readily market their surplus “to the extent that opportunity permitted,” selling to neighbors, to local merchants, and in New York City markets (Fabend 1991: 84, 85)—Braudel’s second level of a basic market economy. Some patentees also had family members in bolting and baking businesses within New York City, “trusted connection[s]” who would purchase their patentee relatives’ wheat and flour as well as find the best price for their produce (Fabend 1991: 210). However, if the opportunity did not permit them to do so, whether due to poor harvest or other reasons, “they learned to be content with a livelihood closer to the subsistence level” (Fabend 1991: 84)—Braudel’s first level, meeting their household’s quotidian physical and material needs.

The patent became socio-economically stratified during the 18th century, as a “prosperous minority” expanded its land holdings (Fabend 1991: 86-92). The Haring family, descended from original patentees, increased its overall acreage from 3,000 to 4,373 by the late 1770s. Conversely, the number of leaseholders rose, not unlike the tenants on the manors across the river—indeed, one of the patent’s landowners (William Bayard, a leading colonial New York merchant; Matson 1998) referred to his holdings as a manor, and in 1773 sold off nine tracts in 150- and 200-acre

lots for £3-£4 per acre. Examining the microeconomics of land purchases by former tenants, Fabend (1991: 93) points out that someone renting 200 acres from Bayard for ten years and not having their lease renewed would be paid £300; if they tried purchasing one of Bayard's 1773 sales, they could have acquired up to 100 acres. However, a new farm's start-up costs would probably impel the former tenant to buy a smaller piece of land, "one in the subsistence category of 51 to 80 acres...to reserve some of his small capital for expenses." Indeed, by the 1770s, the patent and its surrounding area was "inhabited...by significant numbers of subsistence and marginal farmers, unlanded laborers, and tradesmen with small properties" (Fabend 1991: 93)—persons who were mostly ensconced in Braudel's first economic level, that of basic daily material survival.

Writing in the late 19th century, Green (1886: 39-40) judged the patent a near-term developmental failure, insofar as it did not urbanize according to its founders' intention. Green partly blamed New York-New Jersey boundary issues, which had been indicated by 18th century observers as an "obstruction" to Orange County's growth (Smith 1972: 216), and an issue not resolved until the late 1700s (Schwarz 1979: 74-88, 133-61, 179-90). The other reason for Tappan's comparatively modest growth (see Table 2; cf. Tables 1, 3, 5) was the "rapid settlement of the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys," with Orange County's overall development judged a "struggling advance" (Green 1886: 39-40, 48).

Table 2: Orange County Population

(black and white residents)

1698	219
1703	268
1712	439
1723	1,244
1731	1,969
1737	2,840
1746	3,268
1749	4,234
1756	4,876
1771	10,092

Source: O'Callaghan (1849-51: 1: 689, 691, 693-97)

For southern Orange (present-day Rockland) County, the early-mid 18th century was "an era of peace and plenty," albeit with a still relatively low population of Euroamerican settlers

(Green 1886: 48). While slow, settlement did prompt road building, aided by public funding from 1730 on; “numerous inns” for travelers were built, particularly on the main road along the Hudson’s western bank (Green 1886: 48-52). Interior settlement also prompted investment in Hudson River docks; gristmills and sawmills “built where the water power and public demand warranted them,” in at least five southern Orange locales; “and roadways, that had been cut from the nearest highway to these mills, were sometimes further extended till they joined another highway” (Green 1886: 51).

