

Crafting a Continent: Jesuits, Puritans, Franciscans, and the Creation of an Early American Missiology, 1542-1763

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Abstract

Over more than two centuries, Christian missionaries laboured to convert Indians across early America. The effect on Indian individuals, communities, and nations has been emphasised in recent scholarship on the religious encounter; this thesis focuses instead on the reciprocal effects on the missionaries themselves. The religious encounter in early America had profound and varied effects on missionaries in each space that they claimed. Letters, speeches, and publications produced by Jesuits, Franciscans, and Puritans are analysed as discursive spaces through which missionaries interrogated, adapted, and added to the complex of concepts, paradigms and strategies that guided their evangelical endeavour. This thesis traces the subsequent evolution of their respective missiologies in New France, the Spanish borderlands, and New England, a process understood as inextricable from the broader dynamism of Indian and colonial power. Through a deliberate process of manipulation by the missionaries themselves, all three missiologies were localised as early American phenomena, suitable to the colonial spaces that members of each tradition encountered on the continent. Then, from the early-eighteenth century, those who continued to articulate the logic of missionization in each region began expressing common missiological themes, finally forging a continental, early American philosophy of mission. These successful transformations of each missiological tradition sustained missions as institutions promoting imperial-colonial, diplomatic and commercial interests; the conclusions of this thesis therefore necessitate analysing the history of colonialism across the continent as, in part, shaped by the dynamic intellectual response of Jesuits, Franciscans and Puritans to the early American cultural encounter.

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Long Abstract

Christian missiological endeavour in early America was a fundamental component of the cultural encounter across the continent. Missions, and the Indians and evangelists involved with them, were critical forces shaping the interaction of Indian and colonial worlds in spaces claimed by agents of French, Spanish, and English colonialism. The effect of the religious encounter on Indian individuals, communities, and nations has been emphasised in recent scholarship; this thesis focuses instead on the reciprocal effects on the missionaries themselves. It uncovers the profound and varied effects that evangelism had on missionaries in each space that they claimed.

The historiography of missionization has progressed from quasi-hagiographic accounts of missionaries themselves to its inclusion in the broader New Indian History, that has sought to recover the reality of Indian power and agency within evangelical spaces. It is now an axiom in the scholarship on the early American religious encounter that the notion of ‘conversion’ is a disastrously simple, and often inaccurate, term for the nature of change in spiritual belief and practice among indigenous communities. Instead, the clash of faiths that erupted when each Jesuit, Franciscan and Puritan began his preaching ignited an enthralling array of responses to each new doctrine; eager embrace, resigned indifference, murderous rejection, careful curiosity, raucous laughter and crude misunderstanding are all recorded in correspondence from missionaries. To be sure, Indians’ conversion to Christianity was often genuine, for a number of reasons. But to excavate the true complexity of the religious encounter scholars have turned away from this simple arbiter of missionary ‘success’ to trace the shifts and mutations in both Indian religions and Christianity as they variously merged and conflicted throughout the colonial era. A far more vibrant image has emerged. Indian religious belief and its practitioners were enfeebled, corroded and convulsed by an expanding imperial machinery, but their autonomy endured. Vast spaces in the Spanish, French and English empires – both literal and metaphorical – offered avenues and opportunities for this autonomy to assert itself.

Other analyses have reacted to this new ambiguity by investigating seriously the missionaries' own intellectual and religious development. In exploring the dynamic evolution of the Mohawk Catherine Tekakwitha's Christianity and eventual sainthood, Allan Greer discovered an equally fascinating individual narrative of her first biographer, the Jesuit Claude Chauchetière; the latter's life demanded the same close attention as Tekakwitha's, demonstrating an equal vibrancy that defied simplification. Greer has also analysed the motivation of Pierre Chaumonot, another Jesuit who labored in New France. Chauchetière's and Chaumonot's own spiritual and intellectual development were individualisations of a broader phenomenon of dynamic and lively changes in missiological thought as carriers of Christianity encountered the reality of early America. Missionaries travelled to the Spanish borderlands, New France and New England for a huge variety of reasons, and their experience was often of a series of profound epistemic shocks as missionization interacted with a responsive and acutely disorienting Indian world. But the localised and microhistorical nature of this scholarship has created a gap in the historiography of early America.

This thesis addresses this by adopting a similar approach to construct a continental history of missiological adaptation to early America. Careful attention is paid to the evolution of Jesuit, Franciscan and Calvinist reports from their respective mission fields, with particular emphasis on the subtle changes evident in apparently formulaic expressions of piety or devotion. Close analysis of such discourse exposes how early American missiology evolved in response - either reactively or proactively - to the bewildering progress of the continental encounter, and was not simply an imposition of static intellectual traditions. What becomes clear from such a reading of the texts is the internal divisions and confusions of the 'mission' for the missionaries themselves. As an entity and as intellectual creation multiple planes of significance were contained within it. These included the salvific, the institutional, the imperial-colonial, or the martyrological, among others. Missionaries were required to deftly navigate this terrain of meaning in order to continually excavate the shifting significance of each mission they founded. It is this movement - between the fluid and confusing meanings suggested by the expansion of evangelical endeavour - that invited the creation of early America as a fundamentally distinct missiological space and the corresponding formulation of missiologies relevant to it.

For example, the most comprehensive source used is the Jesuit *Relations*, a series of annual reports sent by the missionaries from the regions of New France to superiors in France and Rome. This thesis analyses this material with a fresh perspective, focused specifically on

Jesuits' constant manipulation of the meaning of events in early America. Previous scholarship, corresponding to the effort to determine missionaries' identities as imperialists, colonialists, or ethnologists, has followed expressions of a particular attitude across and through the *Relations*. Proposing that the Jesuits be considered primarily as imperialists, for instance, required tracing expressions of support for imperial activity and influence. To move beyond these efforts to conceptualise the multiple characteristics fundamental to Jesuits in early America, this approach carefully considers their descriptions of their activity as windows into strategic changes demanded by the religious encounter in early America. Doing this requires considering the *Relations* as a discursive space through which Jesuits constantly appraised the changing significance of their endeavours in New France, rather than a series of reports that simply demonstrate the application of consistent intellectual attitudes. The same methodology can be applied, with equal relevance, to both the promotional material produced by John Eliot and other Puritan missionaries in New England and the correspondence between Franciscans in the Spanish borderlands, their superiors, and the Spanish Crown.

Chapter one traces creative adaptations made by Franciscans and Jesuits in New Mexico and Florida. The missionaries who first entered the Spanish borderlands in the sixteenth century struggled to compose a new missiological program appropriate for the new Pueblo, Calusa and Guale populations. In New Mexico, their reliance on exploratory expeditions composed largely of brutalising military contingents opened up peculiar opportunities for evangelism. Yet, in seizing these sporadic opportunities, Franciscans created a dangerous symbiosis between missionization and Spanish violence. This narrowed their function and denied them the ability to missionize without an accompanying threat. They became figures protecting Pueblos from vicious soldiers; but when the latter left, along with the threat they imposed, the utility of hosting a Franciscan ended. Similar struggles plagued both Juan Rogel, the first Jesuit to missionize in Spanish Florida, and the Franciscans who succeeded him on the peninsula. In both regions, however, formidable expressions of Indian power rejecting missionization were later manipulated by missionaries themselves to sustain evangelisation when royal scepticism threatened its abandonment. Initially, therefore, missionaries were unsuccessful in creating a missiology for early America, but skilfully deployed their disastrous results, as well as the chaos unleashed in Indian communities by colonialism, to lay the foundation for a provincialized missiology in the seventeenth century.

Chapter two then traces the creation of an early American missiology in both the Spanish borderlands and the territory claimed by New France in Acadia and the St. Lawrence

River valley. By the 1650s, Franciscans and Jesuits operating in both imperial spaces had moulded their respective traditions into a coherent paradigm guiding evangelism on the continent. This involved the deft, complicated process of adapting the concept of martyrdom, of reorganising the acrimonious relationship between royal and religious interests into a mutually beneficial arrangement, understanding and then defining the various configurations of Indian power that they encountered through expansion, connecting specific practices of their Orders with their new environments, and forging a vision of continental expansion. When these strands were brought together early America stood distinguished as a unique evangelical space, supplemented by newly created missiologies designed for its missionization. As the missions expanded across early America, thus further globalising the reach of the most militant and aggressive Catholicism, so its principal agents provincialized their missiologies to adapt their efforts to the peculiar demands and opportunities of the North American continent.

Chapter three introduces the Puritan mission, led most visibly by John Eliot, as the third component of early American missiology. Eliot himself was initially ambivalent towards the conversion of Indians surrounding New England, but a series of acute political and religious crises combined to encourage a new commitment to evangelisation. Wielding Scripture as the foundational tool of his missiology, Eliot developed a program of instruction designed deliberately for missionaries themselves to quickly relinquish control over further evangelisation to their most capable Indian converts. But where his missiology was most effective – where it encouraged the most appropriate and Puritan expressions of piety – Indians articulating their understanding of their new faith expressed a degree of interiority irreconcilable with their own evangelism. Eliot's methods and ambitions were therefore not complementary, but discordant. This theme, of the clashing imperatives of missiology, is followed again through analysis of the Jesuit mission in New France in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Devastated first by relentless Iroquois assaults on Huronia, Jesuits nevertheless managed to sustain their mission. A few key figures carefully manipulated the martyrdoms of six colleagues killed in the late-1640s to prove the necessity of continuing their efforts in New France. This provided the vital context for a radical reconceptualization of their missiology in the next three decades, which imposed new definitions on a widening variety of Indian nations, a new understanding of the significance of Iroquois power and belligerence, and a new appreciation of the shifting geography of the mission. The chapter concludes by challenging previous comparative analyses of the Puritan and Jesuit missions,

focusing on the theme of interiorities and the corresponding expression of Indian agency that each encouraged.

The final chapter traces the most radical changes in continental missiology. Through the violent challenges of King Philip's War and Pueblo revolts, and the more subtle but equally insidious entanglement of missionaries with their respective colonial and imperial interests, Franciscans, Jesuits and Puritans instituted profound changes to their evangelism. But such adaptations were not as effective as previous ones. The efficacy of missiological strategies waned as established missions were destroyed, the remnants consolidated into smaller units, and renewed expansion forestalled by resurgent Indian power. It was in such a context, however, that a distinct early American missiology, created by this shared experience of decline, was articulated by agents of each of the three traditions. Crafted by both active missionaries and elite scholars analysing the history of the missions themselves, the fundamental emphasis of this missiology shifted from successful missionization to the act of evangelism itself, in turn focusing heavily on the missionaries themselves rather than the Indian populations they targeted. This more insular rationale for missionization was yet another attempt to continue sustaining conversion efforts across the continent.

In summary, through a deliberate process of manipulation by the missionaries themselves, all three missiological traditions were localised as early American phenomena, suitable to the colonial spaces that members of each tradition encountered on the continent. Then, from the early-eighteenth century, those who continued to articulate the logic of missionization in each region began expressing common missiological themes, finally forging a continental, early American philosophy of mission. These successful transformations of each missiological tradition sustained missions as institutions promoting imperial-colonial, diplomatic and commercial interests; the conclusions of this thesis therefore necessitate analysing the history of colonialism across the continent as, in part, shaped by the dynamic intellectual response of Jesuits, Franciscans and Puritans to the early American cultural encounter.

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Abbreviations

<i>BM</i>	Forrestal, Peter P. <i>Benavides' Memorial of 1630</i> (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1954).
<i>BRM</i>	Hodge, Frederick Webb, George P. Hammond & Agapito Rey, eds. <i>Fran Alonso de Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1634</i> (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1945).
<i>Clear Sun-shine</i>	Shepard, Thomas. <i>The Clear Sun-shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New-England, Or, An Historical Narration of Gods Wonderfull Workings upon sundry of the Indians</i> (London: R. Cotes, 1648).
<i>Day-Breaking</i>	Eliot, John. <i>The Day-Breaking, If Not the Sun Rising of the Gospell With the Indians in New-England</i> (New York: Joseph Sabin, 1865).
<i>Earnest Exhortation</i>	Mather, Increase. <i>An Earnest Exhortation to the Children of New-England, to Exalt the God of their Fathers</i> (Boston: Timothy Green, 1711).
<i>Farther Discovery</i>	Whitfield, Henry. <i>A Farther Discovery of the Present State of the Indians in New England</i> (New York: Joseph Sabin, 1865).
<i>First Establishment</i>	Le Clercq, Christian. <i>First Establishment of the Faith in New France</i> , 2 Vols., translated by John Gilmary Shea (New York: John G. Shea, 1881).
<i>Further Account</i>	Eliot, John. <i>A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England: Being A Relation of the Confessions made by several Indians (in the presence of the Elders and Members of several Churches) in order to their admission into Church-fellowship</i> (London: John Macock, 1660).
<i>Glorious Progress</i>	Eliot, John. <i>The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England</i> (London: Hannah Allen, 1649).
<i>HNF</i>	Charlevoix, P.F.X. <i>History and General Description of New France</i> , 6 Vols., translated by John Gilmary Shea (London: Francis Edwards, 1902).

<i>Indian Dialogues</i>	Eliot, John. <i>Indian Dialogues, For Their Instruction in that Great Service of Christ, in calling home their Country-men to the Knowledge of God, and of Themselves, and of Jesus Christ</i> (Cambridge: Marmaduke Johnson, 1671).
<i>Journal</i>	Edwards, Jonathan. <i>The Journal of David Brainerd</i> , 2 Vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1802).
<i>JR</i>	Thwaites, Reuben Gold. <i>The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791</i> , 73 Vols. (Cleveland: Burrows Bros. Co., 1896).
<i>JHCCR</i>	<i>The John H. Hann Collection of Colonial Records</i> , University of Florida Digital Collections, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History.
<i>Late and Further Manifestation</i>	Eliot, John. <i>A Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New-England</i> (London: M.S., 1655).
<i>NYCD</i>	O'Callaghan, E.B. & Berthold Fernow, eds. <i>Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York</i> , 14 Vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1855).
<i>Pueblo Indian Revolt</i>	Espinosa, J. Manuel, ed. <i>The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696 and the Franciscan Missions in New Mexico: Letters of the Missionaries and Related Documents</i> (Norman & London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988).
<i>Strength out of Weakness</i>	Whitfield, Henry. <i>Strength out of Weakness: or a Glorious Manifestation of the Further Progress of the Gospel among the Indians in New England</i> (New York: Joseph Sabin, 1865).
<i>Tears of Repentance</i>	Eliot, John. <i>Tears of Repentance, Or, a Further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New-England</i> , (London: Peter Cole, 1653).

Introduction

Re-Centring the Early American Missionary

From when a lone Franciscan first glimpsed the Pueblo settlement of Hawikuh in 1540 to when a sickly Calvinist missionary evangelised across Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania in the 1740s, Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan missionaries constructed missiologies suitable to the early American encounter. This involved the shrewd manipulation of success, disaster, ambivalence and ambiguity into a coherent yet dynamic evangelism, a process that, in turn, forged a continental understanding of early America as a distinct missiological space. By the mid-eighteenth century, these divergent and often mutually hostile traditions had, nevertheless, begun to articulate similar conceptions of the significance of their efforts on the continent. This thesis, therefore, uncovers how multiple missiologies were first forged as a result of the religious encounter in early America, how the continent consequently acquired its own coherence and character, and finally how these evangelisms, crafted so carefully as provincialized strategies, gradually took on common features as missionization progressed.

This thesis is guided by two questions: precisely how were missionaries themselves affected by the religious encounter across early America, and having determined this, is it possible to speak of a general early American missiological experience? To answer both, a distinction must be made between missionization and missiology. The latter is an academic term originating in the nineteenth century – and therefore not one used by missionaries in early America themselves – which in its broadest sense refers to the complex of paradigms, models, strategies and concepts informing and rationalising evangelical endeavour. Though it is not a term contemporary to the period analysed here, it is the most

appropriate term for organising and then analysing the complicated and profound evolutions in Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan thought as evangelised across early America. The former is to a significant extent the application of an individual's missiology, though often mutated by pragmatic alterations in response to obstacles; this process has formed the core of the scholarship analysing the religious encounter in early America. Evaluating the development of the missiology underpinning such interaction, however, sheds new light on the fascinating evolutions of the missionaries' own personal and institutional reactions to their endeavour on the continent, complementing the recent concentration on Indian individuals and societies. The two are shown in a constant dialogic relationship as missiologies were applied to early American Indian spaces, groups, and individuals, then adapted as the interactive process of missionization suggested the validity of specific strategies or the inadequacy of others. In short, the early American religious encounter exposed, caused or exacerbated the instability of missiology at the conceptual and intellectual levels. This thesis traces the effort by Franciscans, Jesuits and Puritans to navigate this shifting terrain of meaning, an endeavour that necessarily provided the foundation for the process of missionization itself.

Utilising correspondence, curated reports and printed promotional material from missionaries in the Spanish borderlands, New France and New England, this thesis deliberately covers the three most extensive programs of missionization and the three most conspicuous missiological traditions. The narrative expands gradually, beginning with initial Franciscan efforts in New Mexico and Florida, then incorporating Jesuit activity across the expanding boundaries of New France, and finally including Puritan missionization in New England. The thesis concludes by analysing the convergence of all three missiologies around a few fundamental Christian themes and paradigms. Throughout, the emphasis is on how each missiological tradition was consciously transformed, through multiple stages, by

missionaries constantly working to extract or impose meaning on their chaotic experiences of early American evangelism.

Careful attention must therefore be paid to the evolution of Jesuit, Franciscan and Calvinist reports from their respective mission fields, with particular emphasis on the subtle changes evident in apparently formulaic expressions of piety or devotion. Close analysis of such discourse exposes how early American missiology evolved in response, either reactively or proactively, to the bewildering progress of the continental encounter. For example, the most comprehensive source used is the Jesuit *Relations*, a series of annual reports sent by the missionaries from the regions of New France to superiors in France and Rome. This project analyses this material with a fresh perspective, focused specifically on Jesuits' constant manipulation of the meaning of events in early America. Previous scholarship, corresponding to the effort to determine missionaries' identities as imperialists, colonialists, or ethnologists, has followed expressions of a particular attitude across and through the *Relations*. Proposing that the Jesuits be considered primarily as imperialists, for instance, required tracing expressions of support for imperial activity and influence. To move beyond these efforts to conceptualise the multiple characteristics fundamental to Jesuits in early America, this approach carefully considers their descriptions of their activity as windows into strategic changes demanded by the religious encounter in early America. Doing this requires considering the *Relations* as a discursive space through which Jesuits constantly appraised the changing significance of their endeavours in New France, rather than a series of reports that simply demonstrate the application of consistent intellectual attitudes. The same methodology can be applied, with equal relevance, to both the promotional material produced by John Eliot and other Puritan missionaries in New England and the correspondence between Franciscans in the Spanish borderlands, their superiors, and the Spanish Crown.

Indeed, where these sources have been mined in recent decades using ethnographic and anthropological methods, they have challenged scholars to read across and through the texts to uncover otherwise inaccessible Indian voices. By contrast, analysing them as expressions of changing missiologies requires one to engage directly with the text itself. Through a careful process of curation - for example, the *Relations* were compiled from letters from Jesuits isolated in Indian communities in the Great Lakes, which were assessed and manipulated by their Superior at Quebec, then further edited by printers in Paris – these sources regularly amplified the effect of missionization on the missionaries themselves, thus revealing how their own missiologies were crafted in reaction. This was likely because the practical experience of evangelism in early America was largely underwhelming, so encouraging other missionaries to participate and donors to continue funding required at least articulating the profound effect of early America on missionaries themselves.¹

What becomes clear from such a reading of the texts is the internal divisions and confusions of the ‘mission’ for the missionaries themselves, divisions that missiology as an organising term is sensitive to. As an entity and as intellectual creation multiple planes of significance were contained within it. These included the salvific, the institutional, the imperial-colonial, or the martyrological, among others. Missionaries were required to deftly navigate this terrain of meaning in order to continually excavate the shifting significance of each mission they founded. It is this movement – between the fluid and confusing meanings

¹ The *Relations* have also been translated from their original French and Latin. Franciscan sources have likewise been translated from Spanish. Yet even when viewed in isolation from other original-language sources such as personal letters or reflections, which were not used due to a combination of space constraints and COVID-related obstacles, they remain the most authoritative expressions of changing missiologies. Indeed, such additional evidence would most likely supplement this narrative of dynamically evolving missiological traditions, rather than challenge it. This is because the editing process appears to have prioritised the most comprehensive descriptions of early American missionization, which therefore provide the most detailed material for analysing the evolution of missionaries’ own thought.

suggested by the expansion of evangelical endeavour – that invited the creation of early America as a fundamentally distinct missiological space.

In turn, this approach answers both central questions of this thesis. Missionaries from all three traditions were incessantly and profoundly affected by their experience of evangelism in early America. This was most obvious through multiple radical transformations of the missiologies guiding their endeavour. Furthermore, these evolutions led eventually to a common expression of the most critical features of missionization, which together formed a roughly coherent early American missiology from these three distinct, and mutually hostile, intellectual traditions. These insights, in turn, suggest the need to reinterpret the continental aspect of early American religious history; present a methodology for recentring its historiography; and invite the reconsideration of early American colonialism.

The Historiography of Early American Missionization

Of the competing religious and spiritual traditions in early America, it is Indian thought and practice that have received the most concentrated attention in recent scholarship. Since approaches fundamental to the New Indian History – a body of scholarship that has reorganised, and continues to reinterpret, the history of early America by understanding the Indian individuals, communities and nations that formed it - began to be applied to the religious encounter, evaluation of missionaries themselves has largely been subordinated to the focus on the effect of missionization on the Indian worlds across the continent. This analytical emphasis has produced a fascinating body of literature that complicates simple dichotomies such as conversion or rejection, replacing this vocabulary with one that highlights religious syncretism, adaptation, and translation.

As an example, it is now an axiom in the scholarship on the early American religious encounter that the notion of ‘conversion’ is a disastrously simple, and often inaccurate, term for the nature of change in spiritual belief and practice among indigenous communities. Instead, the clash of faiths that erupted when each Jesuit, Franciscan or Puritan began his preaching ignited an enthralling array of responses to each new doctrine; eager embrace, resigned indifference, murderous rejection, careful curiosity, raucous laughter and crude misunderstanding are all recorded in correspondence from missionaries. A shift away from assessing the sincerity of conversions has accompanied these analyses. To excavate the true complexity of the religious encounter scholars have turned away from this simple arbiter of missionary ‘success’ to trace the shifts and mutations in both Indian religions and Christianity as they variously merged and conflicted throughout the colonial era. A far more vibrant image has emerged. Indian religious belief and its practitioners were enfeebled, corroded and convulsed by an expanding imperial machinery, but their autonomy endured. Vast spaces in the Spanish, French and English empires – both literal and metaphorical – offered avenues and opportunities for this autonomy to assert itself.

Models for assessing the legitimacy and strength of Indian conversion have therefore multiplied in response to this new understanding. Some place Indian and Christian religion at opposite ends of a vast spectrum and measures effective conversion by how much of the former is discarded and how much of the latter is adopted. An almost infinite variety of combinations exists along such a continuum. Others complicate this binary further by focusing on syncretic faiths, perhaps represented by the ‘Indianization’ of key Christian themes, figures or concepts. Scholars have carefully reconstructed many such permutations of the Indian reaction to missionization; from outright rejection, through the careful creation of devotional modes that skilfully incorporate both Indian and Christian religious mores; to the

sincere and uncompromising embrace of most, if not all, of the fundamental features of Christianity.²

This analysis of the vast complexity of the religious encounter in early America is supplemented by other emphases on the constantly shifting implications of the broader cultural encounter. Central to this is a new appreciation of how unpredictable the results of expressions of agency could be for both Indians and colonial agents. Translation and map-making are excellent examples. The interculturality traceable throughout the tracts produced by the Puritan missionary John Eliot, for example, has been investigated as evidence not of Indian agency overcoming an imposing colonial textual authority, but of the chaotic process of translation producing instability across and through the corpus of texts. This supposes that missionaries' reports were sites neither of Indian nor European expression, but necessarily a messy mixture of both.³ The historiography of North American cartography supplies another illustrative example. A profusion of recent scholarship has exposed not only the fundamental role played by Indian guides in the creation of European cartographic knowledge in early America, but also the vibrant and dynamic tradition of Indigenous cartography itself. This historiography has emphasised the visual and physical aspects of world-creation for both

² James Axtell pioneered a far more nuanced understanding of the religious encounter that remains the standard approach for those analysing missionary endeavour in early America. See James P. Ronda & James Axtell, *Indian Missions: A Critical Bibliography* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1978); James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); James Axtell, *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), esp. 152-171. For excellent examples of this approach, see Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 68-91; Nicholas Griffiths & Fernando Cervantes, ed, *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions between Christianity and native religion in colonial America* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press, 1999).

³ Joshua David Bellin. "'A Little I Shall Say': Translation and Interculturalism in the John Eliot Tracts", in *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, edited by Colin G. Calloway & Neal Salisbury (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2003), pp. 52-84. See also Jacqueline M. Henkel. 'Represented Authenticity: Native Voices in Seventeenth-Century Conversion Narratives', *New England Quarterly*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (March, 2014), pp. 5-45.

Indians and Europeans. More recently, scholars have pointed out the unfortunate implications for Indians in their collaborations with Europeans hungry for knowledge of early America; as Indians across the continent provided the crucial information necessary for the construction of colonial French, British and Spanish maps, they were engaged unwittingly in an act of dispossession. The maps that could not have been produced without them were considered emblems of colonial sovereignty, sweeping aside the very Indians who made them possible.⁴

The general effect of such scholarship has been to recover the fascinating complexity of the development of Indian worlds, communities, and individuals within a colonial context. With regard to missionization, scholars have demonstrated the inadequacy of simplifying extremely vibrant changes with concepts such as conversion, and have forced analyses to pay consistent and close attention to the constant and often unforeseen consequences of the early American cultural encounter.

