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- ¹ The history of slave trade in New York spans several centuries. It began in 1646 when the Dutch West India Company faced the imminent loss of its foothold in Pernambuco. The Company sent a ship from Brazil with a full complement of bondpeople to be sold in its northernmost colony¹. Despite a federal government decree abolishing the trade in 1807, it revived in New York in the 1850s. Its final expression at the end of the decade involved fitting out vessels for the sale of human merchandise in the lucrative Cuban market ².
- ² What began with Brazil ended with Cuba. The other intriguing Iberic interlude came during the first half of the eighteenth century, a period that resembles no other in the long history of New York slave trade. The focus here is on that singular epoch.
- ³ In the first place, it gave rise to the New York professionals, the few wealthy merchants who concentrated on the trade in a carefully chosen geographical range for supply and sale of captives, a practice their peers in later years would hone to perfection. A second group is unique to the period, consisting in merchants and traders who had abundant Caribbean contacts from long years in the provisions trade, and now began either dipping in and out of the slave trade, or receiving bondpeople from the Caribbean on consignment for sale on the mainland. Unlike the slaving professionals, their circuits of trade spread out broadly across the Americas. In geographical range and variety of business practices this pe-riod stands in marked contrast to the years preceding or following. Moreover, it coincided with a peak in local demand for slave labor. As a result, a considerably larger proportion of captives sent to New York were destined for sale to residents of the province than was the case in other northern slave trading colonies (Table 1). In terms of volume, New York was insignificant, certainly in the larger Atlantic network³, but even in the North American context (Table 2). However, given the character of the trade, the origins of New Yorkers of African ancestry were arguably far more diverse than was the case elsewhere in North America at the time⁴. Yet beyond generalities⁵, little is known about their origins.

Table 1. Captives as Proportion of Total Population, 1750

	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>% Black</i>
Massachusetts	188,000	4,075	2.1
Rhode Island	33,226	3,347	9.2
Connecticut	111,280	3,010	2.6
New York	76,280	11,014	12.6
Pennsylvania	183,703	2,872	1.5

Sources. Rhode Island: RAWLEY, J., 1981, p. 350; New York before 1715: « An Account of What Negro Slaves... Imported », DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 5, p. 815; New York thereafter: LYDON, J., 1978, Table IV, p. 382.

Table 2. Slaving Voyages to Africa

	<i>Rhode Island</i>		<i>New York</i>	
	<i>Voyages</i>	<i>Slaves</i>	<i>Voyages</i>	<i>Slaves</i>
1709-1735	39	4,571	13	1,048
1736-1739	46	5,284	1	3
1740-1750	51	5,810	1	0

Sources. *Historical Statistics of the United States*, Washington, D.C., Bureau of the Census, 1961, p. 756.

4 This article is a first step in that direction. The task is complicated by the absence of ship journals, hence the need to proceed by indirection. I have used Customs documents, correspondance between Provincial officials and London, and newspapers in order to construct by five-year intervals last ports of call, numbers of captives aboard, home ports of vessels, and business practices. The sole extant ship journal, describing a 1748-1749 voyage along the coasts of Guinea, serves as a template for the earlier African expeditions⁶.

1. African reared captives brought from Africa

5 Customs recorded some 4,000 people arriving between 1715 and 1741 (Table 3)⁷. Direct trade from Africa swings sharply across the pe-riod from the 1715-18 high (40% of captives) to a 1725-29 low (6%), then insignificance in the final period. These proportions do not indicate the veritable number of African-reared people boarded on slaving vessels because New York professionals also engaged in triangular trade, delivering African-reared people to the islands, then returning to New York with those unsold. A central issue here, therefore, is to determine the appropriate indicators allowing a distinction between African-reared and African-based people. Members of the second group were both American-born and those born in Africa who had spent at least several years in the Americas⁸. The traditional indicators, vessel size and number of captives aboard, are based on the assumption that the larger the size and the greater the number, the more likely an African voyage. However reliable a guide this may be for other slaving ports, it is not particularly useful in the case of New York. Here, I focus on three indicators: market fluctuations, resultant reorganization of business practice, and market structures in the islands and on the mainland.

6 Market fluctuations had immediate impact on African trade. In 1698 an Act of Parliament finally banned the Madagascar slave trade after years of pressure from, both the East India Company and the Royal Africa Company (RAC). This brought a temporary halt to the

unique and very lucrative African focus of New York traders⁹. Also in 1698 the RAC, its monopoly a polite fiction, reversed course. It permitted the entry of private traders to its coastal territories against a 10% duty. Those traders were to supply British American possessions with captives. The decision removed some of the dangers in African coastal trade, focused it along those portions of the western coasts where RAC factories stood, and prompted a heightened interest among New Yorkers in the English sugar islands¹⁰.