Industrial and transport infrastructure development in 18th century southern Orange County aligns with Earle’s middle colonies model (1992b: 489). Yet even though wheat continued to be a major export crop in southern Orange (Fabend 1991: 84), the type of development Green (1886: 48-52) and Fabend (1991: 55-56) discuss was arguably driven as much by the sort of smallholding household-based rural economy that Vickers (1996) posits was key to the northern colonies’ development, albeit in a slower, more limited way at first. In other words, surplus export and attendant industrial and infrastructural development came in the wake of gradual smallholder agricultural development and production, not unlike what happened in Ulster County some 75-80 miles upriver, though perhaps a bit more rapidly given the burgeoning New York City consumer market’s daily demands. In terms of those food demands, though Braudel posits that colonial British North America’s towns “had to live by their own resources and emerge from the wilderness...the real parallel for them is the medieval city” (1981: 520). New York’s later experience better harmonizes with what he recounts about London, Paris, and other large west European cities in 1500-1800 *vis à vis* his levels of economic life. In those cities a relatively large urban area’s quotidian material needs (the first level) impelled parts of its rural hinterland to move from a general concern with subsistence and into the realm of at least basic market relations (the second level; Braudel 1982: 38-42).

East of Hudson, upriver: Manors and Wheat Production in Albany and Columbia Counties

While smallholders predominated west of the Hudson, New York’s nine largest private holdings were mostly east of the Hudson (see Map 1), and arguably match up most closely with Earle’s (1992a; 1992b) model of northeastern colonial economy. Following on from the Dutch West India Company’s mid-17th century manorial system, meant to promote agricultural settlement in New Netherland (Bachman 1969; Rink 1986), English colonial authorities established something similar after the conquest. Attempting to win political allies (Kammen 1975: 79-80), New York’s governors granted 14 manors and at least 14 non-manorial patents (Bonomi 1971: 185). Like the Dutch intended, the manorial grants were also meant to promote agricultural settlement for both

economic development and defense, and were a response to the colony's transition from a fur exporting to a wheat exporting economy (Kammen 1975: 167-71; Kim 1978: 14-16, 42, 129; Matson 1994: 396-98). Farmland prices rose, leading New York City's larger merchants—among them the Philippses, Van Cortlandts, and Livingstons—to invest in rural grain milling and real estate, almost entirely east of the Hudson (Bonomi 1971: 186-87; Kim 1978: 26-28).

Per Kim (1978: 242-48), tenants came to the manors from various backgrounds and with various motives. Chief among them were the “desperately poor,” often former indentured servants unable to purchase either land or farming equipment, which landlords generally “provided at the initial stage of settlement.” A second group was “persons with marginal property” who were looking to avoid large early debts, learn about an area before purchasing land, and remain geographically close to family. Thirdly were the entrepreneurs, looking “to exploit the [manors’] commercial and industrial possibilities,” by setting up shops, mills, taverns, and inns, assuming the manor’s proprietor was either “unable or unwilling to establish and operate such facilities.” Kim’s three basic tenant types roughly mirror the Braudelian economic triptych: the former indentured servants merely trying to ensure quotidian material survival; the smallholders who planned on engaging with the market, but in a limited way; and those who were much more self-consciously engaged in profit-seeking, though admittedly not at the level of what Braudel saw as the “anti-market” of true capitalism (Talbot 2011: 259).

Large landowners wished to attract settlement in order to promote commercial and agricultural development, thereby increasing the land’s value and generating an exportable surplus—or at the very least supply their grist mills (Kim 1970: 597-98; 1978: 157-72). Among the very largest with a 160,000-acre manor by the mid-1700s, starting in the late 17th century the Livingston family built mills (including the first gristmills in their part of the Hudson Valley), general stores, a brewery and a bakery, by way of both attracting and gleaning profits from their tenants (Kierner 1992: 26, 41, 65-85; Kim 1978: 39-40, 148-50, 167; Matson 1998: 99). The Livingstons “were particularly demanding” of tenant improvements, at least on their main manor, regarding quality of house and barn construction (Kim 1978: 221-23). However, by the 1730s, wheat was Livingston Manor’s main crop, and its production for export (as both bread and flour) was “crucial to the Livingstons’ commercial interests” (Kierner 1992: 96; also Kim 1978: 192). They therefore were less likely to push tenants too hard, in order to keep them on the estate and producing as much grain as possible (Kim 1970: 597-98), with more tenants being recruited from Europe in the 1740s (Kierner 1992: 67n39; Kim 1978: 167). By 1767, the manor’s 285 tenant families leased 30,000 acres of land and produced about 50,000 bushels of wheat, ten percent of which went to the proprietor as rent (Kierner 1992: 71-72, 92). The tenant population grew to 460

families in 1774 (Kim 1978: 238), though declined during the Revolution, to 355 by 1784 (Kierner 1992: 91; also see Bruegel 1996a: 1399n14).

