The European age of discovery opened up new trading routes and gave rise to the thirteenth-century merchant colonies. From Paris, London, and other cities, merchants could find opportunities in trade. Inscriptions indicate an earlier date for the origin of the alphabet, showing the impact of early communication on trade. New York Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York by Cathy Matson, 18 Dec 2009. Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York, review, Defying Empire deals with the colonial merchants seemingly questionable.