Table 3. African and American Sources of Captives, 1715-1741

	1715-19		1720-24		1725-29		1730-34		1735-41	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Africa	416	7	117	1	60	2	231	3	4	2
British										
Windwards ^a	485	60	279	58	492	75	404	60	310	57
Leewards ^b	73	14	28	9	140	14	188	32	92	21
Honduras/ Suriname	6	1	4	3	7	2	2	1	1	1
Bermuda/ Bahamas	11	3	16	5	26	14	23	8	22	11
Mainland ^c	1	1	22	8	53	15	13	7	71	19
Dutch/ Danish ^d	54	13	30	12	151	7	54	22	69	19
French ^e	2	1			3	1	9	3	1	1
Spanish ^f	4	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	9	1
Total Americas	636	94	383	96	873	131	694	134	575	130

(1) Captives

(2) Vessels

^a Jamaica, Barbados

^b Nevis, Antigua, St. Christopher, Monserrat

^c Boston, Rhode Island, South Carolina

^d Curaçao, St. Thomas, St. Eustatis

^e Guadaloupe, Martinique, St. Domingue

^f Campechy, Hispaniola, Cartagena, St. Augustine in Florida

Sources. Compiled from E. DONNAN, « Negroes Imported into New York, 1715-1765 », 1932, pp. 462-510.

- 7 The War of Spanish Succession (1702-1713) temporarily interrupted New Yorker involvement in the new trade. But they did surprisingly well under the circumstances. Between 1705 and 1712 four vessels brought in 209 captives from « the coast of Africa »¹¹.
- 8 As trade revived captives were drawn from three distinct areas. These are characterized in Customs documents as, in chronological order of arrival, « Guinea » or its synonym « coast(s) of Africa » (1715-1718), Madagascar, masked by the term « Africa », and « Angola » (1730) (Table 4).

Table 4. African Voyages by Destination, 1715-1738. Number of Captives Returned to New York, Voyage Organizers, Type and Name of Vessel Ship Master, Port and Date of Registry

<i>Guinea</i>	
— 1715: 38, Rip Van Dam and others, sloop <i>Anne and Mary</i> , Th. Jacobs, New York, 1712	
— 1716: 43, Rip Van Dam and others, sloop <i>Anne and Mary</i> as above (25 males, 17 females, 1 child)	
— 1717: 106, J. G., and A. Van Horne and others, brig <i>Dragon</i> , John Lawrence, New York, 1714	
— 1717: 60, J. G., and A. Van Horne and others, sloop <i>Catherine and Mary</i> , John Cracraft, New York, 1714	
— 1717: 100, William Walton, Nathaniel Simson (New York), and Richard Janeway (London), ship <i>New York Postillion</i> , Dennis Downing, New York, 1716	
— 1718: 64, J. G., and A. Van Horne, sloop <i>Catherine and Mary</i> , John Cracraft, New York, 1714 (45 captives to be re-exported to Virginia)	
<i>Madagascar</i>	
— 1718: 5, Adolphe Philipse, ship <i>Phillipsburg</i> , Allan Jarret, New York, 1715 (recorded as in from « Africa »)	
— 1721: 117, Walton and Simson (New York) and Janeway and Moses Levy (London), ship <i>Crown Galley</i> , Dennis Downing, reg. London, 1719 (this is the same vessel as the ship <i>New York Postillion</i> : see text)	
— 1723: 2, Rip Van Dam and others, sloop <i>Burnet</i> , Ed. Sanders, New York, 1722 (recorded as « Africa [sic] and Jamaica »)	
<i>Guinea</i>	
— 1725: 59, Thomas Hopkins, sloop <i>Anne</i> , Garret Garretse, Rhode Island	
<i>Angola</i>	
— 1731: 130, John Waters (New York) and Arnot Schuyler (New Jersey), ship <i>Catherine</i> , Jasper Farmer, 1730	
— 1733: 100, as above	
<i>Madeira</i>	
— 1724: 2, Van Horne and Rynders, brig <i>Hopewell</i> , John Woodside, New York, 1720 (the 2 were returned to Madeira)	
— 1725: 1, as above but not returned	
— 1731: 1, Ph. French and others, and W. Depeyster, per endorsement, brig <i>Nonsuch (sic)</i> , Wm. Smith, New York, 1727	
— 1738: 1, Ph. Painter, Jr. and Ruth Evans of Bermuda, sloop <i>Unity</i> , Stephen Painter, Bermuda, 1736	
<i>Cape Verde Islands</i>	
— 1738: 3, Abraham Van Horne, Jr., sloop <i>Catherine</i> , Thomas Ware, New York, 1737	

Sources. Compiled from E. DONNAN, 1932, pp. 462-510.