Iron was the Livingstons' third major export product, after lumber and wheat (Kierner 1992: 5). Taking advantage of their nearby iron ore deposits in Connecticut, local forests for fuel, the Hudson for transport to New York City, and cheap tenant labor, the Livingstons built the colony's "first permanent ironworks," with a blast furnace in 1743, a forge in 1745, and two more forges in 1749 elsewhere on the estate. A community grew up around their main ironworks, including housing for workers and managers, a general store, gristmill, churches, schools, and taverns. Over the next 25 years, the Livingstons further expanded the works and produced consumer goods, including "nails, kettles, pots, musket shot, carriage wheels, chimney backs, stoves, and other assorted items," besides basic pig and bar iron, with the family becoming New York's "premier iron producers through the Revolutionary era" (Kierner 1992: 80-83; Neu 1952: 3-8). Mirroring New York's larger economic transition from fur to grain (Leitner 2013; Matson 1994), the Livingstons went from fur-trading merchants to landowners / grain exporters, and then nascent industrialists. Though perhaps not quite at Braudel's third level, the family also converted its economic power into political power (the main reason they received such large land grants in the first place), becoming among the leaders of the colony's "landed interest" (Bonomi 1971: 69; Kierner 1992: 10-47).

The upper Hudson Valley's other two other major landed estates were owned by the Van Rensselaers: Rensselaerswyck (850,000 acres), established in the Dutch period, straddled the river around Albany; and Claverack (250,000 acres), just to the south of Rensselaerswyck's eastern half (Kim 1978: 36-37; see Map 1). Unlike the Livingstons, the Van Rensselaers were not as commercially diversified (Kierner 1992: 80-81), nor were they as demanding with their tenants, apparently due to their land being far enough north to have settlement-hampering security concerns *vis à vis* the French and their indigenous allies, up through 1763 (Kim 1970: 590-91; 1978: 144, 222-23, 238-40). Over its first 80 years (1634-1714), Rensselaerswyck only grew by about one family (5-6 persons) per year, to 82 tenants and 427 persons overall; though comprising about half of Albany County's land, it contained only one-seventh of its population (Kim 1978: 235-36). During 1714-1779, Rensselaerswyck grew from 82 tenants to approximately 1,000; Livingston Manor grew similarly, from 33 to 460 during 1716-1776, growth rates that were actually a bit faster than the provincial average (Kim 1978: 238), whose white population rose from 27,000 to 169,148 during 1715-1776; but slower than Albany County, whose combined black and white population rose almost 30-fold during 1698-1771 (see Table 3).

Table 3: Albany City and County Population

(black and white residents)

1698	1,476
1703	2,273
1714	3,329
1723	6,501
1731	8,573
1737	10,681
1749	10,634
1756	17,424
1771	42,706

Source: O'Callaghan (1849-51: 1: 689, 691, 693-96; 3: 905)

For 18th century landlords, more tenants meant more agricultural production, especially wheat (Kim 1970: 598). This was particularly true for the Livingstons and Van Rensselaers in the upper valley, with land and soil well-suited to wheat growing (Cohen 1992: 115). Maximized grain production also allowed firmer control of prices, milling, transport, and marketing: Robert R. Livingston built and monopolized all mills on the manor, with grain transported to New York City from his wharves (Matson 1994: 412). From one perspective (e.g. Kim 1978: 231-34), tenants benefited from having major landlords (particularly those who were also major overseas traders) purchase and/or market their produce, especially if they were “remote from the market,” as they still received something resembling fair market value.