Despite this general shift in emphasis onto the change wrought in Indian individual and groups by missionization, some scholars have continued to analyse the characters and roles of the missionaries themselves. Where they have, historians have either situated evangelists in early America within relevant Atlantic or globalizing contexts, or have produced deliberately comparative collections that analyse the particular fortunes of competing missiological traditions. For instance, in response to the increased emphasis on Indian interaction with missions and local dynamics in the missionary world several works

⁴ Key works in the literature on the cartographic encounter and its implications include: G. Malcolm Lewis, ed. *Cartographic Encounters: Perspectives on Native American Mapmaking and Map Use* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Gregory Waselkov. 'Indian Maps of the Colonial Southeast', in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, edited by Peter H. Wood, Gregory A. Waselkov & M. Thomas Hatley (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 292-343; John Rennie Short. *Cartographic Encounters: Indigenous Peoples and the Exploration of the New World* (London: Reaktion, 2009); J.B. Harley. 'New England Cartography and the Native Americans', in *American Beginnings: Exploration, Culture and Cartography in the Land of Norumbega*, edited by Emerson W. Baker, Edwin A. Churchill, Richard D'Abate, Kristine L. Jones, Victor A. Konrad & Harald E.L. Prins (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), pp. 287-314

have emphasised the transatlantic nature of the Jesuit enterprise in North America. The connections of the Jesuits in New France, to both the European Counter-Reformation context and the French imperial project directed from Paris, have been traced to uncover the transatlantic nature of the missionary endeavour in New France.⁵ This scholarship complements other works that emphasise the global connections enjoyed by the Jesuit order and the effect of such links on their activity in New France.⁶ Enlarging analytical scale has, furthermore, connected with a broadened spectrum of thematic foci, producing studies that have again enriched understanding of the Jesuit-Indian encounter within New France itself. Gendered analyses have traced the impact that missiological activity had on Native American women in the Great Lakes region, while literary and ethnographic approaches have interrogated the correspondence and published reports of Jesuits in New France to expose their functions as tools of empire or institutional aggrandisement.⁷

This summary of emphases in recent historiography assessing the Jesuit mission in early America can likewise be applied to Puritans and Franciscans. New England missionization has been shown to be both a transatlantic production and one that, mainly through the efforts of Cotton Mather, then functioned as a key element to a globalising

⁵ Dominique Deslandres. *Croire et faire croire: les missions françaises au XVII^e siècle (1600-1650)* (Paris: Fayard, 2003); Tobias Winnerling. 'The Spiritual Empire of the Society of Jesus', *Itinerario*, Vol. 40, Issue 2, (August, 2016), pp. 215-237; Bronwen McShea. *Apostles of Empire: The Jesuits and New France*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019).

⁶ Luke Clossey. *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Takao Abé. *The Jesuit Mission to New France: A New Interpretation in the Light of the Earlier Jesuit Experience in Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

⁷ For the focus on Amerindian women in New France, see: Karen Anderson. *Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Carol Devens. *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Susan Sleeper-Smith. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounters in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 2001). For literary and ethnographic approaches see: Carole Blackburn. *Harvest of Souls: The Jesuit Mission and Colonialism in North America, 1632-1650* (Montreal, London & Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000); Brian Brazeau. *Writing a New France, 1604-1632: Empire and Early Modern French Identity*, (London: Routledge, 2009); Micah True. *Masters and Students: Jesuit Mission Ethnography in Seventeenth-Century New France* (Montreal & London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

Protestant evangelical endeavour.⁸ Similarly, the experiences of Franciscans in their various New World contexts has been reexamined as gendered, environmental, ecological and Atlantic phenomena. The paradigm of religious ‘conquest’ applied to territories in New Spain has been discarded in favour of such nuanced scholarship. Like the Jesuits, Puritans and Franciscans now also appear as highly complex characters entering imperial, colonial and Indian settings that promoted even more complicated evolutions.⁹

This focus on excavating missionaries’ many identities and functions is crucial for understanding early America. But it has, also, generally elided consideration of the purely religious responses that they had to their encounter with the Indians. The evangelical impulse applied to early America, obviously fundamental to missionization, appears as a guarantee. This produces a teleology, assuming that their vocation as missionaries made their efforts across the continent inevitable. This is demonstrably mistaken. Juan Rogel was the first Jesuit

⁸ Kristina Bross most effectively summarised this shift in focus toward missionaries’ Atlantic and global contexts, and neglected linguistic, ethnographic, and discursive themes. See Kristina Bross. ‘“Come Over and Help Us”: Reading Mission Literature’, *Early American Literature*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2003), pp. 395-400. Examples of these approaches to the Puritan mission in New England include Kathryn N. Gray. *John Eliot and the Praying Indians of Massachusetts Bay: Communities and Connections in Puritan New England* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2013), esp. Ch. 1 & 2; Edward E. Andrews. ‘Tranquebar: Charting the Protestant International in the British Atlantic and Beyond’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (January, 2017), pp. 3-34; Jan Stievermann. ‘A “Syncretism of Piety”: Imagining Global Protestantism in Early Eighteenth-Century Boston, Tranquebar, and Halle’, *Church History*, Vol. 89, Issue 4 (December, 2020), pp. 829-856; A. G. Roeber. ‘The Waters of Rebirth: The Eighteenth Century and Transoceanic Protestant Christianity’, *Church History*, Vol. 79, Issue 1 (March, 2010), pp. 40-76; John B. Carpenter. ‘New England Puritans: The Grandparents of Modern Protestant Missions’, *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. 30, Issue 4 (2002), pp. 519-532.

⁹ For a summary of how historiography on Franciscan missions has changed, see Mark Christensen. ‘Recent Approaches to Understanding Evangelization in New Spain’, *History Compass*, Vol. 14, Issue 2 (February, 2016), pp. 39-48. For examples of the new themes foundational to this new scholarship, see Steven W. Hackel. *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), Ch. 3; Rebecca Overmyer-Velázquez. ‘Christian Morality in New Spain: The Nahua Woman in the Franciscan Imaginary’, in *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounter in World History*, edited by Tony Ballantyne & Antoinette Burton (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 67-84; Steven E. Turley. *Franciscan Spirituality and Mission in New Spain, 1524-1599: Conflict beneath the Sycamore Tree (Luke 19:1-10)* (Farnham, VT: Ashgate, 2014); Sergio Botta. ‘Towards a Missionary Theory of Polytheism: The Franciscans in the Face of the Indigenous Religions of New Spain’, in *Critical Readings of the History of Christian Mission, Volume 4*, edited by Martha Frederiks & Dorottya Nagy (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 1323-1346; Julia McClure. *The Franciscan Invention of the New World*, Ch. 4.

in Spanish Florida, who quickly abandoned the continent as a waste of missionaries' energy; Franciscans almost gave up on evangelism in New Mexico after Oñate's hideous campaign of repression; and John Eliot initially paid no attention to the prospect of converting the Indian tribes populating Boston's vast hinterland. Recognising this - that missionization was never inevitable, and was in fact ignored and abandoned by the first generations – then necessitates first identifying and then interrogating the bundle of specifically religious impulses that catalysed and sustained missiological activity.

A third historiographical trend has begun to address this. Continental and hemispheric collections that seek to move away from excessively institutional or localised histories have increased in number.¹⁰ These multi-authored explorations of the religious history of early America utilising a continental or hemispheric scale have recently been used for multiple purposes. They have corrected erroneous comparisons, such as between a modernizing Anglo-Protestant colonization in North America and a repressive Iberian-Catholic effort in South America; they have identified and addressed scholarly lacunae such as comparisons between Jesuit and Moravian endeavour; and, most importantly, they have renewed the call for religious motivation and its epiphenomena to be considered seriously as key engines of

¹⁰ Charles H. Lippy & Robert Choquette, eds. *Christianity Comes to the Americas, 1492-1776* (New York: Paragon House, 1992); Nicholas Griffiths & Fernando Cervantes, eds. *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions between Christianity and native religion in colonial America* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press, 1999); Richard W. Pointer. *Encounters of the Spirit: Native Americans and European Colonial Religion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Maria F. Wade. *Missions, Missionaries, and Native Americans: Long-Term Processes and Daily Practices* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008); A.G. Roeber., ed. *Ethnographies and Exchanges: Native Americans, Moravians, and Catholics in Early North America* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008); Aparecida Vilaça & Robin M. Wright, eds. *Native Christians: Modes and Effects of Christianity among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas* (Farnham, Surrey & Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009); Joel W. Martin & Mark A. Nicholas, eds. *Native Americans, Christianity, and the Reshaping of the American Religious Landscape* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Linda Gregerson & Susan Juster, eds. *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Kirk, Stephanie & Rivett, Sarah, eds. *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Catherine Ballériaux, Catherine. *Missionary Strategies in the New World, 1610-1690: An Intellectual History* (New York & London: Routledge, 2016).

change, rescuing the spiritual as a historical force from the primacy of socio-economic and political developments. This historiography has recaptured the variety of missiological experience in early America, its insinuation into broader webs of cultural, economic and social entanglements, and the necessity of deep analysis of each example of the religious encounter. Yet introductory remarks in each have, however, demonstrated another problematic conclusion. Missionization across the continent becomes defined by a chaotic patchwork of localised or regionalised interactions; which are, in turn, difficult to synthesize under a broad categorization.¹¹

When considered as a comprehensive body of analysis of the religious encounter in early America, the concentration on Indian agency, the investigation of missionaries' many identities beyond religious agents, and comparative scholarship devoted to understanding the relative efficiency and effects of missionization has produced a gap in the historiography of early America. An effect of the first has been to flatten the complexity of missionaries themselves. Their old image in quasi-hagiographic scholarship, of unchanging and uncompromising avatars of an intrepid European Christianity, has merely been transplanted to new narratives emphasising the malevolence of this role. The second, by contrast, implies

¹¹ For the comparison between Anglo-Protestant and Iberian-Catholic regimes, see Stephanie Kirk & Sarah Rivett, eds. *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). For the comparison between Jesuits and Moravians, see A.G. Roeber, ed. *Ethnographies and Exchanges: Native Americans, Moravians, and Catholics in Early North America* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008). For the explicit emphasis on religious forces, see Linda Gregerson & Susan Juster, eds. *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). These are all important correctives to tangential comparisons that mischaracterise a particular missiological tradition. Scholarship that has focused on a single mission, one tradition, or a discrete colonial space has tended to contextualise their interaction with early American Indians by reference to a competing evangelical tradition. This has, however, tended to flatten the complexity of the second example, often caricaturing rival missiologies through the lens of the principal one being analysed. For example, Dane Morrison favourably compared the intimidating standards for conversion in Eliot's mission to the laxity of the Roman Catholic orders in New France and New Spain, claiming without qualification that 'Jesuits and Dominicans rejoiced in mass baptisms to save hundreds of souls at a time'. See Dane Morrison. *A Praying People: Massachusetts Acculturation and the Failure of the Puritan Mission, 1600-1690* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 64 ('rejoiced in mass baptisms').

that their religious and spiritual motivations were both necessary and consistent, and therefore only the foundation for their functions as imperialists, colonialists, ethnologists, and linguists. The third recognises the dynamism of evangelists' response to their endeavour across the continent, but emphasises the contrasts between local instantiations rather than pursuing analysis that connects each as an early American phenomenon. Tracing the dynamic evolution of early American missiologies addresses this gap by refocusing on the missionaries as an equally important half of the dichotomous religious encounter, by again prioritising religious themes as the fundamental components of missionaries' actions and attitudes, and by providing a unifying conceptual rubric that encompasses each Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan endeavour.

Reconceptualising the Early American Missionary

Recognising the cultural transformations that revived Indian communities disoriented and sometimes terribly damaged by European colonialism, this thesis applies the same analytical approach to Christian missionaries. Explaining the varying efficiency of missionization with reference to its colonial context or the reaction of Indian targets elides the complex processes of adaptation to their early American experience that allowed agents of multiple evangelical traditions to sustain their efforts across the continent. Indeed, the former factors were in constant flux, yet Jesuits, Franciscans and Puritans managed to sustain their proselytization across the entire narrative of early American colonization. This suggests that neither were critically important, but were contextual factors influencing the decisive process of intellectual and practical adaptation that sustained missiological activity for so long. The survival and flourishing of Christian missions in early America depended just as much on the continued manipulation of the meaning and potential of evangelism on the continent as it did

on imperial and colonial structures. The latter offered vital logistical support and a more general structure through which financial and diplomatic aid could be received, but it could not define early America as a missiological space. Only the missionaries, responding to the progress – or lack thereof – of their endeavours in New France, the Spanish borderlands and New England, could properly do so.

A small body of recent historiography has suggested the necessity of such an approach while providing a conceptual model with which to pursue it. In exploring the dynamic evolution of the Mohawk Catherine Tekakwitha's Christianity and eventual sainthood, Allan Greer discovered an equally fascinating individual narrative of her first biographer, the Jesuit Claude Chauchetière; the latter's life demanded the same close attention as Tekakwitha's, demonstrating an equal vibrancy that defied simplification. Greer has also analysed the motivation of Pierre Chaumonot, another Jesuit who labored in New France. Chauchetière's and Chaumonot's own spiritual and intellectual development were individualisations of a broader phenomenon of dynamic and lively changes in missiological thought as carriers of Christianity encountered the reality of early America.¹² This thesis, using three distinct missiological traditions, utilises the same approach to trace and analyse the wider manifestation of these evolutions across the entire early American continent.

The story that emerges thus thrusts intricate religious thought to the forefront of analysing the missionization of early America. Jesuits, Franciscans and Puritans grappled not only with colonial and Indian agents, but with a continuing effort to reconcile their respective

¹² For Chauchetière, see Allan Greer. *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). For Chaumonot, see Allan Greer. 'A Wandering Jesuit in Europe and America: Father Chaumonot Finds a Home', in *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic*, edited by Linda Gregerson & Susan Juster (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 106-123. Other scholarship sensitive to this new understanding of missiology includes Dominique Deslandres. 'The Impossible Acculturation: French Missionaries and Cultural Exchanges in the Seventeenth Century', in *Ethnographies and Exchanges: Native Americans, Moravians, and Catholics in Early North America*, edited by A.G. Roeber (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), pp. 67-77.

missiologies with the incessant chaos of the early American religious world. The distinction between imperial-colonial and missiological activity in early America, variously presented as a combative, reciprocal, or ambivalent relationship, flattens the complexity of the mission itself. The ‘mission’, though of course concerned above all with evangelisation, was composed of a chaotic array of competing impulses that were fundamental to this endeavour. Crafting an early American mission required a deft manipulation of these shifting features, a choreography that, in turn, suggests new analytical categories critical to understanding early American missionization. Where missionaries found significance in their actions, and expended great effort to sustain these evangelical spaces, they had successfully reconciled events in their mission with at least some specifically religious factors. Conversely, where they appeared ambivalent or pessimistic about the prospects for a particular mission, it was because they could not locate or craft a suitable meaning for their efforts within the restrictions of the missiological paradigms that they were devoted to. At its core, missionization in early America was a relentless series of varied intellectual obstacles to be overcome; the missionaries’ continued participation in these endeavours was the result of a complex negotiation between salvific, martyrological, institutional, evangelical, and many other features of their missiology to meet and overcome these challenges.

This highlights the necessity of carefully analysing the relationship between two fundamental themes – agency and identity. This thesis offers a new understanding of the relationship between both in the missionization of early America. Expressions of agency of both Indians and missionaries are often presented as instantiations of an identity, an identity forged from respective pre-contact traditions. Actions therefore affirm this character, which further conditions future activities. Agency and identity therefore appear locked in a dialectical relationship that confirms, rather than challenges, both. By contrast, emphasising the creation of an evangelical continent, and delineating the corresponding changes in

missiologial thought, show that a significant portion of agency in early America was devoted to understanding, crafting and sharpening identity. In short, identities and their consequent impulses were not imposed on the continent; the early American encounter imposed its chaotic development on the identity of missionaries themselves. Missionaries travelled to the Spanish borderlands, New France and New England for a huge variety of reasons, and their experience was often of a series of profound epistemic shocks as missionization interacted with a responsive and acutely disorienting Indian world. Tracing their reactions constructs a continental history of missiologial adaptation to early America.

This analysis, importantly, does not require simplifying the bewildering extent of change in Indian worlds. Instead it uses the scholarship that has so enriched understanding of Indian adaptation to early American colonization as a foundation from which to equally complicate the missionaries' own reactions to the religious encounter. In their attempts to understand their early American missiologies, Jesuits, Franciscans and Calvinists were inextricably connected to the dynamism of the Indian worlds with which they interacted. Over two centuries variegated expressions of Indian agency, whether demonstrations of power, weakness, diplomacy, or hostility, conditioned the missionaries' responses to their new worlds across the continent. Determining the specific nature of the epistemic chaos unleashed by the missiologial encounter, and tracing the corresponding evolution of an early American missiology, is impossible without this understanding of the equal vibrancy and flux that defined Indian worlds on the continent. This thesis therefore uncovers the complementary dynamism of both Indian and missiologial worlds across the continent.

The conclusions of this thesis challenge the models used for analysing the early American religious encounter. First, the analytical relationship between missions and colonial space is complicated. Missionaries' clear and growing continental consciousness finally received its fullest expression at the end of the seventeenth century. Critically, these

perspectives elided colonial and confessional competition. Instead, a deliberately ecumenical conception of early American missionization was crafted and then stubbornly defended even as imperial competition between France and England accelerated into the eighteenth century. This suggests the need to consider early America differently as a conceptual space. Missions have been presented as institutions encompassed by colonialism and inextricably attached to it. This project reverses this spatial organisation. For the missionaries, the continent was a growing entity that expanded with little regard for colonial claims; to fully appreciate the intellectual history of missionization, early America must be reimagined primarily as a missiological space encompassing parochial configurations of colonial power.¹³

Events taken as the most important in the history of early American missionization are also reconceptualised, complicating the periodisation of missiological activity across the continent. The Pueblo Revolt, King Philip's War and the Iroquois destruction of Huronia are considered events fundamentally altering Franciscan, Puritan and Jesuit evangelism. They subsequently appear as a terminus for historical analysis, or as a chaotic beginning of radically new strategies. By contrast, by demonstrating the constant reimagining of early American missiology by its practitioners these fundamental events, considered uniquely disruptive to missionization, are recast as particularly dramatic episodes in a much broader history of the generation and regeneration of missiological thought. Through its unique methodology, this thesis therefore challenges both spatial and chronological paradigms for

¹³ Scholarship that has adopted a continental approach to missionization has used an analytical paradigm that distinguishes missions by their respective colonial framework. Jesuits, confined to New France, are compared with Franciscans, confined to the Spanish borderlands, for example. The picture that follows is of colonial space encompassing missions. Yet the long history that eventually led Kino and le Clercq to imagine linking the continental components of Jesuit and Franciscan activity necessitates a different approach. The analytical scales should be reversed; the extending and thickening articulations of a continental consciousness requires viewing early America, for the missionaries, primarily as a sprawling missiological zone encompassing all colonial space.

analysing early America, demonstrating the necessity of new approaches to the history of the early American encounter.

This thesis also reconsiders the vocabulary of competing agencies and static identities that has defined much of the scholarship on early American missions. The missionization of early America was a novel intellectual space for both the missionaries and the Indians they preached to. Of course, each carried a religious paradigm that governed their relationship to the cosmos, their communities and other individuals, and the encounter between them was awkward, combative, and often openly hostile. Yet this religious battleground was vastly more complex than a simple terminology of offensive and defensive interaction can capture; tracing the dynamic evolution of early American missiologies suggests the necessity of a more complicated language of missionization, even further beyond the increasingly intricate conceptualization of the cultural encounter.

The new methods for evaluating conversion cannot follow the shifting consequences of the Indian reaction to missionization. Adopting missiological change as the central focus requires a further complication of these models of Indian agency. The deliberate, violent rejection of Franciscans in sixteenth-century New Mexico and Florida, or the targeted slayings of Jesuits by Iroquois warriors in Huronia, provide two examples. Martyrdoms were the most conclusive sign of the rejection of missionization. Considered within the restrictions of models of conversion, this is their fundamental aspect. When analysed as yet more events in the constant search by missionaries for the significance of their efforts, however, their consequences become instantly more dynamic. Incorporating martyrological death into an evangelical program required translating this unmistakable rejection into an invitation to continue the mission. This was achieved, across multiple spaces in early America, through a process that radically reorganises analysis of Indian agency in missionization. This

reorganisation, further, is only possible if one closely follows the interaction of the multiple planes of missiological activity, which is achieved by reconceptualising missionization itself.

This thesis begins in the early American territories claimed by the Spanish empire. Chapter one traces creative adaptations made by Franciscans and Jesuits in New Mexico and Florida. The missionaries who first entered the Spanish borderlands in the sixteenth century struggled to compose a new missiological program appropriate for the new Pueblo, Calusa and Guale populations. In New Mexico, their reliance on exploratory expeditions composed largely of brutalising military contingents opened up peculiar opportunities for evangelism. Yet, in seizing these sporadic opportunities, Franciscans created a dangerous symbiosis between missionization and Spanish violence. This narrowed their function and denied them the ability to missionize without an accompanying threat. They became figures protecting Pueblos from vicious soldiers; but when the latter left, along with the threat they imposed, the utility of hosting a Franciscan ended. Similar struggles plagued both Juan Rogel, the first Jesuit to missionize in Spanish Florida, and the Franciscans who succeeded him on the peninsula. In both regions, however, formidable expressions of Indian power rejecting missionization were later manipulated by missionaries themselves to sustain evangelisation when royal scepticism threatened its abandonment. Initially, therefore, missionaries were unsuccessful in creating a missiology for early America, but skilfully deployed their disastrous results, as well as the chaos unleashed in Indian communities by colonialism, to lay the foundation for a provincialized missiology in the seventeenth century.

Chapter two then traces the creation of an early American missiology in both the Spanish borderlands and the territory claimed by New France in Acadia and the St. Lawrence River valley. By the 1650s, Franciscans and Jesuits operating in both imperial spaces had moulded their respective traditions into a coherent paradigm guiding evangelism on the continent. This involved the deft, complicated process of adapting the concept of martyrdom,

of reorganising the acrimonious relationship between royal and religious interests into a mutually beneficial arrangement, understanding and then defining the various configurations of Indian power that they encountered through expansion, connecting specific practices of their Orders with their new environments, and forging a vision of continental expansion. When these strands were brought together early America stood distinguished as a unique evangelical space, supplemented by newly created missiologies designed for its missionization. As the missions expanded across early America, thus further globalising the reach of the most militant and aggressive Catholicism, so its principal agents provincialized their missiologies to adapt their efforts to the peculiar demands and opportunities of the North American continent.

Chapter three introduces the Puritan mission, led most visibly by John Eliot, as the third component of early American missiology. Eliot himself was initially ambivalent towards the conversion of Indians surrounding New England, but a series of acute political and religious crises combined to encourage a new commitment to evangelisation. Wielding Scripture as the foundational tool of his missiology, Eliot developed a program of instruction designed deliberately for missionaries themselves to quickly relinquish control over further evangelisation to their most capable Indian converts. But where his missiology was most effective – where it encouraged the most appropriate and Puritan expressions of piety – Indians articulating their understanding of their new faith expressed a degree of interiority irreconcilable with their own evangelism. Eliot's methods and ambitions were therefore not complementary, but discordant. This theme, of the clashing imperatives of missiology, is followed again through analysis of the Jesuit mission in New France in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Devastated first by relentless Iroquois assaults on Huronia, Jesuits nevertheless managed to sustain their mission. A few key figures carefully manipulated the martyrdoms of six colleagues killed in the late-1640s to prove the necessity of continuing

their efforts in New France. This provided the vital context for a radical reconceptualization of their missiology in the next three decades, which imposed new definitions on a widening variety of Indian nations, a new understanding of the significance of Iroquois power and belligerence, and a new appreciation of the shifting geography of the mission. The chapter concludes by challenging previous comparative analyses of the Puritan and Jesuit missions, focusing on the theme of interiorities and the corresponding expression of Indian agency that each encouraged.

The final chapter traces the most radical changes in continental missiology. Through the violent challenges of King Philip's War and Pueblo revolts, and the more subtle but equally insidious entanglement of missionaries with their respective colonial and imperial interests, Franciscans, Jesuits and Puritans instituted profound changes to their evangelism. But such adaptations were not as effective as previous ones. The efficacy of missiological strategies waned as established missions were destroyed, the remnants consolidated into smaller units, and renewed expansion forestalled by resurgent Indian power. It was in such a context, however, that a distinct early American missiology, created by this shared experience of decline, was articulated by agents of each of the three traditions. Crafted by both active missionaries and elite scholars analysing the history of the missions themselves, the fundamental emphasis of this missiology shifted from successful missionization to the act of evangelism itself, in turn focusing heavily on the missionaries themselves rather than the Indian populations they targeted. This more insular rationale for missionization was yet another attempt to continue sustaining conversion efforts across the continent.

The first exploration that eventually led to this creation was undertaken by a Franciscan friar, Marcos de Niza. A veteran of evangelical efforts in colonised spaces in Peru and Guatemala, he was chosen to reconnoitre the region north of Sonora to verify fantastical

tales of wealth that had recently reached the Spanish King and his Council of the Indies. The creation of an early American missiology thus began.

Chapter 1

First Encounters: New Mexico and Florida, c. 1542-1610

De Niza clambered up the side of the hill and peered over the edge. He gazed in awe at ‘a very beautiful city, the best that I have seen in these parts’. Houses ‘all of stone with their storeys and terraces’ clustered on the plateau on top of the mound. By his estimation the settlement was larger even than Mexico City. He turned to two Indians who had accompanied him and expressed his disbelief at the grandeur of this pueblo of Hawikuh, known by him as Cibola. His wonder was heightened when they told him that Hawikuh was the first, and ‘the least’, of the legendary Seven Cities of Gold. Furthermore, Totonteac, an Indigenous community not far from de Niza’s route, ‘was much bigger and better than all the seven’ and had ‘so many houses and people that there is no end to it’. De Niza knew that he had to carry this information back south to New Spain. Before leaving, he fashioned a small cross and placed it on a large pile of stones on the hillside; in the name of Antonio de Mendoza, the Viceroy of New Spain, he declared possession of the Seven Cities, of Totonteac, and every other Indian settlement that he had learned of during his journey. He quickly scrambled down the hill and began the journey back to carry his astounding news to Mexico City.¹⁴

De Niza was the first Franciscan to enter the vast territory to the north of New Spain. His entrance signalled the start of the first tentative evangelical efforts in the Rio Grande

¹⁴ Percy M. Baldwin, ‘Fray Marcos de Niza’s “Relación”’, *New Mexico Historical Review*, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (April, 1926), pp. 193-223, 218-219 (‘a very beautiful city’, ‘all of stone’, 218; ‘the least’, ‘much bigger and better’, ‘so many houses’, 219). De Niza’s journey itself was prompted by the appearance of Cabeza de Vaca in Mexico City, eight years after his shipwreck on Florida’s Gulf coast. He was the first to bring fantastical tales of fabulous wealth in the unexplored region north of Mexico. His report reached the King and the Council of the Indies soon after he was discovered by Spanish slave raiders in the borderlands of northern Mexico. For the most comprehensive treatment of his journey and its effects, see Rolena Adorno & Patrick Charles Pautz, *Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca: His Account, His Life and the Expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez*, 3 Volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

Valley. The report he provided of the grandeur of Hawikuh, itself the least impressive of the fabled seven cities, electrified the imperial hierarchy in Mexico City. Within a year, in 1540, the governor of Nueva Galicia, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, had assembled an expedition to explore the uncharted territory north of Sinaloa and locate the mythical seven cities. Included with the soldiers and allied Indians were five Franciscans, among them Father Juan de Padilla and Brother Luis de Úbeda.¹⁵

De Niza's expedition and report were therefore significant as the catalysts for the first extended interaction between Franciscans and Indians in early America. Over the following seven decades, Padilla, Úbeda, and their successors began to shape a missiology relevant to their new mission fields in New Mexico and Florida. In the latter, Jesuits also initiated a similar process of adaptation. However, this chapter demonstrates that these tentative first efforts forced Franciscans and Jesuits to embrace identities and strategies that encouraged Indians to tolerate them, but quickly forestalled significant evangelical progress. Eventually, Franciscans overcame these obstacles, creatively manipulating expressions of Indian agency to rescue their missions from abandonment. As de Niza had done when initiating evangelism in New Mexico, Franciscans made shrewd appeals to relevant authorities to sustain it. This eventually created a platform from which Franciscans could begin to craft a comprehensive early American missiology.