- 9 « Guinea » covered 3,000 miles of coast from Casamance down through the Ivory Coast, Europeans sometimes extending it to include the Gold Coast as well¹². « Guinea » comprised three distinct political configurations.
- 10 North of Cape Mount (Casamance to the border of modern Liberia) was characterized by small autonomous villages surrounded by fields near the coast, and one centralized State, Futa Jallon, in the mountainous interior. Its expansionist policy after 1720 would provide upwards of 65,000 captives to European traders¹³. That war, however, post-dated all but one of the slave vessels entering New York port from « Guinea », suggesting that the region north of Cape Mount may not have attracted them.
- 11 South of Cape Mount along the Windward Coast was a region devoid of centralized States whose autonomous villages resembled those farther north. But the crucial difference is that people here were spared expansionist wars and, more importantly, strongly resisted both the lure of the trade and slavery itself. This area attracted few North American vessels seeking captives¹⁴.
- 12 Eastern Ivory Coast stood in marked contrast. A fringe area of Akan political organization, it was strongly oriented toward trade in captives at the time the New York vessels sailed. For well over a century powerful interior States vied with one another in the game of territorial expansion. They supplied captives, largely war prisoners, to the small satellite States of the littoral, whose economies depended on town middlemen in the exchange of human merchandise. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the Asante kingdom emerged victorious and dominated the entire area, including the Gold Coast. As a result, captives,

no longer primarily war prisoners, were increasingly people kidnapped from fringe areas like the eastern Ivory Coast¹⁵.

- 13 This is no doubt the area that attracted the New York « Guinea » vessels between 1715 and 1718. Further evidence comes from the word « Coromantee », a designation New Yorkers and English islanders alike began to apply to captives from « Guinea ». The word was a deformation of Kormortin, a minor port located between the major points of Gold Coast captive supply. At Kormortin North Americans were able to trade directly with Akan merchants, thus able to eliminate a number of fees¹⁶.
- 14 In 1716, trade with Madagascar opened again for a five year period. The wording of the new rule was sufficiently ambiguous to make traders wary, hence the term « Africa » used in New York, Jamaica and Barbados as of 1717, but not before¹⁷. The vessels entering New York from « Affrica » (*sic*) had faced the same market conditions as their seventeenth century peers. Captives were drawn from an island divided into loosely organized polities relying on European pirate vessels and their crews from around the world to enforce the terms of trade. The only change in 1716 was location: whereas in the seventeenth century captives were boarded from the southern area near Fort Dauphin, later supplies were drawn from the north-eastern portions of the island¹⁸.
- 15 Finally « Angola » by which North Americans meant the coastal area comprising modern Gabon, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola proper. John Thornton demonstrates that captives arriving from the region in North American ports in the 1730s were not drawn from the Portuguese colony in Angola, an area zealously guarded against European intruders, given Brazilian demand. But Kabinda, the capital of an independent State was a magnet for the RAC and private traders alike at that time. Kabinda drew its captives from its southern neighbor in the modern DRC. The people arriving in New York were highly likely to have come from Kongo. Thornton describes the latter as « a Christian country with a system of churches and schools, and high literacy (at least among elites) in Portuguese », a creole form of which was employed in the slave trade¹⁹.
- 16 Five captives arriving from Madeira and three from the Cape Verde islands owed their fate to an American mainland trading practice. Some of the captives taken along the coast would then be traded on the islands for provisions to supply the return Atlantic voyage. Other European traders drew on these sources of captives to complete their « cargos »²⁰.
- 17 Finally, it should be noted that captives entering New York and other North American ports represented a far more even gender and age balance that was the case in the islands²¹.
2. African reared and African based captives brought from the Americas
- 18 By 1741, then, the African-reared population of New York province was decidedly multicultural, having been continuously renewed from three distinct areas. The captives drew upon widely differing experiences of political organization and cultural practices which worked in specific ways to shape their judgment of and adjustment to the new environment of slavery.
- 19 But not all of those who departed Africa in New York vessels entered New York port, which brings up the second indicator, the reorganization of business practices (Table 5). The RAC decree specified trade to English colonies. In practice this meant the three sugar islands which were also RAC *entrepôt* islands, Barbados and Jamaica, taking the great majority of captives, and Nevis of the Leewards. Professional slave traders thus worked in

a circumscribed area of the Caribbean. In some cases the new system worked so well that professional traders forsook African voyages. Bermuda traders had been supplying Virginia and later Carolina with captives directly from Calibar in the late seventeenth century. By 1708, they acquired most of their human merchandise at Barbados²².