But though transport and marketing were key “conveniences,” a given tenant “probably compromised his ability to secure the greatest possible return on his produce” because landlords typically held preemptive purchase rights to their tenants’ grain. For instance, the Livingstons’ tenants were required to grind all their grain at mills on the manor, while being charged 10 percent of their produce to do so (Kierner 1992: 92). There was, nonetheless, a great deal of tenant-landlord bargaining over price; and some of the Livingstons did not always exercise their preemptive right to buy their tenants’ available surplus (Kim 1978: 231). But landlords still maintained a certain “ubiquitous” economic power over their tenants, who required financing for initial subsistence needs, milling and transport, which could well put them into further debt. Surviving evidence indicates that between a third and a half of Livingston Manor tenants avoided non-rental debt, implying that between a half and two-thirds incurred such debt (Humphrey 2004: 241-42; Kierner 1992: 93-94; Kim 1970: 599).

Their basic structural power over their tenants also put manorial proprietors in a position akin to merchants west of the Hudson. A manor's mill owner, whether the proprietor or those granted mill-rights on a given manor, "often became the leading store-keepers in rural areas because farmers needed mills to grind their grain and—in a cash-poor economy—they also traded their grain for tools, dry goods, and other items their families needed," including basic "daily necessities" (Kierner 1992: 41). As a result, these general stores induced settlement in their vicinity (Kim 1970: 599). In a Braudelian schematic, subsistence needs (the first economic level) drove engagement in local markets (the second level), to the benefit of those engaging with more distant markets (part of the third level).

But this was not necessarily true in all instances. Per Kim, a manor's ideal-typical economic configuration contained "the linked activities of wheat growing, milling, commercial trading, and operating stores" (1978: 160). In the upper Hudson Valley, only the Livingstons became that integrated, their gristmills turning their tenants' wheat into "flour, bread, and biscuits...in turn packed in barrels made of their lumber and...shipped on their sloops for overseas market" (Kim 1978: 160), part of the bulk goods network Leitner (2013) discusses. Livingston tenants were also a captive market for imported goods. By comparison, Rensselaerswyck's tenants had nearby Albany's extensive commercial options, which obviated any commercial development that might have been undertaken by the Van Rensselaers, who besides lacked "sufficient capital and ambition" to become overseas traders like the Livingstons (Kim 1978: 160-61). In Braudelian perspective, the Livingstons were on the way to possibly becoming full third-level capitalists, and that with only half the tenants Rensselaerswyck had. Yet their tenants were still very much in the first or at most second levels of Braudelian economic life: even into the 1760s, Albany County tax rolls indicate that "the majority of tenants on both" Livingston and Rensselaerswyck Manors "lived near or at the bottom of the social hierarchy," with about 90 percent of Livingston Manors' residents and 88 percent of Rensselaerswyck's assessed at £10 or less (Humphrey 2004: 240-41). By comparison, upon his 1769 death, Stephen Van Rensselaer's estate's £19,000 rating was almost 80 times that of even his wealthiest tenants' holdings; while his fellow "manor lord" Robert Livingston Jr. had holdings in 1778 rated at about £30,000, not including his urban property in Albany or New York City (Humphrey 2004: 241).

East of Hudson, downriver: Mixed crops on Westchester County's Manors

Similar to Livingston Manor, but closer to New York City, Philipsburgh Manor was also a relatively well-integrated locus of production. Its proprietors were major trading merchants like the Livingstons: they saw agriculture as a commercial enterprise, leading them to promote wheat growing and mill construction (Countryman 1981: 18; Kim 1978: 160-61; Matson 1998: 99).