Coronado and the Franciscans: Sanctioning Violence

Padilla's first act of significance came after the appalling mistreatment of three Indians by Coronado. Mesmerized by the magnificent legend of the fabled seven cities of

¹⁵ Angelico Chavez, *Coronado's Friars* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1968).

gold and the wealth they were said to contain, the expeditions leader had been told by an Indian known as ‘the Turk’ that he had travelled there with a *cacique* from the nearby pueblo of Cicuye, later known as Pecos, and an Indian called Bigotes. Lusting for the glory of discovery, the conquistador sent Captain Hernando de Alvarado to find both men and corroborate the Turk’s claim. Neither Indian, however, would reveal what Coronado sought; they either knew nothing about the claims or were hiding their knowledge from the Spaniards. Bigotes and the *cacique* were placed in irons and marched back to Tiguex, where Coronado had headquartered his expedition for the winter. Before the conquistador himself, they again denied any knowledge of the Turk’s claims. Infuriated, Coronado set dogs to savage them and they were threatened with execution.¹⁶ When they had recovered they were permitted to return to their communities, their festering wounds a testament to the horrific cruelty of these mysterious new figures.¹⁷ Word soon spread of their brutal punishment – along with the horrific campaign of theft and rape that had accompanied the Spaniards as they roamed through the Rio Grande Valley, the Indians’ treatment helped catalyse an uprising against the expedition.¹⁸

This first extended violent challenge to Spanish cruelty in the Pueblo world demanded a response. The Franciscans accompanying the entrada were critical in shaping discussions about the legality of retaliation. Aware that the conquistador intended to push further into the eastern interior, they argued that no pueblos left in the wake of the expeditions advance could be allowed to openly revolt. Ignoring any brazen challenges to Spanish power from several pueblos could send ripples of subversion across the Southwest, destroying the potential for

¹⁶ Richard Flint, *Great Cruelties Have Been Reported: The 1544 Investigation of the Coronado Expedition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002) 169 & 283-284.

¹⁷ Flint, *Great Cruelties*, 59-60 & 95.

¹⁸ For a summary of the violence and theft committed by the Coronado expedition see Stan Hoig, *Came Men on Horses: The Conquistador Expeditions of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado and Don Juan de Oñate* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2012).

the expansive missionary field that de Niza had first envisaged for New Mexico. For these practical reasons, they agreed that Coronado must put those guilty to the sword.¹⁹ Padilla had sanctioned retribution, inaugurating a reciprocal relationship between missionization and colonial violence in New Mexico.

Despite the fierce conflicts that followed, Coronado remained entranced by the Turk's promise. The first conquistador in New Mexico eventually reached the apparent location of the legendary seven cities, known then as Quivira, in the spring of 1541. Any enticing glint of mineral wealth, however, was absent; rather, empty plains disappeared over the horizon in every direction, symbolic of the utter failure of the *entrada*'s efforts. Coronado murdered the Turk for his apparent dishonesty and left the region in disgust. Their guide may have been leading them to the vibrant and bustling city of Cahokia, or simply dragging them into a featureless terrain to hasten their deaths. Coronado himself reported that the guides admitted following the latter strategy, 'believing that, as the route was so barren and uninhabited and lacking in water, they would take us to a place where we and our horses would starve to death'.²⁰

For Padilla, however, Coronado's target was a useful vehicle by which Franciscans could secure a different prize. The land offered no gold or silver, but it did contain the only resource the Franciscan was interested in – Indian souls. The region that Coronado designated as Quivira was inhabited by Wichita Indians. They approached the Spaniards' camp, and Padilla spotted his opportunity. Though he returned as far as Pecos with Coronado, he

¹⁹ Flint, *Great Cruelties*, 96.

²⁰ George P. Hammond & Agapito Rey, eds. *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition 1540-1542* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1940), 189 ('the route was so barren'); Richard Flint, *No Settlement, No Conquest: A History of the Coronado Entrada* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 163-164. For a description of Cahokia, see Timothy R. Pauketat, *Ancient Cahokia and the Mississippians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 67-119; Timothy R. Pauketat & Thomas E. Emerson, eds. *Cahokia: Domination and Ideology in the Mississippian World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

quickly travelled back to begin proselytizing to the Wichita. Coronado, fearing for Padilla's safety if he dragged his collection of Indian captives back to New Spain, ordered the prisoners' release as a gesture of goodwill. Padilla's mission, despite this, swiftly came to a brutal end. He was murdered by his hosts, most likely after attempting to leave to minister to their enemies.²¹ Padilla represented the fearsome power of the Spanish newcomers and he could not be allowed to carry this authority across the Indigenous interior to rival Indian groups. It was more expedient to simply execute him and let his Indian companions bury him, lest the Spaniards returned in search of their priest.

Dejected, Coronado trudged back to Nueva Galicia after departing New Mexico in April 1542. His Quiviran dream had been proved a chimera, a fiction birthed from marvellous tales, greed and vanity. It would be almost forty years before a Spanish expedition entered the region again. For Padilla, his short time in Coronado's company had been equally futile. Yet he had embodied dynamics that would be evident throughout the next sixty years of exploration. The Franciscans were asked for, and provided, a justification for military action; Coronado actively attempted to secure his safety by releasing his captives, hoping to establish a bond of reciprocal generosity and hospitality; and the Wichitas killed Padilla shortly after he arrived back among them, fearful of the repercussions if he was allowed to encounter other Indians on their borders. Missiological endeavours in New Mexico over the following six decades would mirror his experience, gradually ossifying into a strategy involving a dangerous intimacy between violence and evangelisation.

Symbols and Spectacle

²¹ Hammond & Rey. *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition*, 263; Richard Flint, *No Settlement, No Conquest*, 197; George Parker Winship, *The Coronado Expedition 1540-1542* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 401, 401 n.1 & 534-536.

In 1579 an Indian had told the Franciscan Agustin Rodriguez of settlements to the north of New Spain where Indian communities grew cotton and wove cloth. For the friar this implied an irresistible level of sophistication; agriculture and weaving suggested that the groups who practiced them were sufficiently civilized to be converted to Christianity. Two years later, Rodriguez had assembled a small expedition of nine soldiers and two other friars. His Franciscan companions were Francisco López and Juan de Santa Maria. Francisco Sanchez – ‘El Chamuscado’ – led the military contingent. The group set out from the nearby mining town of Santa Barbara on June 5th, 1581, heading up the Conchos River toward its junction with the Rio Grande.²² It was an explicitly evangelical expedition. Chamuscado offered to guide the friars as an opportunity to reconnoitre their route and the potential it sustained, but the aim was primarily missiological.

Violence again offered the missionaries a strategic opportunity. Roaming along the Rio Grande, Rodriguez spoke in every pueblo he could about the cross. But the implications of this fundamental symbol of Christianity – Christ, the Trinity, sin, heaven and hell – were impossible to convey in short, hurried exchanges that relied almost entirely on signing and gesticulating.²³ The inclination of Spanish soldiers to resort to terror and violence, however, provided an opportunity. In the Tigua pueblo and among the Cabris Indians, Rodriguez used the reputation of the *entradas*, first established by Coronado and sustained by Chamuscado’s willingness to use aggression against Pueblos, as brutalising, destructive forces to suggest the utility of the symbol of the cross. If the sign of the crucifix was made with the fingers as a gesture to welcome future Spanish contingents, he promised, peace would be assumed.²⁴ This

²² J. Lloyd Mechem, ‘The Second Spanish Expedition to New Mexico’, *New Mexico Historical Review*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (July, 1926), pp. 265-291, 265-267; Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Spanish Exploration in the Southwest, 1542-1706* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1916).

²³ References to communication ‘by signs’ are common in the accounts of the expeditions. See: Hammond & Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 37; Bolton, *Spanish Exploration in the Southwest*, 146 & 179.

²⁴ Hammond & Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 27; George P. Hammond & Agapito Rey, eds and trans. *Obregón’s History of 16th Century Explorations in Western America, Entitled: Chronicle, Commentary, or Relation of the*

association spread, and became so strong that the Yavapai Indians, far to the west of the Rio Grande, initially received the designation Cruzado because of the crosses painted on their heads.²⁵ Rodriguez' symbiological strategy was an efficient means of communicating the utility of the new faith, and an equally effective means of ensuring its transmission across Indian exchange routes.

This marked an evolution. Padilla had sanctioned Spanish violence as a means of intimidating Pueblos, thereby creating a landscape that could sustain a mission. Rodriguez' strategy was different. Manipulating violence itself as an evangelical tool by juxtaposing the threat of aggression with the pacifying authority of the symbol of the cross, he further implicated missiological effort with the brutalities of Spanish colonial agents. This creative response to the mutual incomprehension caused by a linguistic gulf was briefly effective. However, this fleeting indication of promise was dashed when his fellow friar Santa Maria, newly optimistic about the potential for establishing a stable mission, decided to return south to New Spain. Santa Maria had witnessed some Pueblos' favourable stance toward Christian symbols, and the Indians encountered by the expedition had generally been genial and welcoming. Furthermore, the land appeared fruitful, capable of sustaining a significant settler population. The priest intended to return to the capital, extolling the virtues of the bountiful mines and hospitable pueblo populations. If settlement was pursued, missionaries could ride a colonizing wave to establish a vast new field of souls eager for conversion.²⁶

He never managed to leave the pueblo. Seeing his preparations for a long journey onward, the Indians clamoured for an explanation. They made signs to convey their growing

Ancient and Modern Discoveries in New Spain and New Mexico, 1584 (Los Angeles: Wetzel Publishing Company, Inc., 1928), 277.

²⁵ Zárate Salmerón, *Relaciones*, trans. Alicia Ronstadt Milich (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace Publishers, Inc., 1966), 66; Herbert Eugene Bolton, 'Father Escobar's Relation of the Oñate Expedition to California', *The Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (April, 1919), pp. 19-41, 27.

²⁶ Hammond and Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 37-38.

anxiety that Santa Maria would bring back more Christians to ‘put the natives out of their homes’. The priest either misunderstood or failed to even recognise their concern in their voices - he enthusiastically confirmed their fear, signalling that many more like him would return to establish an even more favourable relationship between Spaniard and Indian in New Mexico. His disastrous misreading of the Indians’ tone proved fatal. While Chamuscado led his soldiers on an journey to the buffalo fields nearby, the Franciscan was killed.²⁷ It was obvious that when confronted with exploratory parties, the Indians at Puaray were willing to listen to the friars’ message, either from genuine curiosity or a calculated effort to retain peace. The prospect of a permanent and growing Spanish population was, however, clearly unendurable. Santa Maria had discovered the extent of Pueblo toleration.

When Chamuscado returned from the plains and enquired after Santa Maria, the Indians admitted that they had murdered him. Perhaps surprising those who expected a reprisal, the soldiers feigned ignorance. They understood the aggressive potential brimming in the Indians’ words. If the soldiers ordered any punishment the tension could boil over. Hopelessly outnumbered, the arid land could become their grave. However, by refusing to acknowledge, let alone address, the friar’s tragic end Chamuscado effected a fundamental change in Indian attitudes toward the Spaniards. Rumours of their immortality had spread among the Indians, fanned by the perception that the newcomers were genuinely the ‘children of the sun’ and the terrifying efficiency of their firearms. The latter had been demonstrated when Chamuscado had encountered the massive, hulking herds of buffalo to the northeast; Indians who had accompanied the soldiers watched in awe as flames spat from the Spaniards’ guns, each booming shot felling a huge beast.²⁸ Santa Maria’s death and the total leniency that followed, however, shattered this perception – a Spaniard could be murdered just as

²⁷ Hammond and Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 37-38 (‘put the natives out’, 37).

²⁸ Hammond and Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 32 & 34-36 (‘children of the sun’, 32).

easily any other combatant. Any consequences, furthermore, were not apparent. The Franciscan's legacy was even more damaging than his death.

Further misfortune would befall Rodriguez and Lopez when they both decided to stay in the pueblo of Puaray, a settlement in the northern portion of a cluster of Tiwa pueblos along the Rio Grande. Their lust for conversions overrode the frantic objections of their military escort. The soldiers argued that missionization was doomed – the vast chasm between the friars' intentions and Indian receptivity could not be crossed in any meaningful way, and both priests were endangering the lives of those on the expedition by choosing to stay.²⁹ They would certainly share Santa Maria's fate, especially since Spanish military might had been silenced by Chamuscado's refusal to take revenge. Yet Rodriguez would not be deterred.

The Franciscans' evangelical impulse was now clashing with the practical fears of the military contingent. Rodriguez and Lopez knew that death was likely imminent once the soldiers had left. For them, this was a desirable fate but one that would at least temporarily preclude the establishment of the first institutional mission in New Mexico. And when the soldiers left, the Pueblos would likely draw the same conclusion that had compelled them to kill Santa Maria. For the Franciscans to survive without the restraining influence of the threat embodied by Chamuscado, they had to somehow ingratiate themselves to the Tiwa Pueblos to such an extent that their survival would be prioritized over the threat of impending settlement initiatives from the south. An opportunity soon arose.

Shortly after Santa Maria had been killed Pueblos slaughtered three horses that the expedition had brought with them. Chamuscado's soldiers attacked the pueblo of Malagon in

²⁹ J. Lloyd Mechem, 'Supplementary Documents Relating to the Chamuscado-Rodriguez Expedition', *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (January, 1926), pp. 224-231, 230.

retaliation, taking captives. As restitution for the crime public beheadings, to be held on the morning of the following day, were ordered. But this short delay allowed the Pueblos to make the shocking imbalance of power uncomfortably apparent. A thousand Indians, who now knew that the captives would be murdered, quickly surrounded the camp where they were being held, causing profound unease among the hopelessly outnumbered soldiers. Fearing the huge Pueblo presence would initiate a rescue attempt, Chamuscado brought the executions forward. For Rodriguez, on the other hand, resolving the extreme tension in this way was wasteful. This was a chance to recalibrate the association of the two friars with Spanish brutality, which could, in turn, suggest to the Tiwas the utility of maintaining the Franciscans within their communities. Together, Rodriguez, Lopez and Chamuscado fashioned a scheme to defuse the situation and encourage the Indians to protect the friars.³⁰

A block was hastily placed in the middle of the camp. The spectacle of the execution began. The captive Pueblos were led individually to the centre of the plaza, roughly thrown onto the block, and told to prepare for the killing blow. Each time a trembling captive was marched to their death, the two friars theatrically rushed out to ‘assail’ the soldiers and save the prisoner’s life.³¹ The gambit appeared to work. When Chamuscado and his men left shortly after to return south to New Spain they feigned an insistence that the priests must follow them. In response the Indians grabbed Rodriguez and Lopez and rushed them back to their houses, ‘because of the great support they had found in the religious’.³² The carefully structured theatrics of the ritual had ingratiated the friars to their Indian hosts. Chamuscado and the other soldiers remained uneasy about abandoning them but left nonetheless.³³

³⁰ Hammond & Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 40.

³¹ Hammond & Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 41 (‘assail’).

³² Hammond & Rey, *The Gallegos Relation*, 41.

³³ J. Lloyd Meham, ‘Supplementary Documents Relating to the Chamuscado-Rodriguez Expedition’, 225.

Unfortunately, the militia was eventually justified in its concern. Both Franciscans were murdered at Puaray only months into their mission. The Tiwas' panicked desperation to retain the friars had clearly subsided, either replaced by a calculated understanding that their potential to draw Spanish settlement along the Rio Grande would be too disastrous or abandoned as a strategic ploy used to prevent Chamuscado's retribution. The Franciscans' corpses served a similar function as Santa Maria's; when a rescue mission passed through Puaray searching for the missionaries its members repeated Chamuscado's response, offering no reaction to the news that Indians from the settlement had slain them. Likewise, when Don Juan de Oñate passed through almost two decades later his soldiers discovered a gruesome mural depicting the ferocious attacks on each priest. Burdened with a greater task than retribution, Oñate ordered his men to quietly move on.³⁴

The specific missiological character of the Rodriguez expedition, in contrast to Coronado's brutal methods, had allowed the friars to make more substantial progress in the Southwest. They had become guardians of fearful Indian communities and forged a favourable understanding of the symbol of the cross. Yet these features required the reality, or at least the threat of, Spanish brutality. When the decision was made to begin formal missionization, the spectre of military violence was necessarily silenced. A symbiosis between the Franciscans and Spanish violence had been established, but it offered only another deadly impasse.

Oñate and the Failure of Symbiosis

³⁴ Diego Pérez de Luxán, *Expedition into New Mexico Made by Antonio de Espejo, 1582-1583, As Revealed in the Journal of Diego Pérez de Luxán, A Member of the Party*, trans. George P. Hammond & Agapito Rey (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1929), 181; Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà, *History of New Mexico, 1610*, trans. Gilberto Espinosa (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1933), 142; *BRM*, 58.

The Spanish Crown's last attempt to finally colonize New Mexico, and win access to the sprawling Pueblo world, was led by Don Juan de Oñate. Preparations were exhaustive and plagued with obstacles. The group of missionaries that would accompany the conquistador into the region met up with the expedition in March 1597. This group was the largest Franciscan contingent yet. Ten priests and lay brothers, led by Friar Alonso Martinez, plodded alongside the immense group of Spanish soldiers, officials and settlers as it slowly snaked its way toward the Rio Grande.³⁵

As Oñate hastened through Pueblo Indian communities Rodriguez' efforts were proving valuable. Town after town welcomed Oñate and his men with effusive praise for both the crucifix and the priests who carried them.³⁶ West of the Rio Grande, atop a colossal and imposing mesa, stood the pueblo of Acoma. An arresting, seemingly impregnable fortress settlement, the Indians there had been guarded in their previous meetings with Spaniards. Coronado and Rodriguez had both visited the pueblo, but only threats of an attack or the distribution of gifts were sufficient to establish a conversation. When Oñate pushed further west looking for the Pacific, he sent for his nephew, Juan de Zaldívar, to bring the men under his command and push further on. Following his uncle's orders, Zaldivar stopped briefly at Acoma to demand provisions.

The fragile and paranoid relationship disintegrated into chaos when Zaldivar demanded supplies from the Acomas to replenish his stocks. In response to his orders, Acomas feigned compliance. They invited the *maestre de campo* up to the pueblo. There, they struck. Acoma warriors attacked the Spanish soldiers. Their patience with the

³⁵ Hammond & Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate, Part 1*, 311. For summaries of the preparations of the Oñate expedition and its movement toward New Mexico, see Marc Simmons, *The Last Conquistador: Juan de Onate and the Settling of the Far Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Stan Hoig, *Came Men on Horses*, 155-175.

³⁶ Villagrà, *History of New Mexico*, 140.

presumptuous intruders had finally run out. The battle was quick and brutal. The soldiers fought desperately to survive but were eventually corralled into a small section on the edge of the towering walls of the mesa. Thirteen eventually died in combat; another five, watching in terror as the Indian force rampaged through their compatriots, threw themselves from the walls. Several, miraculously, survived. Oñate only heard the news when he returned from his venture to the Pacific. He had been forced to return from his westward journey by an impassable snow. He was shocked to learn of the bloody attack.³⁷

The Franciscans who had taken the chance to spread throughout the region rushed back to San Juan in response. The conquistador, eager for revenge, referred the matter of retaliation to the priests. Like Padilla and the friars who travelled with Coronado, Martinez knew that punishment had to be swift and overwhelming. The Acomas had set an example, and other Indians were now waiting to see the ferocity of the Spaniards' response – if it was insufficient others would be encouraged toward similar action. If emboldened, pueblos across the Southwest 'would form a league, rebel, and destroy us easily'.³⁸ But Martinez went further, beyond Padilla's similarly practical arguments. A Christian monarch, and by extension his representatives, were obliged for religious reasons to wage war against insubordinate subjects with the intention to 'secure and preserve peace... and not through ambition to rule nor for mortal vengeance, nor for the desire for the property of others'.³⁹ A punitive attack against Acomas was therefore not only a practical necessity but a moral one too.

After the gathered priests had provided this justification for a counter-attack, Oñate gave instructions to Vicente de Zaldivar, the brother of the murdered *maestre de campo*.

³⁷ John L. Kessel, *Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 80-81.

³⁸ Hammond & Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate*, 1:456 ('would form a league').

³⁹ Villagrà, *History of New Mexico*, 207-08 ('secure and preserve peace', 208).

Before any assault could occur Zaldivar was to ask the Acomas to once again submit to the Spanish monarchy and surrender the leaders of the Indian warriors for punishment. As a condition of any future peace, they were also required to abandon the mesa and establish a new community in the valley nearby, to make the friars' instruction easier.⁴⁰ If, however - as turned out to be the case – the Indians refused to accede to these conditions, those of fighting age were to be captured instead of killed.

Oñate had realised that captives were far more useful to the Franciscans than corpses. His final instruction to Zaldivar was to stage public executions of Acoma captives. He demanded that those who were pardoned should be convinced that the friars had argued vociferously against their execution – ‘in this manner they will recognize the friars are their benefactors and protectors and come to love and esteem them, and to fear us’.⁴¹ The priests would thus function as instruments of pacification of both Spaniard and Indian. The image of the benevolent priest could be juxtaposed with the fearsome Spanish soldier to create an awe-inspiring effect of terror and compassion; hordes of petrified Indians would kneel in obedience before a Spanish sword, but one sheathed by the Franciscan presence. Oñate's expedition therefore concluded the opening efforts to establish missions in New Mexico. Martinez had added a moralistic dimension to the missionaries' arguments for the necessity of violence, and Oñate had echoed Chamuscado's scheme when he attributed the Indians' rescue to the friars alone. He explicitly combined love and fear into a productive milieu that had taken almost sixty years to build.

The friars, in concert with the leaders of each expedition, had successfully cast themselves as precious and central figures in the rapidly changing Southwest. Yet their value was very clearly tokenistic. From Coronado's *entrada* to Oñate's, Franciscans sanctioned

⁴⁰ Villagr , *History of New Mexico*, 210; Hammond & Rey, *Don Juan de O ate*, 455-6.

⁴¹ Villagr , *History of New Mexico*, 211 (their benefactors and protectors').

extremely vicious military campaigns for practical and quasi-legalistic reasons. The terrible violence that followed inculcated fear and suspicion of the Spanish throughout New Mexico. Beginning with Rodriguez, this atmosphere offered an extremely effective means of providing the missionaries with a foothold in Indigenous communities, as bulwarks against the worst excesses of Spanish aggression. On the other hand, the exercise of the Spaniards' military power was forestalled by the friars' attempts to establish a formal missionization process. Fearing for the safety of the priests, the leaders of each expedition made efforts to try and promote their security. Each such attempt, though, cast the soldiers as apparitions – phantoms only suggestive of the terrifying extent of Spanish brutality. Over sixty years, the evangelistic endeavour therefore failed to independently craft its own momentum and logics in New Mexico. Instead, it remained parasitic on Spanish military might. Violence was its host. When it detached from the military presence it could not sustain itself - Padilla, Santa Maria, Rodriguez and Lopez embodied this contradiction.

New Mexico was not, however, the only early American theatre of Spanish imperialism. While the friars toiled in pueblos along the Rio Grande, Franciscans and Jesuits strove to establish missions in Spanish Florida.

More Contradictions: *La Florida* and the First Early American Jesuit

Father Francisco de Avila knew what the pounding and beating on his door meant. He had been told of his contemporary's murder at the village of Tolomato - Ospo, the site of his own mission endeavour among the Guale Indians, was not far from that settlement. The fury evident in his Indian hosts' efforts to break into the friary indicated that his death would be next. Avila was being swept up in an overwhelming wave of hatred caused directly by the Franciscan presence in Guale. A smouldering atmosphere of resentment turned molten when

Father Pedro de Corpa, the missionary at Tolomato, publicly told the heir to the chief, Juanillo, that he was forbidden to marry more than one woman. As a Christian, monogamy was his duty. Banning polygamy was simply inconceivable for the heir and his father. The friar's audacious demand so infuriated the heir that he bludgeoned De Corpa to death in the dead of night. Rather than a simple display of brutal violence, each vicious strike symbolized the culmination of the resentment caused by the missionization campaign, begun in 1587, that had disgusted many Guale leaders, who had come to view the friars as 'wicked', 'cunning' men trying desperately to 'destroy our laws and customs'.⁴²

When the Ospo Guale finally smashed down the door and squinted for a sign of the priest in the dim light, they could not see him. Infuriated, they began to ransack the house. Avila, hiding behind the broken door, took his chance and fled. He moved swiftly and quietly to the cover of some rushes near the friary, pausing briefly to consider his next move. His attackers, however, had quickly ravaged the dwelling and hustled outside in search of their real target. The night was clear, and a brilliant moon shone above Ospo; Avila was betrayed by its light, the alert was called, and three arrows thudded into his hand, shoulder and thigh. He collapsed to the ground. His escape had failed.⁴³

His capture brought over three decades of missionization among the Indians of Spanish Florida to a close. But the Franciscans had not been the first religious order to enter Spanish Florida. Jesuits entered the colony in 1566, and their first mission was founded on the peninsula's southwest coast, among the Calusa Indians. Their efforts there proved a harsh

⁴² Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 73; J. Michael Francis & Kathleen M. Cole, ed. *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida: Don Juan and the Guale Uprising of 1597* (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 2011), 107-110 ('wicked', 108; 'cunning', 109; 'destroy our laws', 110).

⁴³ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 76-77. See also Maynard Geiger, 'Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba', *Franciscan Studies*, No. 21 (1940), pp. V-IX, XI-XII, 1-117, 119-140, 29.

immersion into the complexities of Indian custom and thought, and they would leave the region in despair.

The Spanish relationship with the Calusa, a powerful chiefdom on Florida's Gulf Coast, had been extremely volatile before the first Jesuit initiated his mission there. Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, the *adelantado* tasked with destroying the nascent French presence on the province's Atlantic coast, had married the Calusa chief Carlos' sister at the request of the cacique. The consummation of their marriage secured a friendship between the Spanish and this powerful tribe on Florida's Gulf Coast.⁴⁴ To thicken this relationship Carlos agreed, at the Spaniards' request, to accept a Jesuit to evangelize in his territory. But Carlos quickly came to resent the missionary chosen, Juan Rogel. The Jesuit incessantly and publicly criticised what he considered Calusa idolatry, infuriating the cacique. Tensions ran so high that the chief planned to abduct the missionary and murder him.⁴⁵ Fortunately for the mission, Carlos was killed after Rogel had temporarily returned to Havana. The chief had ordered an assembly of nearby villages under the pretence of a trading event. A ruse, the gathering concealed an ambush for the Spaniards. But Carlos was betrayed; soldiers, aware of his deceit, tricked him into entering the fort and stabbed him to death.⁴⁶

It was in this context that an Indian named Felipe succeeded Carlos as chief of the Calusa. The new cacique had nursed a hatred of his predecessor for years – he explained to Rogel that he had been the rightful heir to the chiefdom, and Carlos had broken his promise to hand him the reins of power when he matured.⁴⁷ The new chief immediately made clear to the Jesuit that he wanted to become a vassal of the Spanish king 'for the security of his

⁴⁴ David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1992), 74.