- 20 Among New York merchants with money and Caribbean connections the RAC decree prompted larger and more focused African ventures. Among the first to respond to the new terms was Frederick Philipse. His ship *New York* supplied 135 African-reared captives to Edward Cordwent of Barbados in 1699 and another 137 in 1700²³. Philipse's two ventures do not appear in New York Customs records since none of the captives entered that port. This is the hidden side of New York professional slave trading activities, the precise effect of which can only be determined through island archives.

Table 5. Vessels carrying captives into New York, 1715-1741

	1715-19		1720-24		1725-29		1730-34		1735-41	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Africa	6	7 ^a	0	1 ^b	2	2	3	3	2	2
Americas										
Windwards	44	60 ^c	45	58 ^d	60	75 ^e	18	32	39	57
Leewards	3	14 ^f	5	9	6	14 ^g	18 ^h	32	13	21
Dutch/Danish	10	13 ⁱ	10	12	26	27 ^j	14	22 ^k	14	19
N. American										
Mainland	1	1	5	8	10	15	5	7	17	19

(1) Sponsored solely by New Yorkers

(2) Total vessels

Origins of partners in joint ventures with New Yorkers in notes: vessels with no New Yorker participation: number only).

Africa ^a London ^b London

Windward ^c New London, Barbados, Virginia, Jamaica (12 no New York)

^d Jamaica, Barbados (11 no New York)

^e Boston, New London (13 no New York)

Leewards ^f Nevis (10 no New York)

^g London, Antigua (6 no New York)

^h Antigua (x3) (11 no New York)

Dutch/Danish ⁱ New England (probably Boston) (2 no New York)

^j Boston

^k St. Thomas (x3) (5 no New York)

Among those ventures in which New York did not participate the most numerous are those sponsored by Bermuda and those European vessels homeward bound from the Caribbean using New York as a port of last resort before crossing the Atlantic.

Sources. Compiled from E. DONNAN, 1932, pp. 462-510.

- 21 The activities of Frederick's son Adolph, on the other hand, do enter the New York Customs records. In March 1717, captain Jarret of Adolph's ship *Phillipeburg* gave bond in London for a voyage to « Africa » and Barbados. The ship entered New York port on 29 April 1718 carrying six captives, duly recorded by Customs as having come from « Africa ». The captives were squeezed in the hold around a full cargo of rum taken on board in Barbados in exchange for their comrades. Rum was the ideal trading commodity in the Madagascar slave trade. Duly armed with the rum, the *Phillipeburg* made two other voyages to Madagascar. The first entered New York on 12 November 1720 with three captives, the second on 12 June 1721, carrying another eight people, all duly recorded by Customs as from Barbados²⁴.
- 22 Rip Van Dam's activities (Table 4) reveal similar trends. At the same time, he brought captives to New York directly from « Guinea », twelve others entered New York for his

account from « Barbados » (1717 and 1718), and eight from « Jamaica » (1718). The Van Horne family brought 230 captives to New York from « Guinea » in 1717 and 1718. A year later, four captives entered from Curaçao and two from Jamaica, both *entrepôt* ports. These people entered as islanders were certainly African-reared.

- 23 William Walton is a special case. He brought more African-reared people to New York – 457 of them – than any other slave trader. The « coast of Africa » accounted for 217 people in 1717 and 1721, both voyages undertaken with London partners (Table 4). At first glance, it would seem that he conducted two distinct branches of trade in the Americas that accounted for another 340 captives. On the one hand, he was virtually the sole importer from Spanish American ports an activity he pursued between 1716 and 1738. On the other hand, he brought large numbers of captives to New York from British American beginning with 63 from Barbados and Virginia in 1718. Between 1719 and 1728, 15 sloops brought in from 2 to 45 captives from Jamaica. As of 1730, Walton changed course, importing people from Curaçao and St. Christopher in the Leewards. These people, as with those from Spanish ports, were almost certainly African-reared (Table 6).
- 24 The South Sea Company provides the connecting link. Chartered in 1711, it promised investors high returns from supplying the Spanish Americas with merchandise, human and inert. The SSC venture certainly suited the Spanish *colons* since it undermined the restrictive trade laws defined by Madrid. High returns were a thing of the past when in 1720 the bubble burst, but the trade persisted until 1739²⁵.