While both Philipsburgh and Cortlandt, Westchester County's other large manor, were smaller than the two large upriver manors, their average leaseholds were larger (see Table 4). The

Table 4: Manor Size & Average Leasehold

	Size (in acres)	Avg. Leasehold (in acres)
Rensselaerswyck*	1,100,000	153
Livingston	160,000	106
Philipsburg	92,000	187
Cortlandt	86,000	237

*including Claverack

Sources: Kim (1978: 36-37, 39-40, 69-70, 189); Kierner (1992: 26)

Livingstons and Van Rensselaers believed that, due to soil fertility, 80-120 acres was more than adequate for a farmer to grow wheat on their manors (Cohen 1992: 115; Kim 1978: 190-91). Downriver in Westchester this was not the case, with poorer soil and hillier terrain leading the Philipses and Van Cortlandts to grant their tenants larger leaseholds. Unable to compete with mid-18th century Albany County's wheat production, and presented with New York City's burgeoning meat and dairy demand, the Westchester manors began to diversify into livestock grazing after 1730 (Hornsby 2005: 155; Kim 1978: 191-92). As a result, upriver tenants paid rent in wheat, while Westchester tenants paid rent largely in cash, at least after 1750 (Kim 1970: 598; 1978: 192-94; Reubens 1965: 440).

Prospective tenants' other settlement options, especially fee-simple "freehold" ownership, slowed the Westchester manors' settlement. A freehold was the British North American mainland colonists' ostensible choice, and the mid-Atlantic colonies' primary mode of agricultural settlement (Greenberg 1978: 483-84; Hornsby 2005: 153; Kammen 1975: 299-302). Founded in 1693, Philipsburgh Manor had just 20 families in 1700, and still only some 60 tenants and 309 residents overall by 1712; while Cortlandt Manor was founded in 1697 but contained just 17 families and 91 residents in 1712 (Kim 1966: 12-15, 32, 59; 1978: 67-69, 235-36). Though comprising over half the county's land area, combined the two manors had only 14 percent of Westchester County's 1712 population (see Table 5). The county's small freehold towns were all much more densely populated in the early 18th century (Kim 1966: 78-79, 85; 1978: 93, 235-36).

Table 5: Westchester County Population
(black and white residents, except as noted)

Year	Population (black & white)
1698	1,063
1703	*1,946
1712	*2,803
1723	4,409
1731	6,033
1737	6,745
1746	9,235
1749	10,703
1756	13,257
1771	21,745

*residents' race unspecified

Source: O'Callaghan (1849-51: 1: 689, 691, 693-97)

Philipsburgh grew to 272 tenant families by 1776 (Kim 1978: 238; Reubens 1965: 438), providing a convenient market for original proprietor Frederick Philipse and his major overseas trading operation (Howell and Keller 1977: 135). Like the upriver Livingstons, Philipse's business was initially based on the fur trade, but later included grain and flour (Matson 1994: 412; 1998: 363n5). He built "mills, blacksmith shops, and cooperage works at his main manor after 1693" to provide him with flour to export (Howell and Keller 1977: 130-39; Matson 1998: 115). There was even some tertiary production of hardtack "ship biscuits" by the manor's bakehouse, established as part of his "model...full-scale production-distribution cycle, unique for its time" (Howell and Keller 1977: 135). Frederick's son and brother-in-law expanded the manor's "mills, blacksmith shops, coopering works, and tenant settlements" during the 18th century (Howell and Keller 1977: 139-42), and traded with other mainland colonies and the British Caribbean (Matson 1998: 60, 76, 99). By the mid-18th century, with some 1,100 tenants and 24 slaves, Philipsburgh had become "an agro-industrial complex... [producing] a variety of grains for the New York market." These were "ground and bolted (sifted)...in its own mills, packed...in its own barrels, and shipped...downriver in its own sloops" (Burrows and Wallace 1999: 128), including about two tons of flour each day "during peak seasons of the 1740s" (Matson 1998: 234). But aside from its more industrialized section, Philipsburgh Manor was still noted in 1775 for being sparsely settled and rural (Reubens 1965: 438).