⁴⁵ John H. Hann, ed and trans. *Missions to the Calusa* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991), 265.

⁴⁶ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 267.

⁴⁷ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 267-269.

kingdom and for living in peace and quiet'. He agreed, though reluctantly, that Rogel could resume his missionary work among his people.⁴⁸

The Jesuit wasted no time. Lured by small gifts of food and trinkets, Calusa Indians listened to Rogel's long orations on the nature of the soul, the holy trinity, the evil of idolatry and the profane. Yet the linguistic gulf again posed a formidable barrier. The Calusas' fleeting interest in this odd figure, explaining totally alien, complex concepts in a strange and unfamiliar language, quickly waned. Curiosity turned to indifference; indifference to anger and mockery. When Rogel eventually began to condemn practices fundamental to Calusa religion, and therefore widespread— ritual killing of children, sodomy and polygamy – they began to leave his catechisms.⁴⁹

Their rejection, however, was not simply a silent one. Defiance of Christianity took place on a spectrum. Some were simply disgusted by Rogel's daring challenge to fundamental Calusa practices. Some of these sparred with the Jesuit on the thorny issue of idolatry. If reverence of idols was wicked, they asked, why was the cross, the central emblem of Christianity, adored so fervently? Others simply laughed when he attempted to explain the concept of the soul. Each Calusa believed they had three souls – in the pupil, in their shadow and in their reflection. At death, only the soul in the pupil remained with the body. Illness was attributed to one of these three souls leaving the body. The shaman's duty was to locate the soul and return it. Lastly, one of the souls would enter an animal or a fish upon death, repeating this cycle with smaller and smaller organisms until it withered away completely.⁵⁰ Rogel's description of an immortal, immutable soul that entered one of two realms after death

⁴⁸ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 238 (the security of his kingdom').

⁴⁹ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 239.

⁵⁰ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 238.

must have appeared laughably banal when compared with the lively dynamism of the Calusa afterlife.

It therefore quickly became obvious to Rogel that he had not encountered a submissive and simple-minded community in the Calusa. They were steadfast in their beliefs, could articulate them clearly, and were quick to pounce on any obvious contradiction in his teaching. For Rogel this was obviously a mortal challenge to his methods. He recognised the need to adapt his missiology to the Calusa context he was just beginning to understand. The situation, helpfully, was not hopeless; when he had explained the reasons for venerating the cross, the Indians had understood well enough to conclude that he was telling the truth. But still they refused to consider conversion, answering that they wished to live under their ancestors' laws.⁵¹ With the Calusa cautiously receptive, but sheltering under the obligations of tradition, Rogel turned to the source of authority that could force the faith upon his people – the chief, Felipe.

The new Calusa chief's actions had instantly suggested that he would be a great friend to the mission. He had secured an alliance with Spain, thus securing the new mysterious powers they possessed for the exercise of his authority across southwestern Florida. The Calusa were part of an intricate exchange system that stretched across the peninsula; this network insulated them from the unpredictable climate on Florida's southwest coast by facilitating trade for food with Indians in the interior. In the decades preceding the Spanish arrival Calusa dominance of this complex system was threatened by expansionist Tocobaga Indians from the coastal regions to the north. Felipe's friendship with the Spanish consolidated his new position and forestalled any further turmoil, while potentially

⁵¹ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 239.

countering further Tocobaga aggression.⁵² If Rogel could convert Felipe, he thought, the Calusa and vassal tribes would follow.

Aware that the alliance with Spain would be strengthened if Rogel was treated well, Felipe began feeding him information on how best to missionize among his people, and he began ordering the Indians to listen to Christian teaching.⁵³ In addition, the initial private conversations between the two men were extremely promising. Felipe agreed with Rogel's teachings on the unity of God, his creation of the universe and his limitless power. Both the missionary and the chief could recognise features of the other's celestial order. The cosmic power in Calusa belief was formed of three figures, distinct in their tasks but nevertheless unified in their responsibility for the universe; and the omnipotent God of Christianity drew strong parallels with the first of these figures. Finally, in similar fashion to other Calusa, he was forced to admit the truth of Christianity after Rogel used the Bible as evidence for its validity. For the chief the physical retention of Christian teaching in writing - a radical, frighteningly powerful new technology - suggested greater truth when compared to Calusa belief. Rogel triumphantly wrote that Felipe had admitted that since their customs and practices were inherited 'only by tradition, by the second or third passing down of it, it

⁵² Though there remains controversy about the reasons for Calusa expansion in the centuries before Spanish contact, it is agreed that they stood at the apex of an Indigenous system of exchange that stretched across southern Florida from the Gulf to Atlantic coasts. The Calusa have been described as the 'overlords' of the entire southern part of the Florida peninsula. The Tequesta, another powerful tribe bordering the Calusa domain, were subordinate to them. The Tequesta paramount may have been related to his Calusa counterpart. Fontaneda listed over 40 settlements in total as subject to the Calusa chief. For the network and the debate surrounding its origins, see Randolph J. Widmer, *The Evolution of Calusa: A Nonagricultural Chieftdom of the Southwest Florida Coast* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988), esp. 261-277; William H. Marquardt, 'Tracking the Calusa: A Retrospective', *Southeastern Archaeology*, Vol. 33, Issue 1 (2014), pp. 1-24. For Fontaneda's estimations, see Jerald T. Milanich, *Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1995), 52. For the Tequesta, see John Mann Goggin, 'The Tequesta Indians of Southern Florida', *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (April, 1940), pp. 274-284, 274; Woodbury Lowery, *Spanish Settlements Within the Present Limits of the United States: Florida, 1564-74* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), 260.

⁵³ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 240.

becomes entirely changed'.⁵⁴ The superiority of Spanish might, analogous features of Calusa and Christian faith, and an authoritative new technology combined to give Rogel hope that Felipe could be persuaded to convert.

But though, as *cacique*, Felipe possessed extraordinary authority over the Calusa and his vassals, he was equally beholden to a complex web of obligations and duties that validated and maintained his leadership. Rogel soon realised that Felipe's authority was contingent on responsibilities inimical to the life of a respectable Christian - the Jesuit had tripped into a relationship between a *cacique* and his people that made satisfactory conversion almost inconceivable.

Rogel's suspicions were aroused by Felipe's continued promises to abandon all sinful custom only when Menéndez returned to Florida. The *adelantado* had apparently given Felipe permission to continue practicing his traditional belief until his return, but Rogel was sceptical. He saw no change in the chief's zeal for his 'witchcrafts and superstitions'. Every complaint he made was referred to Menéndez' command.⁵⁵ This scepticism was justified when Felipe married his sister. Crestfallen at such a flagrant violation of his teaching, Rogel pleaded with the *cacique* to undo the ceremony. But Felipe informed him that it was 'a very ancient custom' for the *cacique* to take his sister as his wife; furthermore, his vassals had requested he do so, a demand that Felipe was bound to obey. In order to placate Rogel the Indian promised to leave her once he had become a Christian – after Menéndez' return. The priest was disgusted but, determined not to let an opportunity for instruction slip away, gave a speech condemning more generally the practice of polygamy. It had little effect. Felipe replied that Calusa men could not change their lives as completely as Rogel hoped. Rather, he should be content with burning their idols, condemning witchcraft, and forbidding sodomy

⁵⁴ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 241 ('it becomes entirely changed').

⁵⁵ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 243 ('witchcrafts and superstitions').

and ritual killings. These losses could be tolerated, but outlawing polygamy would be unendurable. Felipe had made it obvious that until Menéndez returned he did not plan to abandon Calusa custom for Christian teaching.⁵⁶

This impasse was confirmed by another clear example that Felipe's authority was not imposed but accepted. Rogel asked the vassals of Felipe to become Christians, and they replied that they would not do so until their cacique led the way. Undeterred, Rogel harassed them with questions about their idols, perhaps thinking that by discrediting their beliefs he could force a more receptive attitude. Instead, he stumbled across attitudes that further discouraged him. The vassals replied that they could not answer his questions – the only knowledge they possessed of the idols and their worship was what the *cacique* and his shaman told them. Confused, Rogel asked Felipe to elaborate. The chief explained that to maintain his privileged status as king he must continually demonstrate his detailed knowledge of the idols, their cults, and appropriate forms of veneration. To do otherwise would invite accusations that he was not a legitimate ruler, because this knowledge was passed down through the line of chiefly succession as a validation of the *cacique's* lineage - Calusa rulers, as Felipe told the Jesuit, were 'obliged to know'. Felipe claimed that this duty was one of the reasons for his desire to wait for Menéndez' return before publicly committing to the faith. In the interval he could convince his vassals and subjects of the errors of this esotericism, convincing them that he was not forsaking the idols and their cults out of ignorance, but by reason.⁵⁷

Felipe was weaponizing a well-established Calusa custom. Rene Laudonniere, the Frenchman who had founded the settlement Menéndez had been sent to destroy, wrote of the nature of Carlos' rule. Two Spaniards who had been taken into Calusa society after being

⁵⁶ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 243 ('very ancient custom').

⁵⁷ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 244-247 ('obliged to know', 247).

shipwrecked informed Laudonniere ‘that the king was held in great reverence by his subjects and that he made them believe that his sorceries and spells were the reason why the earth brought forth her fruit’. To maintain this authority he ‘withdrew one or two times each year to a certain house, accompanied by two or three of his closest associates, and there did certain magic deeds’. Secrecy was critical; if anyone attempted to witness these private rituals they were killed on Carlos’ orders.⁵⁸

Rogel struggled to react to this exposure to the true complexity of his new mission field. There was no other section of the Calusa polity to turn to. Felipe, as *cacique*, was the custodian of traditions inherited from a long kingly lineage, customs that he was obliged to follow; in turn his subjects remained loyal, convinced of his rule by his adherence to their expectations. For Rogel’s purposes, this cultural matrix allowed no room for the fundamental demands of Christianity. The same reason for the hopes placed in the cacique - his formidable authority - was precisely why he could not accede to Rogel’s demands. Even his thundering sermons about the dreadful horrors of Hell fell flat against the logics that stitched the Calusa world together. The priest had misunderstood. He had imagined an ossified Calusa culture in which the chief made orders that subjects were bound to obey; instead, Felipe’s authority moved laterally rather than vertically, dependent on seamless navigation between the spheres of power and obligation. Dismayed, Rogel apparently gave up. He expressed a desire to go elsewhere, perhaps further inland towards Indians more receptive to the faith. But the Spaniards refused to escort him, and no Indian would dare take him to communities hostile to their chief.⁵⁹ The expansive and dynamic religious encounter that Rogel had hoped for

⁵⁸ René Laudonniere. *Three Voyages*, translated by Charles E. Bennett (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2001), 110-111 (‘held in great reverence’, 110; ‘did certain magic deeds’, 110-111).

⁵⁹ Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 248-249.

therefore splintered under the twin pressures of an equally lively Calusa culture and a volatile interior world.

Adrift in a sea of confusing novelties, Rogel had identified Felipe as the safest, most productive port. Indeed, the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, the rules and precepts of the order written by Ignatius Loyola himself, recommended this as the most viable strategy.⁶⁰ These rulers were those best positioned to benefit from a relationship with the new and still mysterious power that the missionaries represented. For this reason Felipe eagerly accepted Rogel into his society. However, the same status that encouraged embracing the missionaries actively discouraged fundamental cultural change. Proselytization, the Jesuit would come to understand, had very clear limits – limits which fell far short of his own standard for a successful mission. He eventually recognised this contradiction, and his zeal, strong enough to sustain a perilous ocean voyage, spartan conditions and ridicule and hatred by the Indians, was momentarily flattened.

Like that of the Franciscans who had briefly and fruitlessly laboured in the Pueblo world along the Rio Grande, Rogel's evangelical logic, when applied to the Calusa, created a disastrous paradox. Fellow Jesuits of his tried establishing a mission on the Atlantic coast further north but achieved even less. On 10th September 1570 a small band of Spanish Jesuits, led by Father Baptiste Segura, sailed into the Chesapeake Bay and landed in Ajacan, the Spanish term for what would later be Virginia. No soldiers accompanied them. The mission lasted only 5 months; it ended in the deaths of all the missionaries, murdered by the Indian Don Luis. Along with Rogel's dismissal of the Calusa mission as a lost cause, the

⁶⁰ The *Constitutions* ordered that in missionization 'preference ought to be given to those persons and places, which, through their own improvement, become a cause which can spread the good accomplished to many others who are under their influence or take guidance from them'. See Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, ed. and trans. George E. Ganss (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), 275, quoted in James Axtell, *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 161.

killings brought the Jesuit effort in Spanish Florida to a close. The surviving evangelists from the first Florida mission moved to other imperial theatres in Mexico and the Philippines, and the Jesuit order abandoned *La Florida*.⁶¹

Guale Revolts

But *La Florida* was vast. Another Indian group, the Guale, offered the next wave of missionaries a new field to cultivate. This effort was the most comprehensive missionary endeavour yet in early America.

Before Rogel left Spanish Florida forever he had learned of a new group of Indians close to St. Augustine who had apparently been convinced of the truth of Christianity. Menéndez had visited a chief in Guale who had begged the *adelantado* to ask his God for rain. A cross was erected, Menéndez offered a prayer, and rain began to fall. Astonished, the cacique promptly added veneration of the cross to the panoply of spiritual practices that governed his community's life. More negatively, an heir to a Guale chiefdom had beaten a young Spaniard left in his village to learn the Indian language. In defiance of the new alien faith, he also tore the cross into pieces. In response, the Spaniard promised to 'pray to the cacique of heaven' for his punishment; within three days the heir lay dead. His father and his vassals, petrified of this new quasi-shamanic power, restored the cross and treated it with reverence.⁶²

⁶¹ For a detailed narrative of the Ajacan mission, see Clifford M. Lewis & Albert J. Loomie, *The Spanish Jesuit Mission in Virginia 1570-1572* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 5-67. For Father Segura's poor leadership, his conflict with civil officials in Spanish Florida, and the production of the missionaries' martyrdom see Frank Marotti Jr., 'Juan Baptiste de Segura and the Failure of the Florida Jesuit Mission, 1566-1572', *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (January, 1985), pp. 267-279; Charlotte M. Gradie, 'Spanish Jesuits in Virginia: The Mission That Failed', *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (April, 1988), pp. 131-156; Seth Mallios, 'The Apotheosis of Ajacan's Jesuit Missionaries', *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Spring, 2007), pp. 223-244.

⁶² Hann, *Missions to the Calusa*, 281-282 ('the cacique of heaven', 282).

In 1574 the same chief travelled to St. Augustine for baptism. He had gone beyond Felipe's grudging acceptance of Christian instruction and was willing to experience the most fundamental aspect of conversion. One of the Franciscans duly performed the ceremony, optimistic that the authority the chief wielded would function as a vehicle for the further spread of Christianity throughout Guale. Like the Calusa chief he held power over a regional complex of vassals and subjects, who would all be expected to follow the cacique's example. But one of his fellow caciques, however, refused. His authority threatened, the baptised chief travelled to the village of this disobedient Indian. He approached the settlement looking to resolve this problem; his strategy, whether violent or argumentative, is unclear. The heir of the rebellious chief, perhaps fearing the former response, killed the Guale cacique with a single arrow. Over in seconds, the shockwaves from this encounter eventually swept through the entire Guale province.

The murdered chief's wife was enraged by his death. Seething with fury, she rushed to Santa Elena to appeal to the Governor, Diego de Velasco, for vengeance. She weaponised her Christian status, claiming that the chief's baptism obliged the Spaniards in Florida to protect her and avenge his murder.⁶³ Velasco quickly ordered all the chiefs in Guale province to assemble at Santa Elena. When the men were assembled he ordered them to identify and bring forth the Indian who had fired the fatal shot; his command was followed, and they returned to the settlement with the guilty man. Velasco was now satisfied that this matter was resolved – he offered the chief's wife gifts as compensation for his death, hoping to conclude the conflict. She refused. Her anger and grief, she made clear, would only be assuaged by the death of the murderer; more worryingly for Velasco, she promised that violence would sweep through Guale communities if he failed to order justice done.⁶⁴

⁶³ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 33.

⁶⁴ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 33.

The Governor had nowhere to turn. If he refused to execute the chief's killer his widow could deliver revenge on a catastrophic scale. Furthermore, she would lead this chaos as a renowned baptised Christian; her actions would cast the new faith as an ideological veneer adopted by cynical Indians desperate for an advantageous relationship with the Spaniards. Despite this, the alternative seemed even more damaging. Velasco had, perhaps foolishly, promised the assembled chiefs that no harm would come to them or the guilty man if they agreed to identify him. Breaking this promise could ignite a fierce response and irretrievably damage the reputation of Spanish officials among their Indian neighbours.

He chose what he evidently decided to be the least damaging option – he publicly executed the heir. The gathered chiefs watched aghast as he was led to the gallows and hung, his swaying body a stark representation of Velasco's betrayal. Shocked and incensed, they left Santa Elena to return to their own villages, 'swearing that they would avenge this affront'.⁶⁵ Aside from an obvious provocation, the heir's corpse was emblematic of a greater problem for Franciscans. The baptism eagerly conferred on the chief and his wife was lauded as the foundation of a burgeoning tide of conversion across Guale communities. But the reception and effect of the rite was extremely unpredictable within a context of internal Guale conflict. The chief's wife manipulated her Christianity into a tool of vengeance, in turn heightening the implications of Velasco's already difficult decision. In short, Franciscans performing baptisms quickly and without questioning soon found that such a strategy was potentially disastrous.

The implications of this mistake soon became clear. The Christianity wielded by the chief's wife, and sanctioned by her baptism, had been decisive in Velasco's decision to choose the execution of the guilty Indian. The other Guale leaders who had witnessed his

⁶⁵ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 33 ('avenge this affront').

hanging kept their promise. Violence swept along the Atlantic coast. In response to the brazen execution of the cacique's heir, the chiefs had made a clandestine pact with the Escamacu, their neighbours to the north, each agreeing to kill any Spaniard that was brought to their communities. Soon, this threat became apparent; twenty-two Spanish soldiers roaming the Florida coast searching for Indian escapees arrived at Escamacu. After meeting with the males - the women and children did not emerge - the men were ambushed that night. In addition, three soldiers in Guale left for Santa Elena after being warned of the bloodthirsty intentions of their hosts. But they were equally unfortunate; hurrying back to the sanctuary of the capital, they met the party of Escamacu that had killed the other soldiers. They had beheaded their victims and were taking their trophies to the Guale as gifts. The three Spaniards were apprehended, returned to their hosts, and murdered in their former stations. News of the killings came from the one Spanish soldier to escape.⁶⁶

Panic struck Santa Elena. Isolated and surrounded by a hostile alliance of Indians, it could offer little safety against marauding bands of murderous warriors. The small garrison abandoned the fort and fled to St. Augustine. The unrest made clear the function of Christianity in Guale communities. It was evident from the arguments made by the murdered chief's wife that baptism, from an Indian perspective, opened a reciprocal relationship with Spanish agents. The ceremony was a ritualised expression of alliance, not an indication of fidelity to Christian laws. Baptism had been hauled by Indigenous actors away from its Christian association into the Guale system of diplomacy.

The rancorous uprising was the most explosive conflict in Spanish Florida in the 1570s and 80s. Franciscans had been caught up in the pulses of seismic violence, but had not been harmed. There were very few in the territory anyway - in 1578 only two friars were

⁶⁶ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 34-35.

stationed in *La Florida*, and six years later only four.⁶⁷ The short missionization among the Guale had produced a baptism of a senior Indian figure, but the resulting tremors from the ceremony had grown into shattering waves of violence. In 1587, however, the missions were renewed again; Father Alonso de Reinoso sailed into St. Augustine with twelve other Franciscans to restart the missionary program across Florida.⁶⁸

Avila and the Ambiguity of Missionization

Ten years later, Avila was captured at Ospo. Four other Franciscans were murdered in the frenzy that followed. If Avila had also died the revolt may have appeared an utterly damning rejection of the Christian faith. In what followed, however, his treatment by Guales embodied the more ambiguous position that the Franciscans had carved out for themselves within the arena of Indian life in Florida.

His Indian captors, indeed, initially intended his execution. They forced him to endure a torturous march - naked, severely injured and constantly humiliated by those driving him on – further inland to the Guale village of Tulafina. Upon arrival he was hurried to the site of his execution, which had been arranged carefully to convey the range of punishments that he was to suffer. The centrepiece of the display was a large, imposing cross, flanked by a whip and a torch. The cacique of Tulafina explained the significance of the cross to Avila; the symbol was ‘an invention of yours so we shall have to place you on it’.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ David Hurst Thomas, ‘The Spanish Missions of La Florida: An Overview’, in *Columbian Consequences, Vol. 2: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands East*, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), pp. 357-399, 373.

⁶⁸ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 42.

⁶⁹ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 87.

Later that day, Avila was restrained and tormented further by a ceremony mimicking and mocking the Christian Mass. An Indian dressed in a chasuble led the ritual while another placed a book before the priest. With the atmosphere electric in anticipation of his death the following day, those assembled roared for Avila to revere the book as he did in his own liturgies; each time he refused, an unidentified cacique who had travelled to Tulafina to witness the execution snatched the book from the Indian's hands and struck Avila hard across the face with it. His agony was only ended after three more hours of dancing, during which he was beaten repeatedly with clubs and burning cinders were thrown onto his open wounds.⁷⁰

This violent choreography, however, ended in dispute. Arguments flared over whether to carry out Avila's execution as planned or to hold him as a slave. A number of reasons for the latter were discussed. His life could be exchanged for that of a cacique's heir who was currently being held at St. Augustine; others were adamant that the daughter of the sun had appeared to them and told them not to kill the priest; and, perhaps most decisively, the chief of the settlement of Talapo had claimed ownership of Avila as 'his priest', threatening anyone who harmed him further. In the end, Avila himself was given the choice - life or death. He chose life.⁷¹ His hellish experience that followed was, however, not simply an indication that the Franciscans had pushed too far; it suggested an ambiguity at the heart of the early religious encounter that had not yet been unveiled elsewhere in early America. Even as his tormenters consciously rejected the new faith he had brought to them they made clear their wish to possess the power of the new forces he so clearly carried.

⁷⁰ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 88-89.

⁷¹ J. Michael Francis & Kathleen M. Cole, ed. *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida*, 109 ('his priest'); Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 89.

Even though the Guale Indians had decimated the Franciscan mission within a matter of days, they had not forgotten the latent spiritual power lurking within and among Spaniards. The *adelantado* Menéndez had communed with the forces of nature to cause rain to fall, and a prophecy of death spoken in anger had proved true. Avila embodied the same formidable forces. The liturgy, doctrine and imagery of Christianity that he had carried to his hosts had been firmly rejected; but the priest's other, more practical abilities were strongly desired.

During his incarceration Indians from across the Guale villages persistently harassed him to abandon the customs and laws of his order and 'accept that of the Indians'. This prospect was offered as a generous gift. They warned Avila that the Spaniards would never lay eyes on him again, nor he them. Their recommendation was to 'leave your law and become an Indian and you will enjoy what we enjoy; you will have a wife or more, if you wish; furthermore, in the other life you will enjoy what you enjoy here, for we know that he who has been miserable and mean in this life, will be the same in the other...Give up the things you teach for they are foolish'.⁷²

This wish to incorporate Avila and the powers he possessed into their community was further demonstrated when the Guale resolved to go to war. After the decision had been made, a group of warriors brought ten harquebuses to the priest and ordered him to fashion powder and bullets. If he refused, they would kill him. Avila quickly assured them of his ignorance, but they refused to believe him. They answered, 'do not excuse yourself for you do know how; your books tell you how you can make them'. The priest obviously appeared puzzled, so the tomes were brought before him - a copy of the *Summa* by Thomas Aquinas, a prayer book, and a breviary. Exasperated, Avila thought quickly and asked for the materials

⁷² Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 92 ('that of the Indians', 'give up the things you teach').

required to craft the necessary items. Only then, after the Indians conducted an extensive search and failed to find the resources, did they leave him alone.⁷³

For Avila, the association of his theological texts with the knowledge to manufacture parts for weaponry was preposterous. But for the gathering of Indian warriors eager to utilise this fearsome new arsenal it made perfect sense. Writing was an equally powerful, alien technology that preserved beliefs and thoughts; with very little understanding of the actual content of Avila's books it stood to reason that the knowledge to produce ammunition was included somewhere within its pages.

The Guale had re-conceptualised Avila. No longer a hated and derided vehicle for a threatening new faith, he appeared now as a custodian of novel and exceptionally powerful forces. This status as an odd but valuable figure was strengthened each time he resisted the Guale's commands, threats and offerings.⁷⁴ When Florida's Governor, Mendez de Canzo, arrived at Tolomato with the Indian hostages from the village cowering on the deck of his ship, the Guale quickly released Avila to them. He had been held for almost ten months. The ship hastily returned to St Augustine. In July, after he had recovered sufficiently, he was asked to testify about his experience, but he flatly refused. His ghastly ordeal had been such that, if narrated, de Canzo's only legitimate response would be to coldly execute all who had been involved in his captivity; as a Franciscan, Avila was therefore forbidden from truthfully relating his experience.⁷⁵

Spanish Florida was the setting for the most comprehensive experiment in the first phase of missionization in early America. Its yield, however, mirrored the disappointing results of New Mexico. Rogel and Avila came to be, like their priestly contemporaries across

⁷³ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 93 ('your books tell you how').

⁷⁴ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 91.

⁷⁵ Michael Francis & Kathleen M. Cole, ed. *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida*, 106-107.

the continent, considered figures both able to protect Indians in their care and open avenues of exchange with colonial centres. These, however, were the limits of Indian toleration. Avila felt most keenly the consequences of de Corpa transgressing this boundary, and Rogel eventually realised that the vibrant forces guiding Calusa life discouraged any further development.