Table 6. William Walton's American markets

	<i>Spanish Ports</i>		
	<i>Captives</i>	<i>Vessels</i>	
Campechy	4	1	1716
Hispaniola	5	2	1724 & 1732
Cartegena	1	1	1729
St. Augustine	9	1	1738
<i>British Ports (1718-1727)</i>			
Barbados and Virginia	63	1	
Jamaica	88	11	
South Carolina	3	2	
<i>British, Mixed, Non-British Ports (1729-1740)</i>			
Jamaica	7	2	
Curacao & Jamaica	2	1	
St. Christopher	37	2	
St. Christopher & St. Eustatia	1	1	
Curacao	8	2	

Sources. Compiled from E. DONNAN, 1932, pp. 462-510.

- 25 Walton, with partners and connections in London, had little difficulty establishing himself and his firm as South Sea traders. The SSC factor at Jamaica, in his comments to the governor of the island in 1736 makes clear the nature of the links between English and Spanish America. A Bristol ship had just delivered 350 captives from the Gold Coast. « As we want girls, we shall take those who are not too much on the Yellow cast... ». They would remain on the island. The others, he felt, suited the Havana market. But if there

were no demand in Cuba, then the captives would go to the Jamaican consignees, that is, those traders authorized to market SSC « merchandise ». The factor thought they would find markets in Hispaniola or Florida. As for captives not suited to any immediate market, they could be sold from port to port wherever a market could be found²⁶. Thus it was that 350 captives who departed from the Gold Coast, « Yellow » or not, became instant Jamaicans.

3. Market conditions and the origins of captives

- 26 The voyage patterns of these inter-American ventures as recorded by New York Customs closely resemble another totally different New York practice. This was carried on by equally wealthy merchants engaged in Caribbean trade who were seldom if ever involved in large slaving ventures. Upon occasion they accepted small numbers of captives from the islands, agreeing to sell them for a commission in the New York market. Some of the African-based islanders found themselves in New York as a result of an owner's death or financial difficulties, others because they were deemed unsuitable workers. African-based New Yorkers were shipped to the islands for similar reasons. The merchant Jacobus Van Cortlandt was particularly distressed by the 1698 « glut » of arrivals from Africa since it forced him to sell his consignees at very low prices. Between 1698 and 1701, he accepted people on consignment sent from Antigua, Jamaica, Barbados, St. Christopher, Curaçao, Campechy and Madeira. Between 1717 and 1740, Customs recorded consignments coming in groups of five or less from Nevis, Antigua, Jamaica, Barbados, Curaçao, St. Thomas, Suriname and Madeira²⁷. On the strength of Customs documents and marine registers in newspapers alone, little distinguishes these voyages from those sponsored by major slave traders. Attention to business practices, however, suggests otherwise. The consignees were African-based people.
- 27 The number of vessels carrying consignees peaked in the years from 1729 to 1732. This draws attention to the third indicator useful in distinguishing between African-reared and African-based people, that is, market conditions.
- 28 The year 1730 represents a significant turning point in market conditions across British American colonies. The decade opened with a marked decline in physical and economic conditions. Disease and drought plagued the islands, but were compounded in British possessions where sugar producers could no longer compete with French prices²⁸.
- 29 In this context, however, there is a more pertinent turning point bearing on origins of New York bondpeople. Insurrections and plans for them, in fact and in fancy, flared across the Americas with an impact even stronger than the similar wave towards the end of the 17th century²⁹.
- 30 Jamaica was the eye of the storm. For years fugitive slaves had been forming encampments in the highland. What had been guerilla warfare for decades became by the late 1720s an alliance of three major camps against the British. What had changed was neither strategy nor tactics. The British now confronted the novelty of alliance among the major African ethnic groups. The war ended with the signing of a formal peace treaty in 1739³⁰. Planters, in economic distress not to mention physical danger, departed the island in large numbers, selling slaves when and where they could to avoid total loss. William Walton the Africanist drastically reduced his trade with Jamaica. On the other hand, the Livingston firm brought in a record 156 people from Jamaica in three vessels. The Livingstons brought captives to New York for use on their own lands as well as for

auction. There is no indication that they entered direct trade with Africa before 1741. Their 156 Jamaicans were no doubt African-based people.