In comparison, Cortlandt Manor was much less of an integrated economic unit, marked by “complete administrative anarchy” until 1712 (Kim 1966: 59-61; 1978: 161). Containing only four or five tenant families as of 1701 (Bonomi 1971: 195), pre-1712 settlement was focused near the river just south of Peekskill, with most of its acreage “left unimproved” and the manor lacking good roads other than near the Hudson (Kim 1966: 79-80). Early Cortlandt Manor leases typically required tenants to build houses, plant fenced fruit orchards, and cultivate the land, though particular details varied per landlord; tenants were typically expected “to make good use of the land” in order to increase their own income (Kim 1966: 114-16; 1978: 221-23). By the 1730s, Cortlandt Manor was part of a “newly diversified agrarian economy” with a decreased role for wheat, but with tenants that were by now arguably engaged more in commercial than subsistence farming, and when they paid rent at all, did so largely in cash (Kim 1966: 144-47, 205; 1978: 194). With few mills of their own even into the 1730s, Cortlandt tenants took their grain to mills in adjoining patents and townships (Kim 1978: 169), a mixed blessing for the manor’s development. Indeed, at its 1732 division amongst the Van Cortlandt heirs, the manor still contained only about 20 tenant families, with settlement hampered by a general preference for freehold ownership, by tenancy-in-common (reducing the incentive to improve leaseholds), and uncertainty about the heirs’ intentions (Kim 1966: 85-87).

The division was initially no spur to the manor’s development. Each of the ten heirs was given four widely-dispersed, non-contiguous lots, which “impeded the development of an integral plantation system with mills and other facilities”—aside from the fact that most of the heirs were neither experienced, nor interested, nor local, nor wealthy enough to engage in “large-scale land development.” Only two of the heirs built mills on their land, while a third had one build on a leased mill site. In debt and facing low rental returns, eight of the ten sold off nearly half the manor (41,792 of 86,000 acres) during 1736-1776. The land sales and “generous lease terms” aided Cortlandt Manor’s settlement, along with new roads that tied it together internally and linked it closer to the outside (Kim 1966: 85-87, 95-110; 1978: 150-56, 169, 181-84, 421-24).

Westchester’s two large manors broadly exhibited a version of each type of colonial northeastern development: Philipsburgh more along the lines posited by Earle’s (1992a; 1992b) bulk staple export model; while Cortlandt was somewhat closer to Vickers’ (1996) independent households and small merchants model. This is also the reality of an unevenly developing world-economy, where local economies can have elements and actors that are not yet fully capitalist (Braudel 1977: 112; Dunaway 1996a: 232). Philipsburgh was part of an integrated agroexport operation, with attendant industrial and infrastructural development; while Cortlandt, in part due to its fractured ownership (Kim 1966: 55), was developed later and to a lesser degree (e.g. with much less milling investment) by smaller proprietors, many of them absentee, with its typically

more independent tenants producing a more diversified set of crops, and infrastructure provided (if at all) by the local state.

Despite tendencies toward agro-industrial commercialism by certain proprietors, on all the Hudson Valley manors the tenants did most of the actual work and value creation (Humphrey 1998: 142, 156, 158; Kim 1966: 199). In a colony with abundant land but relatively scarce labor, this explains why proprietors were eager to attract tenants and were often lenient about rent (Hedrick 1933: 75; Kammen 1975: 301; Kim 1966: 40-46; 1970; 1978: 163). As well, farm households had the option of moving to nearby colonies with land available for fee-simple ownership, making the colonial Hudson Valley a partial exception that upholds Domar's (1970) thesis whereby an economy can only have either two of the three factors of free land, free peasants, and non-working landowners, barring "exogenous" political factors (also Solow 1991: 35-37)—in this case the existence of alternative land tenure within the same colony and/or nearby colonies. This also partly explains the Hudson Valley's various overt tenant-landlord struggles during the 1750s-1840s. Underlying the more obvious pecuniary concerns about milling monopolies, first choice of crops, and relatively high lease re-sale fees owed to landlords (Bonomi 1971: 193-94), Hudson Valley tenants developed a labor theory of land value, by which their occupancy and improvements justified their right to eventual fee-simple ownership (Humphrey 1998). This was, ironically, similar to North American indigenous peoples' usufruct-based notions of land value, and was of course at odds with the landlords' title-based notion of land ownership (Humphrey 1998: 147-57).