More generally, missiological efforts in the Spanish borderlands in the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries exposed a problem common to Franciscans and Jesuits in New Mexico and on the Florida peninsula. Missionization had been superficially effective, but the missiologies that informed Franciscan and Jesuit endeavour were irreconcilable with the explosive clash of colonizing forces and Indian power. Such contexts differed - Rodriguez' strategy of connecting evangelism to preferential treatment by Spanish soldiers was, for example, distinct from Rogel's targeting of Felipe to overcome intense objections to his preaching – but each such response was logically flawed. Paradoxes multiplied as missionaries were unsuccessful in adapting appropriate conceptual and strategic models for evangelism in the Spanish borderlands. This failure, furthermore, was a key factor inviting the dissolution of both colonies at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Manipulating Indian Autonomy

Spain's nascent colonies stood on the brink. News of Oñate's brutality had reached the Spanish crown, and the King was horrified. In 1602, he had ordered Mexican Viceroy Gaspar de Zúñiga Acevedo y Fonseca to investigate the reports; four years later, having seen a report that outlined the shocking scale of Oñate's cruelty, he ordered his successor Juan de Mendoza to halt the expedition with immediate effect. The *conquistador* was to be detained when he arrived back in Mexico City, replaced with a different, 'discreet and Christian',

Governor for New Mexico.⁷⁶ The Franciscans were so disgusted with Oñate that they returned to Mexico City while he was exploring east of the Rio Grande, abandoning the short-lived missions that they had established. Tribute demands were central to their anger. In 1601 one friar had complained that during the icy winter months ‘our men, with little consideration, took blankets away from the Indian women, leaving them naked and shivering with cold. Finding themselves naked and miserable, they embraced their children tightly in their arms to warm and protect them’. Others observed that continued excessive demands left Pueblo Indians with ‘nothing but what they had on’.⁷⁷ Only one Franciscan, Juan de Escalona, stayed in the colony as a symbolic gesture that the Franciscans had not yet abandoned the region totally.⁷⁸

The Atlantic shore of the vast Spanish borderlands was faring no better. After Santa Elena had been abandoned St. Augustine stood as the single Spanish settlement in all *La Florida*. Effective Spanish might extended no further than the town’s immediate hinterland; Jesuits had abandoned the colony in despair, and the Franciscans had been devastated by the explosive revolt of the Guale missions; the Florida interior, swarming with western Timucua and Apalachee Indian communities, remained untouched; Francis Drake continued to terrorize Spanish shipping in search of plunder and glory; civil officials looked warily northward at English attempts to settle at Roanoke; and the royal subsidy for the colony in the 1590s was sporadic at best, making food scarce and salaries almost non-existent.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Charles Wilson Hackett, ed. *Historical Documents relating to New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya, and Approaches Thereto, to 1773, Vol. 1* (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1923), 413-415 (‘discreet and Christian’, 415).

⁷⁷ Matthew Liebmann. *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), 32 (‘naked and miserable’, ‘nothing but what they had on’).

⁷⁸ John L. Kessell. *Kiva, Cross, and Crown: The Pecos Indians and New Mexico, 1540-1840*, (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1979), 87-90; Jack D. Forbes. *Apache, Navajo and Spaniard*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 95-106.

⁷⁹ Charles W. Arnade. *Florida on Trial, 1593-1602*, (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1959), 3-10.

This dismal reality prompted inquiries about the possible abandonment of both colonies. Felipe III ordered an investigation into the viability of *La Florida* in 1600 and wanted it abandoned completely in 1606. New Mexico was less expensive than Florida, but the Rio Grande Valley was still absorbing enormous amounts of Spanish capital - resources that would be better utilised in Europe or more successful settlements in Latin America. In the first decade of the 1600s the Council of the Indies and the Crown debated halting their efforts in the region altogether.⁸⁰

But Franciscan efforts would not be abandoned so readily. The missionaries of St. Francis waged a campaign across early America to keep Spanish interests in the continent alive. They had witnessed genuine stirrings of affection toward Christianity among their Indian audience – sometimes in the form of a dramatic emotional embrace of the new faith, other times as an eager and thoughtful interrogation of the friars. Their contemporaries had been butchered in pursuit of souls on the sprawling plains of Quivira, in pueblos along the Rio Grande, and in formal missions in Guale villages; their martyrdoms, though practically catastrophic, were indications that their efforts were providentially sanctioned. These empirical and more mysterious developments were certain signs that missionization in New Mexico and Florida had a promising future.

In February 1608 friar Lazaro Ximenez was ordered by the Viceroy of New Spain, Velasco, to travel back to New Mexico and determine, in consultation with the officials and other friars there, how best to abandon the territory. The Crown was concerned about its moral responsibility to Pueblos who had at least nominally submitted to the Christian faith and was determined that they would not be left in the region to face the ire of those who had rejected it. Newly baptized Christian Indians were to be brought along with those few

⁸⁰ Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, 88-89.

remaining settlers who would return to New Spain. Ximenez' return in December, however, carried astounding news. When he had arrived back in New Mexico he had been informed that, in his absence, more than seven thousand baptisms had been performed. Untold others were so eager to receive the blessing that 'it seemed the Lord was inspiring them to accept Him to gain salvation'. Unidentified metals had also been unearthed, but not yet evaluated.⁸¹ Velasco forwarded this astonishing information to the King a few days later; in early-1609 the Crown responded by approving his decision not to leave New Mexico. The mission had been saved.

A cruel irony lurked in this reversal of fortune. When confronting missionaries, Indians in New Mexico and Florida encountered adversaries for whom violence and death were welcomed. In the Franciscan tradition, martyrdom was the supreme missiological act. It appeared to confirm the apostolic nature of their work, indicating their place in an evangelistic tradition stretching through time back to Biblical accounts of missionization by the Apostles themselves. The most decisive form that Indian rejection took – the slaying of a missionary – therefore did not convince the Franciscans of the futility of a mission. Instead, it suggested divine sanction.⁸² In addition, it offered the missionaries in New Mexico a powerful rhetorical device when the Franciscan order was asked to vacate the territory. In 1602, when different missionary institutions were being considered to replace them, six senior Franciscans in New Spain referred to the martyrdoms of Rodriguez, Santa Maria and Lopez as reasons why it would be unjust to recall their successors. In a gruesome description,

⁸¹ Hammond & Rey. *Don Juane de Oñate, II*, 1067 (the Lord was inspiring them').

⁸² Zárate Salmerón. *Relaciones*, translated by Alicia Ronstadt Milich, (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace Publishers, Inc., 1966), 99. The desire for martyrdom was, for the Franciscans, a desire to emulate Christ; therefore martyrdom was a step on the road to evangelical perfection, and thus one of the primary motivations of Franciscan missionaries. See Isabelle Heullant-Donat. 'Martyrdom and Identity in the Franciscan Order (Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries)', *Franciscan Studies*, Vol. 70, (2012), pp. 429-453; E. Randolph Daniel. 'The Desire for Martyrdom: A "Leitmotiv" of St. Bonaventure', *Franciscan Studies*, Vol. 32, (1972), pp. 74-87, 85-86.

friar Diego Charo claimed that ‘the Indians crushed the heads of three of them and ate them as fricasse’. A later petition signed by the other five was less lurid but equally emotive; the Franciscans, they reminded the Viceroy, were ‘always the first in this kingdom’, and had laid the foundations for a Catholic surge in New Mexico ‘with untold hardships, shedding of blood, and numerous martyrs’.⁸³ These arguments helped to secure the order’s position as the sole missiological organisation in the province, therefore providing for Ximenez’ fantastical claims six year later, which were itself extremely significant in the decision to retain New Mexico as a Spanish colony.

In Florida, the deaths of the Franciscans in Guale communities had a similar effect. There, however, the aftermath of the revolt catalysed a brief Indian conflict, pitting the caciques who now desired a trading relationship with St. Augustine against those who had considered the chaos a total rejection of any future connection with the Spanish Empire. The cacique of Asao, Don Domingo, travelled under military guard to St. Augustine in 1601 to protest his innocence in the killing of the friars, to render obedience to Mendez de Canzo, and to promise his service to the Crown in the future. Four years earlier, in an assault on San Pedro Island during the uprising in 1597, he had stood defiantly at the front of his canoe wearing friar Berascola’s hat, taunting the Indians on shore by assuring them that the hat was ‘all that remains of that priest’. De Canzo seized on his change in attitude by promising peace, gifts and alliance if they would bring Juanillo to him, dead or alive.⁸⁴

Without delay, Domingo assembled a force of five hundred warriors from those gathered near Tulufina. He knew that Juanillo and Don Francisco had fled to Yfusinique. When they arrived, they encountered a village prepared for war, ‘heavily fortified, fully

⁸³ Hammond & Rey. *Don Juane de Oñate, II*, 978 & 981 (‘crushed the heads’, 978; ‘shedding of blood’, 981).

⁸⁴ *JHCCR*, MS006: Fernando de Valdes Inquiry (1602), 157; J. Michael Francis & Kathleen M. Cole, ed. *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida: Don Juan and the Guale Uprising*, 42 & 134-5 (‘all that remains’, 42).

entrenched with wooden posts, large mounds of earth, and surrounded by deep pits'. When ordered, the Indian inhabitants refused to surrender either Juanillo or Don Francisco to Domingo. They firmly rejected the offer of an alliance with the Spanish, and threatened to kill the cacique and all the warriors. In response, Domingo ordered arrows fired into the village. Those sheltering inside fired back. As each volley whistled back and forth, only the attackers took casualties. Eight died, with fifty-six badly wounded. Juanillo and Don Francisco remained hidden. Domingo changed strategy, and charged the village; the gambit worked, and twenty-four Indians inside were slain, including the two targets. Juanillo's body was decapitated, his scalp sent to St. Augustine as proof of his demise. As part of the bargain Domingo asked for six Spanish soldiers in return, 'so that other caciques would see that the lord governor looked upon him favourably...none of the other caciques would dare turn belligerent'.⁸⁵

Don Domingo had clearly been jostling for position in a Guale community disoriented by extreme violence. His strategy, however, also furnished opportunities for the Franciscans to argue strongly for retaining Spanish Florida. His actions shattered any perception of a united Guale rebellion, allowing friar Baltasar Lopez to report to the Valdes inquiry that the Indians guilty of killing the friars 'were very few'. Domingo had expressed his regret to Lopez himself, promising to rebuild the churches that were destroyed and welcome new friars among them. Francisco Pareja referenced the 'war against the village that was the cause of their uprising...as a result of which they all became tranquil'.⁸⁶ Juanillo's death at Yfusinique allowed Franciscans to portray the 1597 revolt as an aberration, an unfortunate interruption catalysed by a small Indian contingent who hated the friars' intrusion into their communities. An overwhelming force of Guale warriors had made obvious their rejection of this group by

⁸⁵ J. Michael Francis & Kathleen M. Cole, ed. *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida: Don Juan and the Guale Uprising*, 139-141 ('would dare turn belligerent', 141).

⁸⁶ *JHCCR*, MS006, 142-3 & 147 ('very few', 142; 'they all became tranquil', 147).

murdering them. With their influence apparently gone, Indian communities on the Atlantic coast stood ready to embrace missionaries once more.

The most decisive expression of Indian agency in the early missiological encounter – martyrdoms – were therefore fundamental to a continued Franciscan presence in New Spain. Rodriguez, Santa Maria and Lopez' deaths, it was argued, obligated the Viceroy to allow the order to continue to missionize the region. Six years later, Ximenez's fantastical account of a massive surge of Christian zeal among the Pueblos was crucial to securing New Mexico's existence. Likewise, in Florida, the killing of the five friars in 1597 soon catalysed conflict among the Guale caciques for St. Augustine's favour. In turn, this allowed the Franciscans reporting to the Valdes inquiry to depict the Atlantic coast as a fresh new mission field, now that the few rotten stumps had been torn out. The swift mutation of the meaning of the friars' deaths was a testament to the adaptability and savvy of their contemporaries, who cleverly manipulated their legacy to provoke pity, reverence, and an understanding that the missions of Florida and New Mexico must be allowed to endure.

This hurried effort to save the missions from abandonment was the first effort to make early American evangelism coherent, and therefore attractive to later missionaries and the colonial agents that provided logistical and economic support. The first decades had been utterly chaotic, betraying a lack of strategy suitable to the new mission fields in the Spanish borderlands. This absence of a deliberate and considered method was complemented by an ignorance of what these new regions offered to the missionaries themselves, a disastrous combination within a context of powerful and unpredictable assertions of Indian agency. But in their desperation Franciscans propagandized effectively enough that New Mexico and Florida were retained as possessions claimed by the Spanish Crown. Their critical intervention was a vital bridge linking the highly disordered experience of the Franciscans in

the sixteenth century with the creation of a new, confident and expansive missiology by the 1630s.

Chapter 2

The First American Missiologies: New France and the Spanish Borderlands, c. 1610-1645

As Franciscans celebrated their successful campaign to preserve the evangelical mission in the southern borderlands of Florida and New Mexico and secure them for themselves, two Jesuits landed at Port Royal, the French settlement huddled on the western shores of the Acadian peninsula. Rogel, and the other Jesuits in the early American territories claimed by Spain, had abandoned the continent as a lost cause. By contrast, the arrival of Fathers Pierre Biard and Enemond Massé in Port Royal, in May 1611, catalysed a reversal of this position.

The Jesuits' arrival in New France had been a long time coming. In 1604 Henri IV, at the urging of his royal confessor Pierre Coton, had asked the Jesuit General Claude Aquaviva for two missionaries to accompany the French fishing fleet bound for Acadia. This was agreed, but the Jesuits would not see the New World until 1611. Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt, an aristocratic gentleman who had accompanied one of the first explorations of Acadia in 1604 and had been granted control of the enterprise in 1608, had initially refused to take the Jesuits. But when he ordered his son back to France in 1610 to garner more financial support for his precarious settlement the Queen Mother and Madame de Guercheville, wife of the Governor of Paris, both assured the seigneur of Port Royal of their patronage if he accepted the Jesuits in the New World; Coton made a similar pledge. Grudgingly, Poutrincourt consented to the Jesuits arrival. Fathers Pierre Biard and Enemond Massé left

Dieppe with the voyage in January the following year, landing at Port Royal in May of 1611.⁸⁷

Over the next three decades Jesuits in New France crafted an early America unique in its evangelical potential, its significance for the missionaries themselves, its environment, and its geographic scope. This chapter analyses how Biard and Massé's arrival in Acadia initiated this process, beginning with their reactions to the Micmac Indians they evangelised and the region itself. Their successors, first based at Quebec then expanding into Huron Indian communities in the heart of the Great Lakes, then extended this institutional effort to interpret their new mission fields in early America. Their creation of an American missiology was mirrored by Franciscans in the Spanish borderlands, who also deftly adapted to the demands and possibilities of these new regions. By mid-century both early American missiologies had reimagined the continent as a unique evangelical space.

The Acadian Experiment

Biard and Massé's attitudes toward the mission in New France were different. Each emphasised a different component of evangelism that appealed to them. Massé had first been inspired toward foreign mission when he learned of Francois Xavier's missiological endeavours in Asia. Xavier's example prompted 'some thought of shedding his blood, or at least employing his life, in some foreign country for the salvation of souls'. Massé's corresponding obsession with hardship, contempt and rejection was seen in one of his first acts as a new Jesuit. On a pilgrimage to procure alms for the Society, he was hosted briefly by 'an Ecclesiastic of rank and piety', who treated him with 'extraordinary respect and love'.

⁸⁷ W.J. Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987), 26-27; Marcel Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973), 84 & 107-111.

However, this only frightened him; ‘imagining that the rebuffs of the world must be the mark of the union with God that he wished to have’, Massé prayed that his host would withdraw his hospitality and expel him and his companions from his care. His wish was granted, and from then on the Jesuit was ‘assured of his continuance in the service of his Lord’. The theme of sacrifice, either as martyrdom or lesser suffering, did not diminish upon his arrival at Port Royal. Rather, after receiving the first letter ever sent by the Jesuit General Claude Aquaviva to Canada, Massé replied that he had become even more zealous to ‘sacrifice myself more quickly and more completely for the salvation of these peoples’.⁸⁸

In contrast to Massé’s fixation on suffering, rejection, and hardship, Biard was constantly focused on the spiritual battleground that he was entering in Acadia. His obligation was felt not in fealty to a Christological example that demanded suffering and death, but to the Indians in New France who had languished without the proper religious traditions for centuries. In fulfilling this obligation to his fellow man, Biard was also meeting the expectation of God himself. With New France a wilderness subject to Satanic malevolence, it offered Biard the opportunity to reach the highest glory a Christian could experience; ‘as one of God’s great instruments, he would make a Garden out of the wilderness; where he would subjugate satanic Monsters, and would introduce the order and discipline of heaven upon earth’.⁸⁹ Where for Massé suffering was central to his missiology, for Biard it was incidental.

The different perspectives of both men were important. At the end of their brief mission, in 1613, both were convinced of the viability of early America as a missiological space and displayed signs of recognising the continent as a unique evangelical arena. Their

⁸⁸ *JR* XXIX: 39-41 (‘shedding his blood’, 39; ‘an Ecclesiastic’, ‘extraordinary respect’, ‘union with God’, ‘service of his Lord’, 41); *JR* I: 184 (‘salvation of these peoples’).

⁸⁹ *JR* III: 35 (‘out of the wilderness’); *JR* IV: 113-115.

hopes coalesced around an exceptionally powerful Indian in the Acadian world, whose actions and attitudes suggested the potential of the mission in New France and its limits.

His name was Membertou. He was a Sagamore, a sachem, among the Micmac Indians. Micmac territory stood at the north-eastern edge of a sprawling Indigenous world, populated by Montagnais along the St. Lawrence, Penobscots, Abenakis and 'Armouchiquois' to the south, and Mohawks in the interior, ranging between the Great Lakes and the Eastern shores.⁹⁰ An acclaimed and experienced warrior, Membertou had amassed a vast array of enemies in Acadia and beyond.⁹¹ Relationships were unstable, and he himself was involved in numerous conflicts in the years following European contact. In June 1606 he had led a confederation of four hundred Indian soldiers against the New England tribes and returned with numerous prisoners. The following year, a Micmac war party attacked the western Abenaki, taking female prisoners, which were later executed. In retaliation, Membertou's son-in-law, Panounias, was killed in Penobscot territory. Despite the desperate apologies of Bessabes, a Penobscot sachem, Membertou forged an alliance of Micmac, Montagnais, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy and attacked the Sacos, killing ten.⁹² It was clear that Membertou could not only command formidable power within the Micmac community, but across the Indigenous Northeast as well.

He had been baptised on June 24th 1610 by Jesse Fleche, a cleric who would later draw Biard's ire for his zeal in performing the ceremony on Indians clearly ignorant of its meaning and implication. Twenty members of his family accompanied him to the baptism.

⁹⁰ Alfred Goldsworthy Bailey. *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures 1504-1700: A Study in Canadian Civilization* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 3.

⁹¹ Marc Lescarbot, *The History of New France, Vol. II*, trans. W.L. Grant (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1911), 354-355.

⁹² Lescarbot. *History of New France, Vol. II*, 354; Kenneth M. Morrison. *The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euramerican Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 34-35; W.H. Mechling & Marcel Rioux. 'The Malecite Indians, with Notes on the Micmacs', *Anthropologica*, No. 7, (1958), pp. 1-11, 13-160, I-XVI, 115-116.

They received the rite as well. His character was regularly commented on admiringly by Biard. Perhaps the most thorny issue of the mission among the Indians in the Northeast – polygamy – was not a problem with the great chief. He had only ever had one wife, despite the cultural and social capital that accrued with each new spouse. He wanted not only to observe a Christian life but to preach it to others, his only obstacle a poor understanding of the intricacies of the new faith.⁹³

His daunting authority and apparent receptivity to the Jesuit message exemplified how Indigenous actors and Christian missionaries could find a productive relationship through the faith. Membertou could wage war against them under the banner of Christianity, thus ensured of a military alliance with the French; the new faith would function as a powerful new vehicle for the chief's own belligerent ambitions. Similarly, Biard could now direct an imposing and acclaimed Indian leader toward his own purposes, using him as a vanguard to smash traditional belief and practice – Christianity, volatile Indian geopolitics, and the structures of chieftainship had formed a symbiosis that both parties could use in pursuit of their own agendas.

Biard quickly perceived Membertou as the best hope for the success of his missionization. His attributes set him apart from other Indians who had been baptised by Fleche. When Biard and Masse questioned some of those who had received the blessing they found an abysmal understanding of its meaning. Many claimed they had accepted the rite as a means of becoming 'like Normans', their collective name for the French.⁹⁴ With greater horror, Biard recorded that many did not even appear to understand the term 'Christian'.⁹⁵ Most troublesome of all, there were newly baptised Indians who refused to follow the

⁹³ *JR* I: 165-7;

⁹⁴ *JR* I: 163 ('like Normans').

⁹⁵ *JR* I: 163.

missionaries' orders. Cacagous, a *Sagamore* living on the banks of the St. John River, retained his eight wives even after Biard castigated him for practicing polygamy; he replied by claiming that the custom of taking multiple wives may not be suitable for the French, but it was essential in Acadia. Others made similar arguments, weaponizing their ignorance by telling Biard and Masse that they themselves were wicked for trying to outlaw polygamy, a condition of baptism that the Indians never understood and would not have consented to if they had.⁹⁶

Membertou's example was therefore at odds with those of his fellow Micmacs. Most who had received baptism had an extremely poor understanding of the faith. Clearly for many the religious rite had functioned as a theatrical confirmation of an alliance between their communities and the newly arrived French. Doctrinal knowledge and practical discipline were obviously considered by many as appendages to the growing relationship between Port Royal and the chiefs of Acadia – useful but not essential. Challenged Indians, such as Cacagous, could take refuge in a crude relativism by suggesting that the logic of Christianity may well be valid, but incompatible with the Acadian way of life. Shocked by the readiness of most Indians to wriggle away from the obligations of Christianity, Biard was forced to conclude that only Membertou was 'truly a Christian at heart'.⁹⁷

Membertou's genuine commitment to reforming his community's practice around Christian requirements was apparently confirmed when his son, Actodin, fell seriously ill. Not yet baptised, the son of the chief deteriorated quickly. His condition worsened until it became evident that he would soon die. When this grave decision had been made the careful choreography that marked the transition to death began. A *tabagie*, a solemn feast given as a final farewell to the afflicted, was prepared, dogs would be slaughtered afterward as a

⁹⁶ JR I: 165 & III: 139.

⁹⁷ JR III: 147 ('Christian at heart').

sacrifice, and finally Actodin's kin would sing and dance.⁹⁸ Collectively, these ceremonies formed a Rubicon. Once crossed, the sick man would be irretrievably lost. Actodin would become a *mane*, one embarked on an inevitable march to the world beyond.

Biard, however, detested these superstitions. He rushed to the scene when he heard that these ceremonies were imminent, intent on using it as an opportunity to castigate the Micmacs for clinging to their traditional methods of mourning. Upon arrival he quickly received assurance from Membertou himself that these rituals would be stopped as soon as Biard ordered it. The opportunity was ripe. The Jesuit could order the entire display prohibited, and Membertou's authority would buttress this decision, making compliance almost certain. But Biard chose otherwise. He permitted the theatrical farewells, the mourning and the *tabagie* to go ahead. Only the slaughter of the dogs and the subsequent dancing, which reeked of dangerous pagan practice, were proscribed.⁹⁹

Actodin's plight had indicated to Biard how intensely promising the relationship with Membertou was. The chief had not demanded that any aspect of the Micmac ceremonies be retained; instead he had deferred without question to the Jesuit for further instruction. Biard, in a few short months, had cultivated an exceptionally valuable ally for his efforts. Unfortunately, his concern about Membertou's hasty baptism was soon proved prescient.

Membertou himself became fatally ill in 1611. He gathered his family members and spoke lovingly of his conversion to Christianity. He was attended to by Biard, whose grand vision for the Indians in Acadia was now based on the extremely promising example that Membertou provided. But, with his death as an exemplary Christian Indian imminent - a legacy crucial for Biard's missionization strategy - the chief made a shocking request.

⁹⁸ JR II: 17.

⁹⁹ JR I: 215 & II: 17-19.

Turning to his Jesuit mentor, the chief demanded that he be interred in his ancestral burial ground instead of the Catholic cemetery at Port Royal. Biard was stunned. He had been confident that Membertou's death would be the axis around which the Jesuit missionary endeavour in New France would pivot; instead, he had been swept suddenly and decisively into a complex negotiation for the chief's legacy. His entire expansive plan for the conversion of the Acadian Indians was at stake.¹⁰⁰

The burial ground of which Membertou spoke was located on a small, desolate island near Cape Sable, on the southern coast of the peninsula.¹⁰¹ For Biard, this unexpected appeal was puzzling. The chief, however, had no reason to doubt that his request would be granted; in 1609, two years before Biard and Masse had ever set foot in the New World, one of the conditions of his baptism by Fleche was a guarantee that his family's burial ground would be consecrated. Unfortunately for the Jesuits, on that occasion he had been negotiating with Poutrincourt. Clearly wishing only to establish a positive relationship with the chief, and not caring if such an act was a permissible Christian action, the proprietor of Port Royal had consented, and Fleche had performed the rite the following year.¹⁰²

Death had threatened to seriously undermine the spread of Christianity once before. A year after Membertou had been baptized, Poutrincourt travelled along the Acadian coast to meet with Martin, another Sagamore. Martin had fled his territory after an outbreak of dysentery, but after hearing that Poutrincourt had come to visit him, pursued him and finally encountered him at Cape Sable. The chief was invited to become a Christian like Membertou. Jesse Fleche stood ready at Port Royal to provide the proper instruction before baptism could

¹⁰⁰ JR II: 21.

¹⁰¹ Wilson D. Wallis & Ruth Sawtell Wallis. *The Micmac Indians of Eastern Canada* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), 266.

¹⁰² JR II: 223.

be performed. He accepted, and Poutrincourt returned to Port Royal to find Martin and his companions 'all strongly imbued with zeal for the Christian religion'.¹⁰³

The disease from which Martin had initially fled, however, eventually claimed his life. He contracted dysentery only a week after his baptism, and died days later. In contrast to Membertou's request, his final wish was that he be buried with other Christians in the cemetery at Port Royal. Lescarbot recorded the Indians' reactions: 'the Savages, having still some reverence for the burial places of their fathers and friends, wished to take him to Cape Sable, forty leagues distant from the Port'. Their convictions were so intense that when Poutrincourt rejected their wish, ordering instead that the Sagamore's dying request be honoured, 'a dispute arose, and the Savages, seizing their bows and arrows, wanted to take away the corpse'. Despite this, Poutrincourt refused to yield. A dozen armed soldiers were ordered to take Martin's body and fulfil the requirement that the Christian chief be buried with others of his new faith.¹⁰⁴ The episode had ended quickly, but had made obvious the intense significance afforded to death and burial. Indians who had been baptised, had been welcomed at Port Royal, and generally enjoyed positive relationships with the French were nevertheless willing to violently protect their traditional customs regarding the final stages of life.

So when Membertou identified his preferred burial ground, missionization and death entered yet another awkward negotiation. Membertou had been carefully cultivated as the first 'true Christian' in New France. Now, this request threatened to decimate that potential; Biard was terrified that burying the chief in his ancestral ground would be misunderstood by both the French and Indians in Acadia as a sign that he had been judged a corrupt Christian,

¹⁰³ *JR II*: 143-147; Lescarbot *HNF*

¹⁰⁴ *JR II*: 149-151 ('burial places', 149; 'seizing their bows', 149-151).

one ‘only in appearance’.¹⁰⁵ Biard had to convince the *Sagamore* to change his mind. The arguments and discussion that followed made clear the flaw in the Jesuits’ strategy.