- 31 The Antiguan insurrection planned and foiled in 1736 had a similar, if lesser, effect on New York origins. The Antiguan court decreed banishment for plotters either marginally involved or having been cooperative witnesses. Some owners with their own suspicions sent out bondpeople to be sold in distant ports, New York among them. The merchant Abraham Van Horne accepted seven people on consignment, two of whom, cooperative witnesses, had also been major figures in planning the insurrection³¹. The New York provincial assembly seemed as insouciant as the slave traders given that no new legislation against such imports was passed as it had been in 1709³².
- 32 Such was certainly not the case in South Carolina where as of the 1730s the legislature required a duty of fifty pounds sterling on anyone imported who had spent more than six months in other colonies. Carolinians who had imported 236 such people in 1735 found a way out of their dilemma by re-exporting many of them³³. Again New York port was a willing receiver. Whereas between 1730 and 1734, only eight people arrived from South Carolina between 1735 and 1741 the number was a record 58. It is clear, then, that a far higher proportion of people arriving in New York during the 1730s were African-based than had been the case in the past.
- 33 In sum, the proportion of African-reared people reaching New York from the Caribbean and environs only partially accords with Michael Gomez' estimate of 10% for North America as a whole³⁴. A tentative conclusion is that as high as one in three arriving in New York from the Americas through 1720 was African-reared, dropping to one in ten before 1729, and thereafter to insignificance. Further research in island archives is clearly necessary. As for African-based people, given the variety of business practices in New York and the structure of markets in the 1730s, their prior experiences in the Americas were as varied as those of their African-reared counterparts. By 1741, New York harbored an extraordinary cross section of the African diaspora.
- 34 These first and tentative conclusions would not have been reinforced by using the traditional indicators to differentiate between African reared and based. Neither the number of captives aboard nor vessel size are useful. Indeed, in the case of New York they may be misleading. James Lydon states that vessels carrying more than seven captives required significantly greater expense, given larger crews, weaponry, leg irons, and greater outlay for provisions³⁵. However, a sample of vessels carrying 15 or more captives to New York between 1718 and 1741 does not entirely bear this out. Between 1718 and 1727 larger vessels (ships, brigantines, schooners) were used to carry fewer numbers of captives (16-31) than was the case between 1730 and 1741, when the largest number of captives (51, 50, 55) were all brought in on sloops. The sloop dominated in that period and would also be characteristic of the New York African trade as it began to revive in the late 1740s.
- 35 The sloop is easily manouvrable and, like the far less agile schooner, had shallow draft, making it the ideal vessel in hostile or uncertain waters. The small sloop had little space for provisions and could not accommodate large crews, suggesting that threat from captives was a lesser concern than threats from potentially hostile vessels, whether African canoe or Company ship, English, French, Dutch or Portuguese.
- 36 Captains had their own ideas about assuring vigilant crews. New York « Guinea » vessels permitted subaltern officers to board four captives of their own, perhaps in order to

promote greater vigilance³⁶. In American waters black crew members were not uncommon on slavers and in fact were regulars on Bermudan vessels. On 8 July 1718, the sloop *Elizabeth* arrived in New York carrying 14 captives and a crew of six, four of whom were black³⁷. Skilled mariners these men surely were, but, perhaps, their attraction lay also in the supposition that they would be more likely than whites to detect captive unrest.

- 37 War brought a halt to this singular period of New York slave trade. The conflict known as The War of Jenkins' Ear pitted England against Spain in 1739, then merged into the American phase of the War of Austrian Succession (1744-1748). Privateers became *de facto* New York slave traders during those years, bringing enemy vessels with captives aboard into the port for condemnation and sale³⁸. As the trade revived, and thereafter through the early years of the nineteenth century, virtually no captives from the Americas entered New York via slaving vessels. Africa was the beacon and New York merchants invested in that trade heavily³⁹.

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NOTES

1. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, pp. 410-411; BOXER, C. R., 1990, p. 99.
2. HOWARD, W. S., 1963.
3. ELTIS, D., 2001, n. 21, p. 22. This issue summarizes the findings of the W. E. B. Dubois Institute (Harvard U.) representing 70% of all slaving voyages. RAWLEY, J. A., 1981, p. 360. I characterize an individual in transit as a captive on the grounds that a person becomes a slave only after sale and entry into work under the constraints defined by a particular slave society. A slave in, say, Kongo becomes a captive in transit, again a slave in, say, Carolina, and a captive once again if shipped out from there.
4. THORNTON, J., 1992, p. 192; WALSH, L. S., 2001, pp. 145 and 170.
5. HODGES, G. R., 1999, pp. 38-40.
6. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, « Negroes Imported into New York, 1715-1765 », pp. 462-510, taken from Naval Officers Lists, Colonial Office 5, 122 NY; *Boston News Letter*, 1704-1725;

New York Gazette, 1726-1742; *New York Weekly Journal*, 1733-1742; *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 15v, Albany, Weed' Parsons and Company, 1857; « Trade Book of the Sloop *Rhode Island* December 1748 - July 1749 », mss. division, The New York Historical Society.