While many of the manorial proprietors may have been starting to resemble fully capitalist actors in the Braudelian (if not Marxian) sense, the basic work of farming in 18th century New York was difficult: dependent on climatic vagaries, spatially-extensive, and reliant on (scarce) hand-labor using primitive tools, they lived lives that were physically difficult and often financially precarious (Bruegel 1996b; Hedrick 1933: 67-68; Humphrey 2004: 239; Wermuth 2001: 48). Westchester in particular was noted for its poor soil and steep, rocky topography (Reubens 1965: 440). In partial consequence, both manorial and non-manorial landlords granted tenants rent-free periods of up to 12 years, giving them time to develop their farmstead, support their families, and in turn produce and export surplus and pay rent (Kim 1978: 171-72). Most early-mid 18th century Westchester manor tenants, while increasingly involved in commercial production and becoming more affluent (Kim 1978: 264-65), were like other northeastern farmers elsewhere in this era: their primary concern was working the land to secure their household subsistence on at least a seasonal basis (Kim 1966: 204-07; 1982: 329; Post 2009: 472; Reubens 1965: 440-41, 446). While the landlords straddled Braudel's second and third levels of economic life, the tenants straddled the first and second levels.

Conclusion: Gradual and Partial Transitions in the Colonial Hudson Valley

The 18th century colonial Hudson Valley contained various levels of Braudelian economic life co-existing in what was otherwise a peripheral region of the contemporary capitalist world-economy; that is partly the reason for different models of colonial northeastern economy as formulated by Earle (1992a; 1992b) and Vickers (1996). Seen another way, there were arguably different varieties of core-periphery articulation, determined in part by the level of Braudelian economic life in which peripheral actors existed. The independent smallholding farm households that comprised most of the western bank's population existed at the levels of subsistence and basic local markets; their dealings with larger markets were mediated by local merchants who aggregated local surpluses and traded in turn with their counterparts in the burgeoning colonial *entrepôt* of New York City. However, New York City's daily subsistence needs pulled hinterland farmers into the market, similar to Braudel's (1982: 38-42) discussion of western European urbanization's effect on neighboring rural areas in the same era, and analogous to the "spatial articulation" of rural commodity producers with larger regional *entrepôts* in 18th-19th century Appalachia (Dunaway 1996a: 198).

East of the Hudson, large landlords directly articulated with actors elsewhere in the world-economy, via production and export of wheat to the Caribbean, in line with Earle's (1992b) model; and were arguably at Braudel's third level of economic life, or at least aspired towards it, e.g. at Philipsburgh and Livingston Manors, with their integrated agroindustrial and overseas trading operations. The smallholders predominating west of the Hudson—some of whom were successful enough to become landlords—were themselves part of a larger regional staples economy in which the middle colonies were noted for grain and especially wheat production (Earle 1992b; Hornsby 2005: 156; Vickers 1996: 219). Manor tenants were a mixed group (Kim 1978: 242-48, 264-65), and presumably even those with a more upwardly mobile and entrepreneurial bent still had to be concerned with basic subsistence at least initially, as well as being subject to limited technology, labor scarcity, and geographic and climatic vagaries. But if generally more subsistence-oriented than their landlords, tenants' structural location forced them to at least articulate with the higher Braudelian levels (i.e. local and regional markets and the world-economy), via cash crop production for landlord export.