When Biard was informed of the chief’s dying wishes, he rushed to confront him. He articulated his fear that Membertou would not be considered a good Christian if he was interred with his ancestors, hoping that this warning would resonate with a man apparently so committed to his new faith. Despite this, the chief remained resolute. He reminded the missionary of Poutrincourt’s promise to consecrate the ancient burial ground, thus allowing his burial as both a member of his lineage and a devout Christian. Biard, however, at the time of this conversation, had persuaded Poutrincourt not to consecrate the ground. The promise to Membertou had been broken.¹⁰⁶

But the dying *Sagamore* persisted in his refusal to accept a grave in the French cemetery. His final gambit was the most convincing; he played cleverly on Biard’s fear of the barren spiritual landscape that would follow his death by claiming that, if he was buried in the French cemetery at Port Royal his children and friends would never visit the grave, since it was their custom to shun all reminders of death and the dead.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, their attitude went beyond simply forgetting. Biard knew that after a burial Micmacs ‘flee from the place, and from that time on, they hate all memory of the dead’. Furthermore, this hatred was combined with a closely guarded secrecy; an Indian who disclosed the location of a burial ground near Canso, on the eastern Acadian coast, was killed in retribution.¹⁰⁸ By suggesting these disastrous consequences if he was interred at Port Royal, Membertou had instantly raised the stakes. By implication, if those closest to him - those most likely to convert in the future – refused to visit his grave his legacy as the pioneer of mass conversion might fade. Avoiding

¹⁰⁵ JR III: 203 (‘only in appearance’).

¹⁰⁶ JR II: 223-225.

¹⁰⁷ JR II: 21-22.

¹⁰⁸ JR III: 129 (‘flee from the place’); Wilson D. Wallis & Ruth Sawtell Wallis. *The Micmac Indians*, 266-267.

reminders of his death could cause the Micmacs to forget his life. His strong commitment to the faith could be quietly overlooked by traditionalists, for whom Christianity was a dangerous anathema suitable only for the French. Those who argued such a point, like Cacagous, would be free from the awkward example of a renowned chief apparently exemplifying Christian practice. Faced with this overwhelming prospect, Biard relented. He made no further argument against Membertou's wishes.

The example of Membertou made clear the defects in Biard and Masse's efforts. Most importantly, like Rogel had done four decades before, they had articulated in their correspondence their belief that converting the chiefs and influential men of Indian communities was the most effective way to ensure mass conversions. Membertou represented the pinnacle of this belief; both *Sagamore* and *Autmoin*, he combined extensive political, social and spiritual power into one formidable target. But the missionaries saw only his place at the apex of an Indian social configuration. They failed to recognise the complex structure around which this configuration was organised. This ignorance was swept into focus by Membertou's death - the customary rejection of reminders of mortality appeared suddenly as a formidable bulwark against Christianity's advance. Within an Indian world still relatively undisturbed by catastrophic disease, war or invasive settlement, the Jesuits were unable to effect fundamental change.

Their experience, therefore, mirrored Rogel's. Once again it exposed the flaw in targeting the most authoritative Indian leaders within communities that remained demographically and culturally stable. Membertou's power made him a singularly promising convert, but equally obliged him to conform to traditional Micmac burial practice; a ritual inimical to the standard of Christian piety Biard and Massé required from the sachem.

Despite this, the missionaries' brief experience in Acadia had fundamentally changed the Jesuit understanding of early America. Rogel had left the continent dejected. By contrast, the Acadian experiment had produced a cautious optimism, although tempered by numerous new qualifications. Summarising the Acadian Indians, Biard valorised the relative simplicity he saw in their lives: 'if indeed they have not all the pleasures which the children of this age are seeking after, they are free from the evils which follow them'. Yet this innocence that he identified had a cost. They were, consequently, 'purely and absolutely wretched', having no understanding either of God, 'sublime things' or the 'noble parts of the soul'. Confined to the realm of sense and instinct, they were unquestionably suffering without Christ's grace. But whereas Rogel found this a lost cause, Biard was undeterred. Membertou's apparently exemplary life and awkward death, and the subsequent interaction with many Indians, had conferred a knowledge of the land, those who inhabited it, the means of helping them, the obstacles that would arise, and the means of overcoming them. In short, Biard concluded that 'we have experimented, we know what is necessary and what is harmful, and wherein lies the principal part of the work'.¹⁰⁹

The tantalising signs of potential success evoked a new appreciation of the necessity of missionization in America. Biard claimed that the Indians, 'these companions of our species, and almost of the same quality as we', stood precariously 'upon the edge of the horrible gulf of the fires of hell'. Again departing from Rogel, Biard then articulated the obligation and responsibility that the Indians' terrifying fate conferred on the Jesuits. The fulsome reception of Christianity among at least some Acadian Indians had convinced Biard that they were 'as capable of enjoying' God as Europeans, missionaries and monarchs. This convinced him, with reference to the 'fires of hell', that 'the blood of this so cruel execution

¹⁰⁹ *JR* III: 135 ('free from the evils', 'absolutely wretched', 'sublime things', 'noble parts'); *JR* IV: 83-85 ('we have experimented', 85).

is upon our hands, who do not exert ourselves to prevent it'.¹¹⁰ Jesuits, instead of abandoning the continent as a useless evangelical endeavour, were now obliged to direct their attention toward early America once more.

Finally, after witnessing the intense and potentially calamitous negotiations around Membertou's death, Biard proposed that the New France mission should be fundamentally different from other Christian missions in New Spain. Peru and Mexico were referenced as practical examples to be avoided. Like Fleche had done, Indians there had been baptized quickly, without appropriate consideration for how deeply the Christian doctrine had been understood. The unfortunate result, in each mission, was 'a Synagogue of Samaritans rather than a Church of the faithful'. Even in the churches themselves 'ancient idolatries' were heard muttered by baptised Indians, and saints' days were observed alongside sacrifices, dances and other 'superstitions'. Biard recommended deliberately diverging from this practice. New France was an arena in which to perfect the evangelical method, ensuring that those converted would truly understand the demands of Christianity. Baptism would therefore be a culmination of intense instruction, the final stage in a process by which Indians would progress from 'Postulant', to 'Seeker', then 'Catechumen', to Christian.¹¹¹

Where Biard saw the promising signs of a successful evangelical project in New France, Massé was occupied by its salvific potential. He was convinced that he had found in New France a realm in which to realise his dream of emulating Xavier through suffering and sacrifice. He felt keenly the same obligation to the Indians that Biard spoke of, recognising that they were 'in need of help'. More importantly, however, he was assured of New France's salvific potential. Identifying the colony as 'the country of the Cross', he resolved to return as soon as possible. His zeal increased in pursuit of 'so great a blessing, so lofty an employ, so

¹¹⁰ JR IV: 117 ('companions of our species', 'fires of hell', 'as capable', 'so cruel execution').

¹¹¹ JR III: 145 ('superstitions', 'Postulant', 'Seeker', 'Catechumen').

sublime a vocation, - in a word, Canada and its delights, which are the Cross'. He deployed mortifications and fasts with increasing urgency. Eventually, he returned to New France in 1625. But when the Kirk brothers captured Quebec, he was sent back across the Atlantic once more. This second setback now clarified absolutely the meaning of early America. From 1625 until 1633, when he finally returned to New France once again, Massé considered himself 'an exile in his native land' and promised to 'exert every effort to die on the Cross of new France'.¹¹² He was the first Jesuit to be utterly convinced of the soteriological significance of early America.

Though their mission had ended in disaster, Biard and Massé had both begun to craft an early America distinct in its requirements and potential. The Christianization of this new missiological arena was promising. Its apparent simplicity was tentatively welcomed, though understood to have awkward consequences; Indians on the precipice of damnation were no longer abandoned as lost causes, but understood to confer a missiological obligation on the Jesuit order; and New France offered a valuable opportunity to rectify the mistakes of other missionaries in the New World, and produce comprehending, and therefore authentic, Christian Indians. For the Jesuits, New France was now also a definite vehicle for the Jesuits' own salvation, offering a dizzying variety of 'Crosses' that one could suffer in pursuit of this ultimate goal. These two convictions – that New France could sustain a successful Christian mission, and that it could offer Jesuits a worthy endeavour for themselves – were the foundations on which Jesuit America would be built.

The Laurentian Shift

¹¹² *JR* XXIX: 33-37 ('help', 'country of the Cross', 'Canada and its delights', 33; 'native land', 'Cross of new France', 37).

But neither would see their Acadian experiment progress. In 1613 the French settlements on the peninsula were destroyed by English forces under the command of Samuel Argall. The Jesuits were seized as captives during the conflict, and eventually transported back to France. The Englishmen had briefly considered more severe punishment for Biard and Massé, but decided it most expedient to just return them across the Atlantic. Biard, despite his measured optimism that a functional institutional mission was viable in Acadia, never returned. Massé, after a tortuous two decades, finally resumed his efforts in early America.

When he returned to New France in 1633, he did not return to Port Royal. After the Acadian town had been destroyed, the centre of gravity in France's early American project had shifted to Quebec, a small settlement founded by Samuel de Champlain on the shores of the St. Lawrence river in July 1608. Massé disembarked at Quebec with Jean de Brebeuf, another Jesuit. The previous year their superior in New France, Paul le Jeune, had arrived at Tadoussac, a small trading post shortly downriver from Quebec. In less than a decade, Brebeuf and le Jeune distinguished their mission from its Acadian predecessor by clarifying further the evangelical meaning and significance of the new early American continent.

By the 1630s the meaning of New France as a colonial project remained highly unstable. Colonial writers eagerly assessed the national significance of Quebec and its hinterland. Early in the century Lescarbot had identified the Indians in the exciting new Laurentian realm as descendants of Noah. The biblical patriarch was also progenitor of the Gauls, ancestors of the early modern French. Indians and French were therefore relatives, and New France the site of their reunion. By extension, Indians offered a model that could be replicated by the French, dashing their accumulated vice and dishonesty that had corrupted the nation. Champlain held a similar vision of New France as an opportunity for a return to a

pristine Christian past, one unblemished by exploitative and dishonourable traders. As part of this, the Quebec governor considered the missiological imperative critical.¹¹³

Champlain was therefore eager to offer the Jesuits what successive Governors in Florida and New Mexico would not. At the end of July, in 1633, a Huron delegation travelled to Quebec. Shortly after their arrival they met with Brebeuf and le Jeune to discuss the Jesuits destined to return to their lands with them. They were delighted. The heads of many different Huron families had eagerly offered to host the missionaries. One of the group, Amantacha, had written a letter himself to the Jesuit superior in France, promising to return to Quebec in the future and escort as many Jesuits as could be spared back to Huron lands. Brebeuf and le Jeune seized on the opportunity to further intrigue their visitors; two days after their initial meeting they permitted the delegation to enter the chapel. The Indians gazed at statues of Loyola and Francis Xavier, asking if, like the Jesuits before them, these men were ‘Ondaqui’, quasi-divine figures ‘above human nature’.¹¹⁴ However, this atmosphere - infused with positive implications for the Jesuits – was threatened by an awkward reality.

When Brebeuf had first greeted the Huron group a captain from Ossossané had eagerly tried to persuade the Jesuit to agree to live in his village. Ossossané was indeed a desirable location. In consultation with le Jeune, it was agreed that the Jesuits should mirror the apostles Peter and Paul, ‘who went forth to attack idolatry in the principal city of the world, and in like manner the most renowned Village of the Hurons ought to be their dwelling place; for, if that one came under the yoke of the law of God, all the others would easily submit to it’. Yet such a vision relied on delicate diplomacy. Many Indians from several Huron villages were clamouring for a Jesuit among them. Offending one could

¹¹³ Brian Bazeau. *Writing a New France, 1604-1632: Empire and Early Modern French Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), esp. ch.3; Bronwen McShea. *Apostles of Empire: The Jesuits and New France* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019).

¹¹⁴ JR V: 239-241, 245 & 257 (‘Ondaqui’, ‘above human nature’, 257).

disturb the intricate web of relationships that would carry the ‘yoke of the law of God’ throughout Huronia. Only an appearance of impartiality would deflect any ill-feeling away from the Jesuit cause. Brebeuf went to see Champlain. He urged the governor to inform the Indians that Brebeuf’s destination was his wish, simply to ease communication between themselves. Champlain, characteristically, was eager to oblige. He recited Brebeuf’s words before the gathered Hurons, satisfying all but one.¹¹⁵ The awkwardness latent in the black robes’ choice of destination was dispelled, dashed by Champlain’s willingness to preserve the Jesuit image.

Unfortunately for Brebeuf, Champlain’s intervention could only assuage Huron concerns. Once Brebeuf’s destination in Huronia was finalised, preparations had been made for his departure on the 5th August 1633. The night before, however, hostile Algonquian Indians had entered Quebec and warned the Jesuit’s Huron hosts not to escort the Frenchmen upriver, since members of the tribe lay in wait to assassinate them. They feared that Hurons, through the presence of Brebeuf and his French companions, could establish a direct link with Quebec. This threatened to monopolise the fur trade in their hands, to the detriment of those who populated the stretch of the St Lawrence in between. Le Jeune attributed the delay to divine providence, but remained nervous about its implications. He feared that a spiritual harvest ‘so slow in ripening’ would dissuade French donors from continuing to fund the Jesuit mission. To moderate their potential concern he referred to the Order’s efforts in Brazil and China, reminding them that thirty-eight years passed before anything was accomplished in the former, and asking forcefully ‘How long have they been waiting at the gates of China’?¹¹⁶ References to Paraguay also began to appear in Jesuit reports as a rhetorical tool, used to complement the references to other mission fields. Identifying the Hurons as ‘exactly

¹¹⁵ *JR* V: 259-263 (‘principal city’, 261).

¹¹⁶ *JR* VI: 7-9 & 21-25 (‘slow in ripening’, ‘gates of China’, 25).

like those other Americans, called Paraquais' comforted the missionaries and their donors.¹¹⁷ It suggested a stadial understanding of missionization, in which a measured and patient approach would see unyielding hostility to the faith break under the twin pressures of evangelisation and colonial expansion.

References to globality were, likewise, an efficient evangelical strategy. Speaking of evangelized Indians, Le Jeune noted that 'the argument that satisfies them best is that which we advance to them concerning our own experience with many idolaters and infidels, such as those recently in Paraguay, who have finally opened their eyes to the truth of the Gospel'.¹¹⁸ Apparent success in South America functioned as a reassurance to those Indians reluctant to sacrifice the security of an established cache of spiritual power. More specifically, while wintering with the Montagnais in 1634, his host had asked the Jesuit how the earth had been formed. Le Jeune described in detail the regions of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, including Florida, Peru, Brazil and Newfoundland. His descriptions accorded with his hosts' knowledge. Thus recognised as one who spoke the truth by the Indian, le Jeune seized his opportunity, urging him to therefore believe his words about Heaven if he believed his descriptions of Earth. In response, his host quickly took refuge in the linguistic gulf separating the two men, claiming that both had 'too much trouble in understanding each other'. Yet he also acknowledged the logic of le Jeune's appeal, stating that 'I will believe thee when thou shalt know how to speak'.¹¹⁹

Finally, as with Massé, the first Jesuit in Asia again provided the paradigm for Jesuit activity while his mission field provided the ideal realm in which to undertake it. The example of Francois Xavier was invoked frequently in the early reports from New France. In

¹¹⁷ *JR* XII: 221 ('called Paraquais').

¹¹⁸ *JR* XV: 127 ('many idolaters and infidels').

¹¹⁹ *JR* VII: 187-9 ('too much trouble', 'I will believe thee', 189).

1635 le Jeune stated bluntly that ‘a thousand times the thought of saint François Xavier passes through our minds, and has great power over us’. He then recalled Xavier’s statement that there was ‘an Island in the Orient which was quite capable of making a person lose his sight, by crying from excessive joy of the heart; I know not if our New France resembles this Island’. References to his missions across Asia indicated both a reverence for his example and a corresponding anxiety as to whether this new Jesuit theatre would match the significance of his missiological endeavours.¹²⁰

Greater stability conferred by Champlain’s help and wealthy donors funding the Jesuit mission had placed a weight of expectation on New France that le Jeune was keenly aware of. As the superior he reacted to the sluggish start from Quebec by deploying an expansive, global rhetorical universe. These references to other missionary theatres around the world, and the continued references to Xavier’s example, seemed a reversal from Biard and Massé’s excited descriptions of America’s singular opportunities for both Jesuits and Indians. It implied an equivalence between New France and missiological arenas in South America and Asia. At this crucial juncture, when the American continent stood as a highly malleable, uncertain and unstable creation, factors uniquely valued by Jesuits themselves provided clarification.

A New Martyrdom

The imperative of carefully balancing the evangelical, commercial and diplomatic demands of New France did not hinder the establishment of Jesuit missions in Huronia for long. The missionaries were desperate to begin their efforts there, convinced that Huron

¹²⁰ *JR* VIII: 187-189 (‘a thousand times’, 187; ‘Island in the Orient’, 189).

society offered an exceptionally hospitable environment for missionization. Between 1609 and 1615 Hurons had gradually established a strong trading relationship with the French at Quebec, independent of rivalling Algonquins competing for primacy in the growing fur trade. Champlain's deft but possibly unconscious navigation of Huron convention convinced the latter that the French would be relatively predictable trading partners, providing the foundation from which Jesuits could evangelise. By 1633, this commercial intimacy had provided extensive knowledge of Huron custom and society, features of which the Jesuits found extremely attractive. At least 17,000 individuals lived in towns and villages, structured by permanent and deliberately arranged houses. Agriculture was a critical practice, providing corn, beans, squash and tobacco. Conversely, hunting for sustenance, which often compelled a degree of nomadism, was unnecessary. Le Jeune and Brebeuf therefore saw in the Hurons a large, mostly sedentary population that could receive regular religious instruction. The Algonquin warning that stopped Brebeuf's journey in 1633 was not a sufficient threat for long. Jesuit missions were institutionalised in Huron territory the following year. Yet, unfortunately, neither Hurons nor Jesuits would anticipate the devastation of the biological encounter.¹²¹

Epidemic disease was an almost ubiquitous feature of the European encounter with early America. Sudden biological exchange between European agents and Indian communities thrust waves of smallpox, measles and plague into the latter, which had never encountered such threats and had no resistance. One such epidemic struck the Indian nations that surrounded New France in 1633. An outbreak of smallpox had spread with terrifying

¹²¹ For the establishment of the Huron-French commercial relationship, see: Bruce G. Trigger. *The Children of Aetaentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 246-331. For the most comprehensive ethnographies of Huronia that uncover the society that Jesuits eagerly entered, see: Conrad Heidenreich. *Huronia: A History and Geography of the Huron Indians, 1600-1650* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971); Elisabeth Tooker. *An Ethnography of the Huron Indians, 1615-1649* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964).

speed from Massachusetts Bay. It engulfed Abenakis and Narragansetts near Boston, before rushing along exchange routes into the St. Lawrence Valley.¹²²

In New France the Hurons lost around half of their population by 1640. Many were children or old people. This robbed them of young warriors to defend Iroquois attacks throughout the following decade and threw traditional political, religious and diplomatic practice into chaos. On the 4th August 1637, late in the evening, three Huron nations gathered in an assembly to discuss the epidemic disease sweeping through their communities. The malady was devastating whole villages in a swift and brutal acceleration throughout Huronia. Blame for this invisible and inexplicable menace had, by now, fallen squarely on the odd figures demonstrating mysterious new powers – the Jesuits. The assembly was therefore called to address ‘the affair of the black robes’, hopefully finding a remedy for the catastrophic force that they had apparently unleashed. Brebeuf, by now the most influential Jesuit in Huronia, was present. The oldest Indian at the gathering, Ontitarac, was chosen to preside over the meeting. He began by describing the deplorable condition into which his nation had fallen since the epidemic first began. Each individual Indian then followed by reciting the names of the dead and dying in their families. Some were extremely zealous in denouncing the Jesuits as the obvious cause of the disease; not one defended them. Each name announced in the cabin was a macabre reminder of the ghastly extent of Huron suffering. When the list of names had finally been exhausted, Brebeuf was permitted to reply. His defence of the Jesuits, however, fell on deaf ears – as soon as he had finished speaking the council demanded he produce the bewitched piece of cloth that was causing the epidemic

¹²² For general works that highlight the importance of the biological exchange in early America, see Alfred W. Crosby. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1972); Alfred W. Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Ann F. Ramenofsky, Alicia K. Wilbur & Anne C. Stone. ‘Native American Disease History: Past, Present, and Future Directions’, *World Archaeology*, Vol. 35, No. 2, (October, 2003), pp. 241-257.

in exchange for his life. In desperation, Brebeuf suggested the Hurons search the Jesuit dwelling and throw all the clothes into the lake, since he himself could not tell them the cause of the disease. The demand was made once more; when the Jesuit again refused, it was agreed to postpone a decision on further action until a Huron delegation that had recently travelled to Quebec returned.¹²³

Fortunately for Brebeuf, no action was taken. The tense atmosphere remained, but there were no violent reprisals. The association of the Jesuits with the contagions, however, endured. The Hurons who had first received the Jesuit mission, who had been ‘cudgelled over and over again by our mysteries’, were the loudest in calling for their deaths in councils. Their most potent weapons were malicious rumours, spread to every community with which they interacted to close off further avenues of evangelisation. The Neutral nation, an Iroquois-speaking community sandwiched between Lakes Huron and Ontario, took heed of these rumours. Brebeuf and his fellow Jesuit Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot entered their territory in 1640. They were permitted to preach after gifting a porcelain collar during a council, but were soon plagued by their reputation. Brebeuf was a figure of particular dread; some claimed he had formed a secret alliance with an Iroquois nation to weaken the Neutrals, or that he had mysteriously communicated with them to praise them for slaying Hurons. As the atmosphere quickly soured, those who had held the council began refusing Jesuit gifts. Brebeuf and Chaumonot were accused of being ‘Agwa’ at each village, a name reserved only for serious enemies. The breviaries, inkstands and writing they carried were considered magical and threatening, as were their alien mutterings during prayer.¹²⁴

For Heirosme Lalement, another Jesuit who wrote the missionary report for Huronia that year, the cause was obvious. Rumours that had spread from la Conception, one of the

¹²³ *JR* XV: 39-49 (‘black robes’, 39).

¹²⁴ *JR* XIX: 211 (‘cudgelled over and over’); *JR* XXI: 219 (‘Agwa’).

Huron missions, had ‘filled their ears and their minds’, ruining the immediate prospects for success.¹²⁵ The accusations were highly varied. Many Hurons refused to use the kettles offered by the French, fearing they contained poison; some claimed that the Jesuits had infected the waters, and that the mists that floated from the rivers and lakes was therefore deadly; or that they possessed a dead body, a powerful means of performing malevolent magic. In a particular attack on Christianity itself, they feared the small tabernacle in each Jesuit chapel was somehow causing the disease and death.¹²⁶ All such accusations militated against further missiological progress.

For Brebeuf, however, as conditions in New France encouraged and nourished hostility to his faith, he found comfort in his difficulties. The difficulties ‘have served only to confirm me the more in my vocation’. Despite the overwhelming difficulty of missionization and disappointing number of baptisms achieved in his first years in Huronia, his experience established with greater certainty the legitimacy of the mission and his place at the head of it. Le Jeune agreed. He considered all these obstacles a new, more painful form of martyrdom. Collectively, the Jesuits in New France accepted the principle that ‘the blood of Martyrs is the seed of Christians’. Yet none had died a death in accordance with this principle. Le Jeune had considered this a potential sign that the Indians of New France were not ready for conversion or salvation. But the utter privation of the Jesuit experience reassured him. Having seen the ‘combats, battles, attacks, and the general assaults’ that the Jesuits were subjected to every day, he began to wonder ‘whether any other martyrdom than this is necessary for the results that we aim at’, adding that there would be many who would rather

¹²⁵ *JR* XXI: 211, 213-217, 219 & 221 (‘filled their ears’, 219); *JR* XIX: 211.

¹²⁶ *JR* XII: 237-239.

‘receive at once a hatchet blow upon the head’ than spend time proselytizing among the Indians in North America.¹²⁷

A list of instructions that Brebeuf provided for missionaries eager to evangelize the Hurons further articulated what this martyrdom required, and further delineated this experience as a uniquely American one. One key to effective missionization, Brebeuf wrote, was how one acted on the Laurentian journey itself. He warned that ‘the Savages will retain the same opinion of you in their own country that they will have formed on the way; and one who has passed for an irritable and troublesome person will have considerable difficulty afterwards in removing this opinion’.¹²⁸ Other instructions were highly specific. Jesuits should try to eat the *sagamité* they would be offered, however unpleasant it may be; they should never make their Huron hosts wait before disembarking; and they should take a small amount of goods that could be traded for fish when Indians gathered to trade, so the Jesuit himself could ‘feast the Savages’.¹²⁹ These apparently banal and procedural instructions held a deeper meaning. Missiology in New France had now acquired features distinct from other mission theatres, particular enough to require more specific instructions than formulaic appeals to bearing discomfort and persecution in the name of Christ.

Furthermore, for Brebeuf his ordeal suggested an environmental component to the early American mission. In the infancy of the Huron mission he stated that one of the key problems of New France was its barren spiritual landscape. He meant this both literally and metaphorically; as an absence of Christian architecture and practice, and the lack of the good example set by pious Christians. In such an environment, ‘the falls are insignificant’. Christians who sinned in such a context were quickly persuaded or coerced to return to the

¹²⁷ JR X: 97 (‘confirm me the more’); JR XVII: 13 (‘blood of Martyrs’, ‘general assaults’, ‘any other martyrdom’, ‘hatchet blow’).

¹²⁸ JR XII: 121-123 (‘removing this opinion’, 121).

¹²⁹ JR XII: 117 & 119-121 (‘feast the Savages’, 121).

appropriate practice. Huron Indians apparently receptive toward Christianity, however, languished in such errors, since the Canadian theatre had nothing ‘which incites towards good’. The intense opposition encountered by Brebeuf to his evangelism was therefore a direct result of the wild and unsettled environment of New France. This particular wilderness assumed a highly negative connotation, but further distinguished early America.¹³⁰

Despite the practically disastrous consequences of their reputation, le Jeune and Brebeuf, were both encouraged by this overwhelming hostility. The Jesuit superior acknowledged the zeal of every Jesuit in Huronia for a martyrological death. Accusations had stirred that one of the Jesuits was an exceptionally powerful shaman, and ‘they desire to emulate each other in being taken for this famous sorcerer, who has been destined to death as a miserable victim’. However, this was not his concern – instead, he was most stimulated by the prospect that the persecution of the Jesuits would be the foundation upon which ‘the faith and Religion are established’.¹³¹

Brebeuf’s obsession with martyrdom reached its zenith in the late 1630s. He made a vow to embrace the prospect of martyrdom with such intensity that ‘it shall no longer be a lawful thing for me, when remaining at my option, to avoid opportunities of dying and of shedding my blood’ for God. The impulse to make this commitment came partly from an overwhelming fear of unworthiness. Confronted with the harsh realities of the mission to the Hurons, Brebeuf found them insufficient for salvation; to the daily hardships he added ‘many voluntary mortifications’, fasting frequently for long period, using a belt tipped with sharp iron points, and holding vigils throughout the freezing nights. These obsessive and nervous signs of devotion, both verbal and physical, derived from the terror ‘lest I be of the number of

¹³⁰ *JR* X: 95-7 (‘falls are insignificant’, ‘towards good’, 97).