7. The figure is at best 75% of all captives brought to New York, as it does not include captives on whom duty was not paid, those smuggled in by sea or overland, brought in the retenues of European migrants or by privateering vessels. James Lydon estimates a minimum of 2,400 captives were smuggled through the port between 1715 and 1764: « New York and the Slave Trade, 1700 to 1774 », *William and Mary Quarterly*, (LYDON, J., 1978, p. 387). J. Lydon treats origins of vessels entering the port in three categories: Africa, West Indies, North American Mainland, adding the ubiquitous « other ».

8. The terms were coined by M. GOMEZ, 1998, p. 26. Provincial officers sent their comments on the New York trade to London regularly and these provide important insights on the nature of the trade. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 5: « Mr. Colden's Account of Trade »! 25 June 1723, pp. 685-687; « Plantations in America in 1721 », anon., pp. 591-630. v. 6: « Governor Cosby to the Lords of Trade », 6 December 1734, p. 20 « Clarke to Newcastle », 2 June 1738, p. 128.

9. BEVER PLATT, V., 1969, p. 548; CHASE, J., 2000.

10. DONNAN, E., v. 1, 1932, pp. 421-429; GASPAR, D. B., 1985, p. 70. The merchant Jacobus Van Cortlandt offered a vivid account of the immediate impact of the Act on New York: « Lester Book of Jacobus Van Cortlandt 1698-1700 », mss collection, The New York Historical Society.

11. *Boston News Letter*, 31 July 1704; Summary customs toms lists are available for the early years beginning 1701: « An Account of What Negro Slaves... Imported into Province of New York », DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 5, p. 815. See also « Lord Cornbury to the Board of Trade », 1 July 1708, v. 5, p. 57, and « Governor Hunter to the Lords of Trade », 12 November 1712, v. 5, pp. 461-462.

12. THORNTON, J., 1992, p. 189; GOMEZ, M., 1998, p. 103, n. 45, p. 304, « Trade Book of the Sloop *Rhode Island* ».

13. GOMEZ, M., 1998, pp. 91-93, 88-89; WALSH, L., 2001, p. 158.

14. ILIFFE, J., 1995, p. 129. The sloop *Rhode Island* boarded no captives from this region.

15. On « fringe » area: MANNING, P., 1990, pp. 65-66; TERRAY, E., 1995, pp. 139-142, 149-152, 158-161, 183-187; WILKS, I., 1971, pp. 344, 372-377. The sloop *Rhode Island* took more captives from this area and in the shortest period of time than from any other area.

16. GASPAR, D. B., 1985, p. 89; TERRAY, E., 1995, pp. 141, 139.

17. BEVER PLATT, V., 1969, pp. 548, 558, n. 22.

18. BEVER PLATT, V., 1969, pp. 551, 565-567; CHASE, J., 2000. In 1698, the vessel's supercargo was obliged to deal with a local ruler near Fort Dauphin who was born in Madagascar then taken as a captive to Martinique from where he escaped and returned home.

19. THORNTON, J., 1991, pp. 1004, 1003-1005; GOMEZ, M., 1998, pp. 135-136.

20. The captain of the sloop *Rhode Island* intended to trade some of his captives in the « Cargo Islands » for provisions for the Atlantic crossing.

21. GOMEZ, M., 1998, p. 68. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, « Negroes Imported », p. 463, for a gender balance of captives in 1716, and « Trade book of the sloop *Rhode Island* » for a similar balance in 1748.