As suggested above *vis à vis* the Domar (1970) thesis, the Hudson Valley's manorial economy had a certain world-historical atypicality in that attempted commercial export agriculture with scarce labor did not lead to "coerced cash crop labor" as in eastern Europe (Wallerstein 1974: 91-114). This is for the simple reason that tenants in British North America were not formally tied to the land as east European serfs were, and were free to remove to nearby areas with available land—hence the landlords' relative lenience regarding rent, in an attempt to

better attract and keep tenants (Kim 1970; 1978). Per Solow's comments on Domar, "[t]here certainly were positive rents and tenant farmers in colonial America, but the *essential* nature of the northern colonies was not that of a landed aristocracy" (1991: 37), with this very essentiality helping keep tenants from becoming serfs. In that respect, the colonial Hudson Valley manors of the late 1600s-1700s were not entirely unique, as agricultural rents and/or land prices have been kept low to induce settlement in other world-historical timespaces: the western Dutch peatlands ca. 1000-1300; various parts of 14th century post-Black Death rural Europe; the 19th century Hungarian steppe; and the central and western United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Anderson 1974: 324; Braudel 1981: 193; van Bavel and van Zanden 2004: 512-13; White 1991: 141-47; Wolf 1997: 111).

Nor was there large-scale chattel slavery in the Hudson Valley, unlike the southern colonies and greater Caribbean, trade with which was a major spur to the northern colonies' major industries, including shipbuilding, grain and sugar milling, rum distilling, and cotton textiles. All these sectors depended on trade with a set of regional economies explicitly reliant on chattel slavery (Burrows and Wallace 1999: 118-90; Matson 1998: 215-64; Richardson 1991). Yet, in the "bread colonies" slavery was uneconomical largely because wheat's seasonal labor demand was short but intense, typically requiring just a few days for fall planting and 10-14 days during midsummer harvest, a point emphasized by both Earle (1992a: 180-81, 228-35) and Vickers (1996: 225-26), and earlier surmised by Domar (1970: 30). Better therefore to have tenants (or for smaller farmers, seasonal hired hands) who could feed themselves, than to buy slaves and be obligated to feed and maintain human property during the long off-season (Post 2009: 470). Instead, African slaves were more typically used on 18th century Hudson Valley estates as skilled labor, such as the two dozen slaves (see above) who ran Philipsburgh Manor's milling, dairying, and international shipping operations (Brawarsky 2003; Harris 2004: 343-44; McManus 1966: 46-67). A population that grew its own food contrasts sharply with certain other parts of British North America, such as eastern North Carolina, where the use of land and labor for nonagricultural extractive activities led to the region becoming a net food importer and conversely a net cash exporter, "a hindrance on the region's economic growth" (Driscoll and Kick 2013: 16). Whereas in the colonial northeast, Vickers argues the dialectic between "diversified rural households" and "a sizable merchant community" in New York City "spurred...productive, linked development" that eventually prompted regional core emergence (1996: 235, 247-48).

At least in part, this regional core emergence was also due to the differential developmental effects of wheat as opposed to other types of staple crop, a point noted by both Earle (1992a, 1992b) and Vickers (1996), and explicated in world-systems literature by Bunker (1989; 1992; 2005). Conversely, having wheat as its major 18th century staple product helped the Hudson Valley

avoid the effects of colonial extractive underdevelopment that Driscoll and Kick (2013) explore in eastern North Carolina and Smith (1987) explores for Charleston and its hinterland. The region's success is due at least in part because it helped promote intensive industrialization in New York City (Burrows and Wallace 1999: 118-90), including the arguably core activity of shipbuilding for the bulk goods trade with the Caribbean (Leitner 2013: 277). Further, given that the "spatial separation of production, exchange and use in extractive economies" makes it extremely difficult for extractive regions to sustain economic development (Bunker 2005: 220-21), having a nearby major urban-industrial center that later became a world financial capital and exemplar of Braudel's third level of economic life in turn helped pull its surrounding agro-extractive region into the core.

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Disclosure Statement

Any conflicts of interest are reported in the acknowledgments section of the article's text. Otherwise, authors have indicated that they have no conflict of interests upon submission of their article to the journal.

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