¹³¹ *JR* XII: 239 (‘desire to emulate’, ‘faith and Religion’).

the reprobate, seeing that God has treated me hitherto with so much mildness'.¹³² As with Massé, Brebeuf was a Jesuit possessed with an intense concern for his own salvation, and a corresponding rejection of all comfort and complacency.

Yet Le Jeune's perspective was different. Brebeuf was convinced that New France was a desirable location for a Christian mission but was frustrated by its environment. By contrast, his superior wrote that 'New France is the most suitable country in the world in which to understand the literal meaning of these beautiful words...I send you even as my Father has sent me'. Furthermore, seeing the 'infinite forests' recalled to le Jeune Loyola's own words, that 'to-day I begin to be of the Company of Jesus'. The effect of the natural environment was therefore highly reassuring. Le Jeune wrote that in early America he had found 'what I had hoped for, a heart in harmony with God's heart'.¹³³ New France had quickly taken on many characteristics: an arena in which to emulate Christ, a place to solidify and authenticate one's identity as a Jesuit missionary, and a space of reassurance for evangelists unsure of their own ability.

By 1640, then, Massé, Brebeuf and le Jeune had all expressed, for different reasons, the belief that New France was an arena where a Jesuit could realistically hope to perfect his missiological endeavours. Early America had shown some positive signs that it could also function as a zone in which an expansive and bustling Christian Indian community could be built, but most Jesuits remained sceptical. The soteriological aspect of New France was its most obvious feature at this stage; the experience of Masse and Brebeuf correlated with their desires, convincing them that early America was, at least for them, a stage for salvation. This was critical. The Jesuits in New France did not enjoy a unified corporate identity; Massé and

¹³² *JR* XXXIV: 157-169 & 181-183 ('opportunities of dying', 167; 'voluntary mortifications', 'number of the reprobate', 183).

¹³³ *JR* VIII: 173, 177 & 181 ('most suitable country', 173; 'infinite forests', 'Company of Jesus', 177; 'a heart in harmony', 181).

Brebeuf represented the obsession with personal salvation through suffering, while Biard and le Jeune prioritised the institutionalisation of mission as a vehicle for mass Indian salvation. Both impulses were contradictory, but the early American experience and environment allowed all four to satisfy their respective desires. This simultaneously encouraged missionaries to endure Hurons' treatment and form missions in the Great Lakes region, and their superiors to imagine these centres of devotion the organs of a growing and devout Christian Indian community.

But reconciling the imperatives of personal salvation and Christianization emanating from Quebec could only provide a foundation. Missionaries could welcome persecution as an archetypal evangelical experience, but if Hurons retained such hatred any significant conversions remained doubtful. For the growing complex of missions to function as a platform for even further expansion, the number of conversions had to rise. For this Brebeuf required an external threat, distinct from the Jesuits, that the latter could then define themselves against. Fortunately, one was readily available.

The Iroquois were the most formidable force in the Indian world around New France. Their lands ranged across the eastern woodlands of early America, butting against the southern borders of Indian groups that claimed the land around the Great Lakes. For the Jesuits in New France, the epidemic that confirmed them into their efforts intensified the terror of the Iroquois felt by Hurons, Montagnais and Algonquins. The economic motivation for war, to gain furs to trade for European goods, was supplemented by a growing demographic crisis. The Mohawks were first to experience the ravages of smallpox in 1633; Senecas, and most likely other Iroquois nations, were struck by the same disease in 1640. A few years later the population of the Five Nations stood at less than half of its former strength. Furious raids on the Hurons to the north now became mourning wars, attacks in which captives were sought to replace those Iroquois who had died from disease. During

these 'Great Mourning Wars', the number of captives taken was two or perhaps three times greater than the number killed.¹³⁴

The speed and horror of Iroquois raids achieved an even greater intensity when firearms began to flood into the Indian world. In 1609, only a year after Champlain had founded Quebec, Henry Hudson rediscovered the river that would later bear his name. A geopolitical fault line, the Hudson separated Mohawks in the west from Mahicans in the east. By 1629, increasingly intense conflict and epidemic disease drove the latter north and east into the Connecticut River Valley. Mohawks now dominated the western interior beyond New Netherland.¹³⁵ Furthermore, they had achieved this position at a crucial time. Fort Orange had been established as a replacement for Fort Nassau, and bustled with traders competing for Mohawk favour; these local rivalries mirrored the larger imperial competition between the Dutch, English and Swedes on the eastern shores. Responding to insatiable Indian demand for guns, this milieu pushed firearms into the Indigenous world with growing abandon. Mohawks were now in the envious position of being the primary trading partner of a colonial settlement increasingly desperate to maintain a positive relationship with them. Guns flowed into Iroquois hands. In 1641, 350 Iroquois appeared on the banks of the St. Lawrence, near Montreal, thirty-six of them armed with muskets. Only two years later, a

¹³⁴ For the Iroquois, see Daniel K. Richter. *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 58-61; Daniel P. Barr. *Unconquered: The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (London: Praeger, 2006), 40-41; Jon Parmenter. *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 41-76. For the Hurons, see Bruce G. Trigger. *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 601-607.

¹³⁵ For Hudson, see J. Franklin Jameson, ed. *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), 1-28; David Beers Quinn. *North America from Earliest Discovery to First Settlements: The Norse Voyages to 1612* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 380-81 & 410-11.

force twice that size stalked the forests around the town, now with 300 firearms between them.¹³⁶

Neither Jesuits nor the French imperial presence could stifle Iroquois harassment. Constant attacks from the eastern woodlands caused a surge of paranoia throughout Huronia. Brebeuf and their fellow missionaries struggled against the persistent terror of Iroquois raiding parties. Hurons imagined Iroquois warriors hiding behind their corn or in canoes seen floating ominously along the river systems; they pictured assassins lying still along trading routes, ready to abduct and torture the unsuspecting; and they listened with dread to warriors' barked communications swelling from the depths of the forests. One Jesuit echoed this fear, reporting 'it is not that these thieves are always all around us, but that one is never sure either that they are there, or that they are not, hence we have to beware of them all the time.'¹³⁷ The ubiquity of the Iroquois danger left little room for the fear of God – in 1641 Bartolomey Vimont, the Jesuit superior who had replaced le Jeune in 1639, complained 'that a vain fear of death engenders all these phantoms in their imagination, and turns them from the true fear which they ought to have of offending Him who alone can strengthen their hearts'.¹³⁸ Furthermore, these 'phantoms' could not be coerced or intimidated into submission. A more subtle strategy was necessary. Brebeuf and Huron Indians – both Christian and non-Christian – crafted a spectrum of suffering that utilised logic and reasoning to encourage conversion.

On 1st February in 1638 Brebeuf was permitted to convene a council of Huron captains. At the meeting, he manufactured a simple comparison: 'that if, to escape the hands of the Iroquois, their enemies, they spared no ingenuity, with how much more reason should they keep upon their guard not to fall some day into the hands of a cruel enemy, who will

¹³⁶ Denys Delâge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America, 1600-64*, trans. Jane Brierly (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1993), 133-135.

¹³⁷ Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York: Penguin, 2001), 106 ('we have to beware').

¹³⁸ *JR* XX: 261 ('a vain fear of death').

torment them forever'. This logic was bolstered by Indians who managed to escape Iroquois captivity. A woman, almost 80 years old, had been tortured but managed to flee from her tormenters. The next time she heard Jesuits preaching of the fires of Hell, she proclaimed 'it were a great deal better...to be burned by the Hiroquois than by the Devils'. New converts began to echo these sentiments as one of the motivations for their decision. The chief of a Huron war party, who had narrowly escaped with his life, accepted baptism on his return. At the feast held to commemorate the ceremony he also compared the fires of the Iroquois with those of Hell, the latter 'a hundred thousand times more dangerous and more painful'.¹³⁹

The implication was clear. Iroquois warriors, though exceptionally ferocious, were an almost trivial expression of the eternal punishment applied to those who refused to convert. Such logic countered the growing terror of Iroquois attacks, redirecting it toward an even greater dread of an immeasurably worse fate. In addition, the only means of avoiding the latter was gracious acceptance of the Jesuit message. Though the Jesuits could not stop the very real consequences suffered by Hurons seized in Iroquois raids, with this strategy they could at least neutralise the paralyzing fear that followed.

Brebeuf's assimilation of Iroquois warriors into the Christian moral paradigm of good and evil was aided significantly by Hurons themselves, marking the first moment of cooperation in the growth of the Jesuit conception of early America. With this characterisation of the Iroquois, the experiential aspects of this new martyrdom had been supplemented with a group of agents who would wilfully impose such suffering. Early American martyrdom therefore now possessed distinct procedural, attitudinal and personal requirements, as well as a diabolic other to be encountered. However, no Jesuit had yet

¹³⁹ *JR* XV: 117-119 ('spared no ingenuity', 117); *JR* XVI: 215 ('burned by the Hiroquois'); *JR* XXIII: 163 ('a hundred thousand times').

personally experienced these distinct aspects of this new coherent American martyrdom. But, as the Mohawk raids intensified further, one was fortunate enough to be caught.

A New Referent

In a Mohawk raid in August 1642, the Jesuit Isaac Jogues was captured. Jogues had been assigned to the Huron mission in 1636. He was seized during a routine trip back to Quebec. Both he and his Huron companions were marched through multiple Iroquois villages and tortured at each. His ordeal made clear the utter contempt with which the Five Nations viewed the French, and the hatred they held for them. One religious authority told Jogues that, of the group of captives, he resented him the most; by contrast, even as they were mounting continuous attacks against them, they viewed the Hurons with compassion rather than anger. The severe cruelty he experienced was justified by reference to his status as one of the ‘principal French Captains’. Yet despite their fury, his Iroquois captors would neither kill him nor ritualistically adopt him. Betraying a certain wariness of French reprisals, they held him as a hostage, reasoning that the colonial power would not dare risk the life of a key agent.¹⁴⁰

His misery surpassed that of Brebeuf and the other Jesuits, eventually mirroring the experience of Christ himself. In one particularly brutal punishment, his captors bound him upright between two stakes, a horror that he himself recognised as Christological. Jogues later wrote that ‘I have learned with some little experience what thou didst condescend to suffer for me on the Cross, where thy most holy body was not even sustained with cords, but hung by the hands and feet’.¹⁴¹ Despite the reassurance of suffering as Christ did, Jogues’

¹⁴⁰ *JR* XXV: 69, 73 & 193 (‘principal French Captains’, 69).

¹⁴¹ *JR* XXXIX: 195-197 (‘thou didst condescend’, 197).

ordeal was so severe that it caused a crisis of his faith. Surrounded by the Iroquois, and convinced of his imminent execution, he ‘suffered mortal anguish in my soul at the sight of the omissions and sins of my past life; the pains of the death which I was to expect, in a little while, at the hands of those Barbarians, as they told me; and the perils of Hell that surrounded me on all sides’. In short, he was seized not by ‘a loving and filial fear, but in a servile dejection’.¹⁴² Jogues was experiencing the extreme edge of Brebeuf and le Jeune’s martyrological suffering, even to the extent of wavering in his devotion; this was the zenith of early American martyrdom.

The following year Jogues was taken with Mohawk traders to meet the Dutch. The minister at the settlement of Rensselaerswyck, Johannes Megapolensis, was the first Protestant missionary in America. Since his arrival in New Netherland in 1642 he had endeavoured to produce a vocabulary of the Mohawk language in order to missionize among them. They attended sermons, but often ridiculed or criticised their messages. Some, however, asked searching questions, indicating potential receptivity. When Jogues appeared among the Mohawk party, Megapolensis saw his wounds; ‘his left thumb and several fingers on both hands had been cut off, either wholly or in part, and the nails of the remaining fingers had been chewed off’. While at Rensselaerswyck, the Mohawks received news that an Iroquois scouting party had been fired upon with cannons from Fort Richelieu after a Huron – part of the band – had delivered letters written by Jogues to the French inside. The Jesuit had been asked to write some letters, to be delivered by the scouting party, to bait those inside the Fort into lowering their guard. Jogues seized the opportunity to warn the French of Iroquois intentions, warning that ‘the design of the Iroquois, as far as I can see, is to take, if they can, all the Hurons...to make of them both but one people and only one land’. He was keenly

¹⁴² JR XXXI: 77-79 (‘suffered mortal anguish’, 77; ‘loving and filial fear’, 79).

aware that if his warning resulted in the death of any warrior, he and his letters would be blamed.¹⁴³

This was prescient. When the cannon fire erupted from Fort Richelieu, the Iroquois scattered and fled, abandoning a canoe carrying three precious firearms and some powder and lead. When they returned to their village they placed blame squarely on Jogues' words, and spoke 'only of burning' the priest. Jogues suspected that 'if I had chanced to be in the village at the return of those warriors, fire, rage, and cruelty would have taken my life'. This tension worsened when another Iroquois war party returned from an expedition to Montreal. One of their men had been killed, two others injured; they, likewise, held Jogues accountable. The information that he had provided in the letters had prompted a violent reaction from the French, which dispelled the Mohawk conviction that Jogues' captivity would dissuade them from conflict. If he had returned to his hosts, he would almost certainly have been executed. Arent van Curler, the captain of the settlement, understood this too. He felt an obligation to the French priest after Charles de Montmagny, Champlain's successor as Governor of the French colony, had prevented Indians in New France from travelling to target Dutchmen. He secretly informed Jogues of a ship at anchor nearby, which would travel first to Virginia, then across the Atlantic to Bordeaux or La Rochelle. Jogues hesitated - he felt an obligation toward the other captives and was concerned for their salvation - but accepted the offer. His year-long ordeal yielded an acquaintance with his captors' language, demography, customs and strength, knowledge that would perish with him if he failed to escape.¹⁴⁴

When the news of Jogues' ordeal reached the other Jesuits in New France it became a model for the suffering that many aspired to. One of those who admired it asked if his

¹⁴³ *Narratives of New Netherland*, 243 & 403-404 ('thumb and several fingers', 403); *JR* XXIV: 297 ('but one people').

¹⁴⁴ *Narratives of New Netherland*, 244-246 ('burning', 'fire, rage, and cruelty', 244).

contemporaries felt compassion for him, having been ‘deprived of the good fortune which Father Isaac Jogues has received, by falling into the hands of the Iroquois’. Furthermore, Jogues had been blessed with his captivity in the middle of his first journey throughout the Laurentian valley. By contrast, this Jesuit had travelled between Huronia and Quebec a total of six times and had not once met with the ‘fortunate adventure’ of capture and persecution. Again, he mirrored the previous convictions that New France, and particularly Iroquoia, was a realm enhancing a missionary’s qualities. He would, he wrote, be ‘very happy’ to follow the example of Jogues; ‘the rage of our enemies augments our merit, and their fires, our glory’.¹⁴⁵ Iroquois hatred therefore appeared as an engine of salvation, both for Jesuits and, subsequently, those they had evangelized. By extension, Jogues’ was a new paradigm created by a confluence of specifically American factors.

Jogues, and his subsequent reputation, represented the culmination of Jesuit efforts to understand the soteriological, martyrological, and evangelical potential of early America. Indians had been critical to this process, but rarely positively – paranoid Hurons demanding bewitched items from Brebeuf, or spreading malicious rumours throughout the Laurentian Indian world; Iroquois warriors menacing small Christianized settlements; or Mohawks mutilating Jogues and his companions. Yet while Jogues had languished in captivity, a group of Indians were steadily evolving their own Christian identity, a consciousness that would eventually propel the Jesuit creation of early America to its peak.

Sillery

¹⁴⁵ *JR* XXV: 41 (‘good fortune’, ‘fortunate adventure’, ‘very happy’, ‘augments our merit’).

The response of Great Lakes Indians to the Jesuits was not universally hostile. Brebeuf had managed to secure the support of some Hurons for his paradigm of Iroquois diabolism, and many others had reasoned that Christianity was a more efficacious religious program than their own. The main problem, however, was scale. Sporadic acceptance of Jesuit preaching, whether sincere or otherwise, could not be enough to delineate a consciously separate Christian Huron community. Without this the Jesuits' fear of a soft religious hybridity, in which Hurons adopted Christian practice while retaining traditional modes of piety, could be realised. Fortunately, the catastrophic epidemic that allowed the creation of a new martyrdom also convinced a group of Indians to embrace Jesuit instruction in its totality. For this, they reasoned, they needed an entirely new space created as an untainted centre of devotion. With this conviction they founded the settlement of Sillery.

The intellectual foundations of Sillery were highly exclusionary and dogmatic. At a meeting to establish the course of the new mission settlement in 1640, three well-respected and well-known Christian Indians articulated the expectations of those who would live there. Estienne Pigarouik, a famous religious practitioner, spoke first. He declared that he no longer feared death, only the machinations of the Devil. Unbelievers carried the influence of the latter, and so must be banished from the settlement to maintain its purity. Noel Negabamat, the second to speak, was more moderate, and offered a different approach. He reminded those gathered that it was clear, from experience, that the Governor, the Jesuits, and the entire French contingent in New France loved the Indians of the Laurentian valley. Their example was one of religious unity; therefore, in order to mirror those who had provided so much for the Indians around the Great Lakes, 'it seems to me we all ought to unite in one and the same belief, since we wish to assemble in one and the same village'. The final man to speak, Jean Baptiste Etinechkavat, was a captain. He asked that those who had faith in him for his leadership also have faith in the new religion he had adopted. After careful consideration, he

had concluded that Christianity, and more specifically the belief in and veneration of the Christian God, was the only way to restore an Indian community so ravaged by disease and war.¹⁴⁶ Together, the three Christians – a former shaman, an exemplary convert, and a respected captain – constituted a formidable power bloc. They also demonstrated what the Jesuits had been struggling to prove; that Christianity was an equally viable system of belief and practice that could be adopted without the chaotic disorientation of Indian power structures falling apart.

In only a few years, the extent of their devotion was made clear by widespread penitential practice, often violent. On multiple occasions the Jesuits learned of Christian Indians beating and cutting themselves in response to perceived sin. One example even showed Jesuit authority to be tenuous with regard to observing the faith. In 1642 one of the inhabitants at Sillery felt a temptation to divorce his wife, who he had wed in a Christian ceremony. The mere thought plagued him, and ‘caused him deep sorrow’. He visited one of the Jesuits at the settlement, who made him confess his apparent sin. Yet this was not enough – ‘the mere idea of changing his wife seems to him so great a crime that he entreats to be sent to prison and to be put in a dungeon, or to be publicly flogged’. The Jesuit refused his request; in desperation, the Indian entered a small room near the chapel and ‘with a rope that he finds, beats himself so hard all over the body that the noise reaches the ears of the Father’. Only the Jesuit’s intervention to forbid such severe penance caused him to stop.¹⁴⁷ Collectively, the Sillery Indians were quickly moving further and further toward the radical end of a spiritual spectrum. This drive culminated the following year when Thomas Sawenhati, a Christian from the settlement, appeared to accept the prospect of death fully and gratefully. He would not search for it, but having considered that life ‘keeps me back from

¹⁴⁶ *JR* XVIII: 93-97 (‘one and the same village’, 97).

¹⁴⁷ *JR* XXII: 63-65 & 67 (‘deep sorrow’, ‘publicly flogged’, ‘with a rope’, 67).

the possession of the great gifts that Faith leads me to hope for' he would welcome his death as a providential event.¹⁴⁸

This process was illustrative of a broader shift in missiological success across New France, one that had profound consequences for the conceptual structure that guided the mission. Only seven years le Jeune had described the paradigm of Francois Xavier as one to be closely followed, Heirosme Lalement again referenced Xavier's example, but this time to differentiate the New France mission from the latter's own in Asia. Lalement recalled the Jesuit's warning that of the thousands he baptized in Asia, only the children and a few adults received salvation. By contrast, Lalement's experience, and the experience of the rest of the Jesuits in New France, had indicated that 'these Peoples among whom we are in Western India are more capable of understanding the mysteries of our Faith' than Xavier's neophytes, thus distinguishing evangelism in early America from the earliest efforts across Asia.¹⁴⁹ The Sillery Indians were just one example of this.

This extreme devotion quickly acquired an expansive component. In the same year as Pigariouch, Negabamat and Etinechkavat articulated the intended character of the new settlement, the Jesuits were informed of Indian plans to travel to Tadoussac to invite both the captain and his people to establish another Christian settlement near Sillery. This was, furthermore, part of a grander strategy. Once the Indians at Tadoussac had founded a new village, more distant nations would be invited to do the same, 'that we may all have only one God, and one way of doing things'.¹⁵⁰ In 1642 they also asked Vimont to take some smoked meat as a gift for the Christian Hurons at Trois-Rivieres, as a simple token of the affection they felt for their fellow converts. Vimont noticed the significance of this; their request was

¹⁴⁸ *JR* XXVI: 203 ('possession of the great gifts').

¹⁴⁹ *JR* XXIII: 107 ('more capable of understanding').

¹⁵⁰ *JR* XVIII: 111 ('one way of doing things').

‘all the more edifying that it is unusual among these Barbarians, who love only their own nation, and have a supreme contempt for others’.

Three years later this new spiritual geography, anchored in and triangulated by Sillery, Trois-Rivieres and the mission at Tadoussac, burst into life. At the latter, an Indian called Ignace had fallen sick. His illness was severe, but he had managed to survive. When he left the bark dwelling in which he had recovered, he knelt down and loudly claimed to have come directly from heaven after being healed, and that he had witnessed Christ himself. He asked that the Indians at Tadoussac be assembled for him to describe his vision.

With the Indians gathered, Ignace gave a grave warning – in his vision he had been given a message by Christ himself, and ordered to relate it to those in the settlement. He had been shown a large book. On one page were listed hated vices, such as drunkenness, communication with the Devil, and adultery; the other side listed each Indian engaged in these acts, one of which Ignace named as having a particularly damning register of sins. Christ then showed a light in his right hand, within which Ignace could perceive the children and adults who had died after being baptised. On his left, however, was ‘a fire that made me tremble with fear’, a flame so powerful that even the Jesuits could not describe it with sufficient intensity. Suffering within this fire were all the Indians and Frenchmen who had refused to believe in God or disobeyed him. Finally, Christ himself stood in the centre of a vast panorama, flanked by images of Paradise and Hell. His final warning to Ignace was that any suffering must be endured patiently, emulating the example of Christ himself.¹⁵¹

This forceful warning had an immediate effect. A Jesuit at Tadoussac reported that the Indians there were profoundly affected. Christian and non-Christian alike bustled into the chapel in crowds to recite ‘special prayers’. The Rosary was recited with a new, hurried

¹⁵¹ *JR* XXVII: 183-189 (‘tremble with fear’, 187).

intensity, and ‘words full of devotion and from hearts which seemed truly contrite’ were heard throughout the settlement. One Indian articulated the significance of Ignace’s vision and subsequent speech: ‘it seems to me that I am awakening from a profound slumber; I have been blind hitherto, and I am commencing to open my eyes’. Away from Tadoussac, the Christian Indians at Sillery and Trois-Rivieres were quickly made aware of this situation and were keenly aware of its importance. They were ‘deeply touched’ by Ignace’s experience.¹⁵²

This emotional link was concretized a short time later. A Christian, again at Tadoussac, had committed an unspecified sin. One of the most respected converts at the settlement seized on those gathered for Mass to address this transgression. He was dismayed; he compared the Christian community at Tadoussac to a ‘shabby, torn cloth’ that functioned as a curtain in the chapel, ‘full of holes; the Devil passes through our hearts as my finger passes through that hole’. Sins tore at the fabric of the community just as the elements battered the cloth he held. The guilty Indian agreed. He presented a whip to the captain and asked to be struck as penance. Each one of those gathered then followed him, including the children. Crucially, an unnamed Indian from Sillery was present in the crowd. Having witnessed each of the Christians receive the punishment, ‘he cried aloud that he was a sinner and wished to do penance with the others’. He rushed forward, threw himself to the ground, and received the same strikes with the whip that the others had suffered.¹⁵³

In addition to these strong religious links felt by Sillery toward other nascent Christian communities in the Indian world, their relationship with the Jesuits acquired a new dimension when François-Joseph Bressani, another Jesuit travelling into Huronia, was captured by another Mohawk raiding party. Jean de Quen, a Jesuit who had been among the Hurons with Brebeuf, preached a sermon at Sillery when news came through of the

¹⁵² *JR* XXVII: 189-191 (‘special prayers’, ‘truly contrite’, ‘profound slumber’, ‘deeply touched’, 191).

¹⁵³ *JR* XXVII: 193-197 (‘Devil passes through our hearts’, 195; ‘penance with the others’, 197).

missionary's capture. His message was simple; that this misfortune was an effect of God's anger, who 'was justly irritated by the wickedness of bad Christians and of the infidels'. This evangelical tactic was a staple of the Jesuit strategy. But in response to de Quen's sermon, Negabamat offered a new response. It was indeed true, he stated, that 'it is our sins that have placed Father Bressany and the Hurons in the hands of the Iroquois'. Such transgressions were now 'loading them with the blows of clubs; are tearing out their nails, are cutting off their fingers...and burning them at a slow fire'.¹⁵⁴

Jean Baptiste Etinechkavat, when he received the same news, decided that war was necessary. In his speech responding to the news, Father Bressani's capture was a key reason for this decision. As a Jesuit, 'he is one of those who have come from so far to teach us', and who had risked the danger of Iroquois capture to evangelize the Christian Indians. Moreover, the other Jesuits were 'afflicted' by his capture; capturing some Iroquois as revenge would 'dry their tears'.¹⁵⁵

Between them, Etinechkavat and Negabamat had articulated yet another stage in the spiritual development of the Sillery Indians. Beyond a simple relationship akin to a teacher and student, Jesuits and Christian Indians now shared a providential space in which the former could suffer the divine judgment passed in response to Indian sin, and the latter acquired an obligation to the missionaries who had converted them.

Biard's initial conviction that Jesuits were obligated to the Acadian Indians had now been reciprocated by the Christian community at Sillery. The Sillery Indians had, therefore, not only nourished an uncompromising and severe regime of communal discipline; deliberate participation in a shared mystical, emotional, and penitential universe that extended beyond

¹⁵⁴ JR XXV: 149 ('wickedness of bad Christians', 'Father Bressany', 'cutting off their fingers').

¹⁵⁵ JR XXV: 157-159 ('so far to teach', 'afflicted', 157; 'dry their tears', 159).

their own community, to encompass the growing constellation of missions and Christian settlements in the Laurentian complex, made clear the new and expanding spiritual geography in New France.

Finally, Noel Negabamat was instrumental in encouraging a Montagnais Indian to listen to the Jesuits, an Indian who le Jeune would later use as a model for his definition of a ‘true Christian’. Biard had defined Membertou as the only ‘true’ Christian in Acadia – le Jeune’s definition of an authentic follower of the faith was radically different, and was illustrative of how the Jesuits’ conception of missiology in early America had fundamentally changed.