22. DONNAN, E., 1932, Jamaica, Barbados and Nevis: v. 1, p. 430; v. 2, pp. 78, 48.

23. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 2, p. 26. There is no indication of where in Africa these people were taken. The ship *New York* left New York in September 1698 for Barbados before crossing the Atlantic: « Lester Book of Jacobus Van Cortlandt », 10 September 1698.
24. BEVER PLATT, V., 1969, p. 564, n. 34 for first voyage; Donnan, E., 1932, v. 3, pp. 471, 472.
25. PRICE, J., 1991, pp. 277-278; LYDON, J., 1978, pp. 388-389 on Walton as premier slave trader.
26. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 2, p. 459.
27. « Letter Book of Jacobus Van Cortlandt »; DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, « Negroes Imported », 1717, (p. 464) through 1741 (p. 508). New Yorkers also relied on West Indian contacts to supply their particular demands, revealing the urban preference for Creole labor. *Letters of Isaac Bobin, Private Secretary of the Honorable George Clarke*, Albany, 1872, pp. 35, 39, 41, 58-59, 116, 152.
28. GASPAR, D. B., 1985, p. 84; DUFFY, J., 1971, pp. 63-96; on small pox in New York: « Rip Van Dam to the Lords of Trade », 11 September 1731; « Lt. Gov. Clarke to the Lords of Trade », 18 April 1739, DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 5, p. 924; v. 6, p. 140.
29. GASPAR, D. B., 1981, pp. 79-91.
30. *New York Weekly Journal*, 14, 21, 28 May 1739; CAMPBELL, M. C., 1990, pp. 54, 58, 61, 78, 105, 126-128, 135-137.
31. GASPAR, D. B., 1985, pp. 21-42. On the cooperative witnesses: CHASE, J., forthcoming, Chap. 3, p. 4. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, pp. 499, 500 (1737), pp. 501, 502 (1738, 1739), pp. 505-507 (1739-41).
32. Whereas the duty paid on Africans imported directly from Africa was 15s, indirect imports carried a duty of 1 pound 10s until 1709, when the latter duty was increased to 3 pounds. DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, p. 444. This may have produced the abrupt shift from « West Indies » to « Africa » in the rudimentary Customs lists of the time (see note 11). The duty was subsequently reduced, but still prompted New Yorkers' complaints: « Van Dam to the Lords of Trade » 11 September 1731, DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 5, pp. 925-929.
33. WOODT, P. H., 1974, p. 333.
34. GOMEZ, M., 1998, p. 302, n. 5.
35. LYDON, J., 1978, p. 390.
36. MORRIS, R. B., 1935, *Petrus Low, mariner v Nathaniel Simson*, 4 November 1718, pp. 701-704.
37. GASPAR, D. B., 1985, p. 138; DONNAN, E., 1932, v. 3, p. 467.
38. PARES, R., 1963; *New York Weekly Journal*, 10 Jan. 1737, 10 Dec. 1739, 5 Feb., 10 March, 28 April, 11 August 1740, 20 June, 18 July 1742, 30 Sept., 15 Oct. 1743, 1 April 1745.
39. LYDON, J., 1978, Table IV, p. 382.

ABSTRACTS

In term of volume, the New York slave trade was insignifiant in the first half of 18th century. However, given the character of the trade, the origin of New Yorkers of African Ancestry by 1741

were arguably far more diverse than was the case else-where in North America or the Caribbean. Yet beyond generalities little is known about their origins.

This article is a first step toward sharpening the focus. In the absence of ship journals, I have used Customs documents, official correspondence, merchant letterbooks and newspapers to construct last ports of call, numbers of captives aboard, and home ports of vessels. These permit a first broad distinction between those born and not born in Africa. These indicators in particular narrow the focus to specific regions: market fluctuations with the resultant reorganisation of business practises and market structures along African West coast and islands, in the Caribbean and on the North American mainland. The results show that by 1741 New York province harbored an exceptional cross section of the African diaspora.

Le commerce des esclaves à New York, 1698-1741. Les origines géographiques d'une population déportée

Quantitativement, le commerce des esclaves new-yorkais était d'importance modeste dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle. Cependant, compte tenu des caractéristiques de la traite, l'origine des New-Yorkais d'ascendance africaine était probablement beaucoup plus diversifiée en 1741 que ce n'était le cas partout ailleurs en Amérique du Nord ou dans les Caraïbes. Il faut cependant reconnaître qu'en dehors de quelques généralités, on sait peu de choses de la provenance des esclaves.

Cet article est une première étape pour examiner cette question. En l'absence de journaux de bord, on a utilisé les documents douaniers, la correspondance officielle, la correspondance des marchands et les livres de bord pour déterminer les derniers ports touchés, le nombre de captifs et le port d'attache des vaisseaux. Cela a permis d'effectuer une distinction approximative entre ceux qui sont nés et ceux qui ne sont pas nés en Afrique. Ces indicateurs géographiques conduisent à braquer le projecteur sur des régions spécifiques : les fluctuations du marché entraînent, en effet, une réorganisation des pratiques commerciales et de la structure des marchés tout au long des côtes africaines occidentales et des îles, dans les Caraïbes et sur le continent américain. Les résultats démontrent que, vers 1741, la province de New York représentait un carrefour exceptionnel pour la diaspora africaine.

INDEX

Mots-clés: histoire sociale

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AUTHOR

JEANNE CHASE

Centre de recherches historiques, EHESS-CNRS, UMR 8558, Paris