This Indian, who was unfortunately not named by le Jeune, had been part of a company of Montagnais and Algonquins who had made camp near Quebec for the winter, in 1637. Estienne Pigarouich had been among the group, the previous year having burned all of the items he owned for use in ritual and ceremony. His influence on the Indian is unclear. Negabamat’s influence, however, came at a critical moment. Le Jeune’s exemplary, true Christian had felt an instant affinity with, and reverence for, Jesuit teaching. He held the missionaries in such high regard that he would not dare address them, hoping instead that they would summon him for instruction. Negabamat broke the ice, informing him of the Jesuit plan to help the Montagnais and Algonquins adopt a sedentary mode of living, which he eagerly agreed to participate in. Following his decision, his life was chaotic. While a catechumen, many of his family died to disease. He was also stricken with the same illness, and had ordered his children to obey the Jesuits in the event of his death. He remained near death for three months but made a full recovery.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ *JR* XIV: 137-145.

For le Jeune, however, his life was not what distinguished him as a true Christian. Instead, shortly after taking communion after his recovery, he spoke of a fiercely internal faith, one that would not now be shaken even by the rejection or criticism from the Jesuits themselves: 'I do not care any more for the things of earth; it matters little whether I am poor or rich...since Heaven is opened to me, and my true Captain has come to visit me. If you were to drive me away, if your Governor were to reject me, if you were all to leave our country, I would never give up God'.¹⁵⁷ Le Jeune's 'true Christian' had therefore articulated an obedience to the faith that no longer required a missionary, secular encouragement, or even the presence of the French in early America. This was in sharp contrast with Biard's definition when he described Membertou as such. The Micmac chief was exemplary precisely because he submitted to the Jesuits' authority, without question; by contrast, le Jeune's model of a Christian Indian had progressed to an autonomous understanding of Christianity and its rules.

The Christian Indians at Sillery had been instrumental in further clarifying the requirements and potential of early America as a missiological space. As a collective, they had convinced Lalement that the Xaverian paradigm for conversion was not applicable to early America, since those at Sillery were more capable of accurately comprehending the Jesuit message; they had formed a key node in a new spiritual geography and were actively involved in the new corporate Christian identity it sustained; and their own examples and influence were such that their emulation by other Indians compelled le Jeune to redefine the archetype of an Indian convert.

¹⁵⁷ *JR* XIV: 145 ('never give up God').

Their most important contribution, however, was yet to come. When a hunting party drifted into the settlement in 1645, the reaction of the Sillery Indians catalysed a process that thrust the boundaries of this expansive missiological world far beyond the St. Lawrence.

Peace with the Mohawks

On 17th May an Algonquian hunting party arrived at Sillery, dragging three Iroquois prisoners with them. The captives were terrified as they were lifted from the canoes and escorted to the village. They assumed their captors' conversation during the journey had been of torture and punishment, but they were mistaken. When the group had drifted into Sillery, Jean Baptiste Etinechkavat had called out to them, reminding the warriors that 'we now proceed in a different fashion than we formerly did. We have overturned all our old customs. That is why we receive thee quietly, without harming the prisoners'. Two Huron women, nevertheless, pleaded with the Jesuits to sanction the prisoners' torture. Both were refused, and both heeded the denial. Vimont noted with pride that 'it is no little hold gained over the Savages, to hinder them from venting their fury on those who, when they hold them, treat them with fiendish cruelty'.¹⁵⁸

Montmagny arrived at the mission village the next day. Dieskarath, the captain of the hunting party, presented one of the Mohawks, Tokhrahenehiaron, to him. The captives' bonds and the knife that cut them were thrown into a fire nearby, a symbolic destruction of any Algonquian anger. When the prisoners finally understood that they would not be tortured and killed, they thanked the Governor, referring to him as Onontio.¹⁵⁹ One proclaimed no other

¹⁵⁸ JR XXVII: 229-239 ('different fashion', 235; 'hinder them from venting', 237).

¹⁵⁹ The designation 'Onontio' was a new diplomatic metaphor. Literally meaning 'great mountain', it was a term denoting the Governor at Quebec a father. This was an invention of the Mohawks and Onondagas, marking a shift from a previous diplomatic language between Indians and French colonial agents that described their alliances as between brothers. The paternal association imposed many more obligations; to arbitrate disputes

‘ardor except for joy and peace’. He danced, then took up a hatchet and cast it into the same fire that had burnt the restraints. As the weapon blackened the Mohawk announced ‘there is my anger cast down; farewell to war, I lay down my arms; I am your friend forever’. Shortly afterward, Montmagny ordered the prisoners escorted to Trois-Rivieres, from which they would be sent back to Iroquoia.¹⁶⁰ He hoped that their treatment would catalyse a peace process.

Less than two months later, he succeeded. The freed prisoner returned to Trois-Rivieres on 5th July, accompanied by two other Mohawks and Guillaume Cousture, a Frenchman taken prisoner when Isaac Jogues was captured. One of the Indians, named Kiotseaeton, announced himself a messenger for the Iroquois, and asked for Montmagny’s presence. A week later the Governor arrived from Quebec, with Vimont in tow. Algonquins, Montagnais, Hurons, French and the Iroquois delegation clustered around two poles that the visitors had planted, with a cord stretched between them to hold the collars of porcelain beads that would represent each Iroquois position. In the following oration, Kiotseaeton tied seventeen collars to the cord. Their collective purpose was threefold – To give thanks for the liberation of the Iroquois prisoners; to establish harmony along the waterways of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence; and to invite Hurons into Iroquois territory to forge new relationships of peace and cooperation. Two days later, Montmagny responded with fourteen gifts of his own, each conveying a particular message. Noel Negabamat complemented these gifts with ten elk skins; half to cover the Iroquois on their return journey, the others to shroud

between Indian nations in favourable relationships with the Governor, to protect them from others who were hostile, and to maintain and regulate the steady expansion of the commercial relationships between French and Indian traders. For the creation of the term and its development, see Peter Cook. ‘Onontio Gives Birth: How the French in Canada Became Fathers to Their Indigenous Allies, 1645-73’, *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 96, Issue 2 (June, 2015), pp. 165-193. For the implications of this new relationship, see Richard White. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empire, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 36.

¹⁶⁰ JR XXVII: 245 (‘joy and peace’, ‘my anger cast down’).

the corpses of those who had died in the conflict. Peace was agreed. That evening, Vimont invited Kiotseaeton and his companions to the Jesuit house in Trois-Rivieres. He gifted them tobacco and a calumet each to smoke it. In response, the Iroquois delegation promised that the Jesuits would ‘soon hear from us’.¹⁶¹

The reversal was stunning. In mid-September two more assemblies were held, attended by Montmagny, Hurons, Montagnais, Alonquins, and more Iroquois ambassadors. This time, the latter’s gifts were intended to convey their new obedience to Onontio. The first set of porcelain beads presented to Montmagny represented his booming ‘voice of thunder’, which upon hearing ‘the whole Iroquois country had thrown away their weapons and their hatchets – but so far beyond the Sky that there were no arms in the world long enough to drawn them back from here’; another requested that he learn from the Algonquins and Hurons their opinion on the proposed peace, and inform the Iroquois; the eighth string assured French traders and soldiers that Iroquois women would marry them, further enmeshing Onontio’s subjects through strong personal relationships. When this round of gifting and diplomacy was over, the head of the Iroquois delegation took a Frenchman, an Algonquin and a Huron and danced with them, all singing ‘in a loud voice a song of peace which they uttered from the depths of their chests’. Over the next few days the various Indian communities exchanged similar diplomatic gestures, trading beaver skins, tobacco and pipes, and more beads. Items were, also, symbolically broken: two Huron gifts ripped the shields from the Iroquois backs and smashed them, and shattered the kettle in which Huron prisoners had been boiled. The final act of this elaborate theatre was a feast, held by Montmagny on the 21st. Four hundred attended, all now united under Onontio’s protection. Jérôme Lalement, a Jesuit part of the Huron delegation, ‘was delighted to see so miraculous a change’ in the

¹⁶¹ *JR* XXVII: 253-265 & 271 (‘soon hear’, 271).

Iroquois. If the peace held, Vimont wrote, ‘it will be possible to go and suffer for Jesus Christ in a great many nations’.¹⁶²

The New France Mission

This final act of diplomacy granted a new feature to the mission in New France, one that concluded the construction of Jesuit America. The Iroquois’ inclusion in a stunning new peace provided a final, geographic expression to the mission. Early America was now distinguished from other evangelical theatres by a new type of martyrdom, crafted by Brebeuf and le Jeune; by a new paradigm for missiological activity, provided by Jogues; by an exceptionally intelligent and malleable indigenous population; by an understanding that Jesuit activity could be perfected in this new space; and by a zealous and consciously expansive Christian Indian community centred at Sillery. Biard and Massé’s earlier hopes had been realised through the careful, interactive crafting of the particular features of the mission in New France.

Correspondingly, certain references that suffused Jesuit reports until the 1640s gradually lost importance. The death that Massé and Brebeuf yearned for as a martyrological end was quickly replaced by a different concept - one manifest by Jogue’s experience of captivity, following which this new martyrdom became the new example to be emulated. Francois Xavier was anxiously regarded as a figure to be matched, and his Asian mission field the template by which to judge the native populations. Yet, eventually, the Jesuits in New France consciously moved beyond Xavier’s example by recognising the singular promise of the Hurons, Algonquins and Montagnais that formed the core of their mission in

¹⁶² *JR* XXVII: 279-287, 295-301 & 303-305 (‘voice of thunder’, ‘far beyond the Sky’, 281; ‘song of peace’, 289; ‘so miraculous a change’, 303; ‘great many nations’, 305).

early America. Finally, the global frame of reference that was frequently utilised by Biard and le Jeune shrank as the mission acquired its own momentum. Jesuits' endeavours in Brazil, Paraguay, Peru and China soon disappeared from correspondence from New France, indicating a more general appreciation that early America deserved its own narrative. Early America now stood as a distinct evangelical arena.

While Biard, Brebeuf, le Jeune and their fellow Jesuits had been crafting a new early America in New France, Franciscans had returned to Florida and New Mexico with a new optimism. The following three decades produced another, Franciscan, America - one remarkably similar in form and consequence to the Jesuit construction. Like the Jesuits, the friars began to distinguish the Spanish borderlands from other evangelical theatres. By the mid-1630s, this distinction was complete. Franciscan and Jesuit conceptions of early America complemented one another, forming a new, comprehensive continental missiology.

A New Providence

Franciscans had been emboldened by the success of the campaign to retain the Spanish borderlands as mission fields. But unlike their Jesuit contemporaries in New France, they wrestled with an ossified and highly competitive imperial structure, one that encouraged conflict between the various jurisdictions in the New World. In the 1610s and 1620s Franciscans floundered within this system, trying fruitlessly to impose their authority on secular governmental officials and institutions. They were, however, operating within a more rigid imperial system than the Jesuits. The Spanish imperial hierarchy was populated by the King, his Council of the Indies, regional viceroys, Audiencias, and ecclesiastical and fiscal authorities. The Crown generally distrusted its bureaucracy, so the jurisdictions of the

regional bodies were left deliberately murky to prevent concentrations of power and corruption. This flexibility provoked conflict.¹⁶³

In Spanish Florida, the revival of the Guale missions was plagued by the indifference of Governor Mendez de Canzo. Friar Baltasar Lopez reported to the Crown his conviction that ‘it pertains to the one who governs to threaten and to punish and for the religious to be like merciful fathers to the natives so that the Indians like them more’, but complained that de Canzo refused to pursue Christian Indians who had fled to the interior. But the governor was not only violating Franciscan expectations. He was actively harming their attempts to reconstitute the Guale missions. Lopez’ fellow friar Pedro Ruiz reported a general understanding that baptism conferred a new freedom to violate their cacique’s orders and roam between villages ‘playing the rogue’, secure in the belief that the rite secured unqualified Spanish protection. Ruiz’ recommendation was that de Canzo punish these examples ‘with gallows and knife’. His continued ambivalence meant Franciscans were the ones to criticise their new converts, ‘and thus they do not hold us to be their true fathers’. For Ruiz the ideal, just like his predecessors in New Mexico, was that ‘the governor is the one to punish and we with our entreaties the ones to save them from the gallows and the whippings’.¹⁶⁴ The Governor’s refusal to cooperate was blatantly undermining Franciscan efforts.

While Franciscans faced this dangerous ambivalence from gubernatorial authority in Florida, their contemporaries in New Mexico faced outright hostility. In 1612 Fray Isidro Ordóñez arrived as the first Franciscan prelate in the province. Relations between the prelate

¹⁶³ For the Spanish imperial hierarchy, see John Leddy Phelan. ‘Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy’, in *Administrators of Empire*, edited by Mark A. Burkholder (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 65-110, 73-78; J. H. Elliott. *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 117-153.

¹⁶⁴ *JHCCR*, MS006, 142 & 150-151 (‘merciful fathers’, 142; ‘rogue’, ‘gallows and knife’, ‘true fathers’, ‘with our entreaties’, 151).

and Oñate's successor as Governor, Pedro de Peralta, deteriorated quickly. Ordóñez criticised Peralta for his use of Indian labour to develop Santa Fe. He also complained that unreasonable tributes were constantly being demanded and that soldiers were abusing Indian women. Within a year Peralta had been excommunicated by Ordóñez. The Franciscan later gave a sermon expressing his iron conviction that his authority was supreme, warning 'let no one argue with vain words that I do not have the same power and authority that the Pope in Rome has...believe me that I can arrest, cast into irons, and punish as seems fit to me any person without any exception'.¹⁶⁵

A similar sentiment was expressed by Ordóñez' successor, Fray Estevan de Perea. The Franciscan had an equally tumultuous relationship with Peralta's replacement, Juan de Eulate. Perea appealed to the levels of the Spanish imperial hierarchy above Eulate for favour, including the Viceroy of New Spain and the King himself. He claimed that by virtue of the papal bulls issued by Leo X and Adrian VI Franciscans had 'authority and jurisdiction supreme' in the provinces of New Spain, and could 'issue any censure or interdict against any persons of whatever state, condition and pre-eminence that may be'. This prompted a stern reply from the Crown in 1620, warning Perea that he was authorised to act only in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters in New Mexico; exceeding this licence would violate his responsibility to serve the King, who would consider himself 'very ill-served' by such actions.¹⁶⁶

This conception held by the Franciscans – that early America was their region, and that every other imperial official in the borderlands should submit to them – received a final

¹⁶⁵ Ramón A. Gutiérrez. *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 109 ('cast into irons').

¹⁶⁶ Lansing B. Bloom. 'The Royal Order of 1620 to Custodian Fray Estéban de Perea', *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 5, (1930), pp. 288-98, 291-292, 294-295 & 298 ('jurisdiction supreme', 291-292; 'censure or interdict', 292; 'very ill-served', 298). See also Lansing B. Bloom. 'A Glimpse of New Mexico in 1620', *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 111, (1928), pp. 357-80.

moral component, in a report submitted in 1629 by Geronimo Zarate Salmeron, a Franciscan. He had evangelised in New Mexico since 1621, returning to Mexico City in 1628 to publish an appeal for further support for the missions around the Rio Grande valley. Spaniards, he wrote, had been aware of the potential riches hidden in New Mexico for decades, but had proven themselves undeserving. When the Oñate expedition had left Mexico another Franciscan, Diego de Mercado, had prophesised that these early settlers would not enjoy the riches they sought. God would keep it from them ‘because they have always come with these desires and greediness for riches’.¹⁶⁷ By extension, Salmeron was advocating Franciscan authority be recognised in New Mexico not because of their practical power or the papal mandate they carried, but simply because they were evangelists.

Emboldened by the success of their contemporaries’ campaign to retain the Spanish borderlands as mission fields financed by the Spanish Crown, Lopez, Ruiz, Ordóñez, Perea and Salmeron had all forcefully asserted the supremacy of Franciscan authority over governmental institutions; in two decades this argument acquired practical, *de jure* and moral-providential elements. The apparently intractable clash that this caused, however, between ultramontane and royal authorities in the Spanish borderlands required a solution.

Benavides provided this solution in 1630. In his *Memorial* to the King he suggested a new conception of New Mexico, one that could prevent clashes between religious and secular institutions and emphasise the necessity of either to the continued progress of missionization. The friars and the Crown, he argued, operated as equally critical vehicles for God’s providence in New Mexico. God had entrusted the spiritual condition of the province and the Indians that inhabited it to the Spanish King; and he had evidently chosen the Franciscan order as the first and only missionaries to penetrate the region. But the success of these

¹⁶⁷ Zárate Salmerón. *Relaciones*, translated by Alicia Ronstadt Milich, (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace Publishers, Inc., 1966), 98 (‘greediness for riches’).

divinely assigned roles required logistical and financial support for the latter. Therefore, by providing the money and infrastructure by which Franciscans continued to evangelise in New Mexico, the King was fulfilling his obligation. Benavides directly assured the King that he was ‘responsible for all this change’ and that his actions had ‘snatched so many thousands of souls from the claws of the demon’. In return, Franciscans taught ‘all the Indians always to recommend Your Majesty to God, because at great expense you send them ministers’. Finally, the friars themselves ‘never fail, either in our Masses or in our private devotions, to commend Your Majesty to God in that far-off kingdom of yours’.¹⁶⁸ Wrestling missionization away from comparatively petty institutional squabbles, Benavides instead conjured a providential universe that compelled both Franciscans and royal authority to cooperate to meet their religious obligations. Furthermore, every time an Indian appeared to accept conversion this creation pulsed with salvific potential for every agent involved in the evangelisation of New Mexico. The Indians were converted; Franciscans were empowered to achieve their goal of conversion, thus fulfilling their obligation as missionaries; and favourable prayers were spoken for the King by the swelling body of Christian Indians and the friars themselves.

Decades of chaotic attempts to mould the Spanish borderlands into viable and valuable possessions of the Spanish Crown had been futile, and they had been finalised as primarily missiological spaces at the turn of the seventeenth century. But within a highly bureaucratic and competitive imperial structure Franciscans found it incredibly difficult to bend the secular authorities to their whim. Where Brebeuf and le Jeune readily received legal and political assistance when required, Franciscans encountered unresponsive or openly hostile governors whose efforts were seriously undermining efforts to reconstitute the missions. The early 1630s, however, saw a promising new understanding of early America

¹⁶⁸ *BM*, 38-39 (‘responsible’, ‘claws of the demon’, 38; ‘you send them’, 38-39; ‘that far-off kingdom’, 39).

develop; where the Crown and Franciscans worked harmoniously as complementary forces in the same providence.

A Different Evangelism

Jesuits had seized on the dreadful impact of disease rife in Indian communities in New France, but Franciscans were denied so radical an upheaval. In Spanish Florida, only the Guale and Timucua were severely affected. The former, being closest to St. Augustine and having the most intense contact with Spanish agents, were reduced to a population of 1,200 by 1600, down from at least 6,000 in the mid-sixteenth century. By 1625 the Timucua, after over a century of smallpox, measles and plague outbreaks, had been diminished to only 5% of their former strength. Despite the obvious lethality of these silent killers, to the west the Apalachee remained untouched. Early contact with Spanish explorers had been fleeting and violent. This hostility ensured isolation – a seclusion that complemented geographic distance from infected rivals and more sparse settlement patterns. Until 1650 Apalachee escaped the epidemics rushing through the peninsula.¹⁶⁹ New Mexico, by contrast, likely experienced epidemic disease even before Coronado traced the Rio Grande. Hawikuh and Pecos were key nodes in the regional economy. The former linked the Pueblo world to Mesoamerica, and the latter was the eastern edge of a trade network that linked Hawikuh with the Rio Grande Valley. However, despite a general trend of population decline beginning in the sixteenth century, mobility mitigated the damage caused. The Pueblo world became defined by fewer,

¹⁶⁹ Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 247-294; Christopher Stojanowski, *Biocultural Histories in la Florida: A Bioarchaeological Perspective* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 115-116.

larger settlements as sites were abandoned. As a result, population remained relatively stable.¹⁷⁰

Exercising apparently supernatural power in Indian communities was, to be sure, fraught with danger. In 1629, At Awatovi, the Hopi pueblo missionized by Friar Francisco Porras, religious leaders challenged the legitimacy of the Christian faith by bringing a blind teenage boy before the priest. Threatened by a growing tide of conversions in the pueblo, they demanded he validate his claims of superior supernatural power by curing the boy. They hoped that his subsequent failure would discredit this worrying threat to their spiritual authority. Instead, their worst fears were realised. Porras took his crucifix, one of those belonging to Mother Luisa de Carrion, and placed it across the boy's eyes. He prayed loudly for a miracle to dispel 'the confusion of all these infidels' and to indicate the miraculous power latent in the contentious symbol of the cross. The blind boy instantly opened his eyes 'and saw perfectly and began to shout' assuring all that had gathered that he could now see. The pace of conversions quickened. Those Indians who had crafted the challenge seethed, but knew that openly killing Porras would only further threaten their position. They poisoned him as retribution. Five years before, another Franciscan named Tomas Carrasco had been preaching the importance of monogamy as a moral imperative. An Indian woman had openly challenged him, preaching with equal passion in favour of polygamy and promiscuity. Her speech, however, was cut short. She was struck by lightning 'from a clear untroubled sky' and killed instantly. Carrasco celebrated the apparent judgment of 'that infernal agent of the demon right in the midst of those good Christian women who were resisting her evil

¹⁷⁰ The first recorded epidemic was a smallpox outbreak in 1636. For this and the general trend of epidemics in the Southwest, see Ann L. W. Stodder & Debra L. Martin. 'Health and Disease in the Southwest before and after Spanish Contact', in *Disease and Demography in the Americas*, edited by John W. Verano & Douglas H. Ubelaker (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), pp. 55-75; Daniel T. Reff. 'The Introduction of Smallpox in the Greater Southwest', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 89, No. 3, (September, 1987), pp. 704-708.

teachings'. Unfortunately, he did not yet understand that for Pueblos, those struck by lightning became cloud spirits, their rhetoric subsequently confirmed as morally true.¹⁷¹

The Franciscan use of power traditionally reserved for Pueblo religious figures was therefore slippery, and potentially disastrous. Disease had not blighted the Pueblo world as seriously as Huronia, so the disorientation suffered was correspondingly less. Friars consciously entering pueblos as conduits of a superior divine power therefore struggled. To further develop early America as a missiological space they required a different strategy.

In New Mexico, though friar Alonso de Benavides knew little about the true extent of Apache and Navajo territory, he knew a concerning amount about their martial skill and contempt for Christianity. These spectres haunting the Christianized Indians in the Rio Grande Valley were believed to swarm across a vast swathe of land encircling the Pueblo Indians – west, from the great river to the Pacific ocean; east, for at least a hundred leagues; and north, 'without our having discovered any end to it in that direction.'¹⁷² This huge landscape arcing across the Southwest sustained a terrifying mass of highly effective Indian soldiers and raiders. In previous decades their land had proved a 'crucible for Spanish valour'. Its warriors had, in addition, been summoned to Acoma as reinforcements when Oñate launched his attack against the pueblo, and to Moqui as assassins when Father Francisco de Porras terrified the Indians there with the baptismal rite.¹⁷³

For the Franciscans, both groups had been a persistent problem. As early as 1609, missionized pueblos located precariously on the edge of the mission frontier displayed a dual problem. Spanish power had not penetrated the interior beyond the Rio Grande, so the

¹⁷¹ *BRM*, 76-77 ('these infidels', 'began to shout', 76); Ramon A. Gutierrez. *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 73-74 ('untroubled sky', 'her evil teachings', 73).

¹⁷² *BM*, 41-42 ('having discovered', Spanish valour', 42).

¹⁷³ Lansing B. Bloom. 'Fray Estevan de Perea's *Relacion*', *New Mexico Historical Review*, Vol. 8, (1933), pp. 211-235, 231-2; Villagra, *History of New Mexico*, 213; *BM*, 42.

prestige that came from military dominance was unobtainable. Those who had converted, or those who were considering it, became more disenchanted with the advantages of conversion with each Apache raid. Secondly, Apache territory had become a 'refuge and a shelter' for enemies of the Spanish.¹⁷⁴ As the frontier between friendly pueblos and hostile Apaches bulged and retracted with each raid it was offering a dizzying number of spaces for Indians hostile to Christianity to exploit and undermine the faith.

In September 1629, Benavides sent twelve Christian Indians from the Tiwa pueblos into the territory of the 'Apache de Navajo'.¹⁷⁵ An Athapaskan-speaking tribe distantly related to the Apaches surrounding the Pueblos, they had seen frequent hostilities with both Indians and Spaniards. Benavides yearned for peace between his Tiwa neophytes and these raiders to the west, hoping thereby to encompass the latter within the nebulous Christian crescent in New Mexico. Leaders from the Christianized pueblos were initially reticent to send an embassy into hostile territory, but agreed after the tantalising prospect of peace followed by a boom in trade was offered as an incentive. A captain was appointed from among the twelve. He was provided with three diplomatic emblems that emphasised the syncretic aims of the expedition. The first was an arrow, 'with a colored feather instead of flint', indicating the peaceful aims of the party; the second was a reed filled with tobacco, to be smoked by their Navajo hosts to spread the message of peace throughout the interior; and the third was a Catholic rosary, functioning as an invitation to evangelisation. Benavides recognised the potential consequences if the expedition was unsuccessful. The Pueblo world remained wary of the Franciscans and their message. Failure would therefore provide

¹⁷⁴ Hammond & Rey. *Don Juan de Oñate, II*, 1089-1090 ('refuge and a shelter', 1089).

¹⁷⁵ These were the Diné Indians of the north-west Rio Grande Valley, who would later be designated as Navajo.

rhetorical ammunition for those ‘envious rivals’ searching constantly for evidence to undermine the new faith.¹⁷⁶

The first settlement that the delegation reached was led by a captain of great renown along the Navajo frontier, and cousin to the cacique who claimed authority over the Indians to the northwest. He accepted the arrow of peace, sending both it and the tobacco-filled reed on to the cacique. However, the third item – the rosary – confused him. He asked its purpose. The leader of the twelve improvised an explanation, replying that each bead along the string symbolised a promise to each individual Navajo captain that Benavides would be their friend. Intrigued, the captain requested that he return with the Christians to Santa Clara to meet the Franciscan, to determine personally if his offer was sincere. The Tiwa agreed.¹⁷⁷

One of the twelve rushed to return to Benavides to inform him of the impending visit. An enthusiastic welcome was organised, in which hundreds of Indians would leave the pueblo to escort him to Santa Clara to meet the friar. Benavides himself, recognising that ‘this nation is proud and spirited’, modified his greeting. Franciscans had previously sat on the ground when first interacting with other Indian communities, ‘thus conforming ourselves to their simple ways’ until they could be taught otherwise. To greet the new visitor, however, Benavides sat on a chair placed next to the altar, hoping to cultivate an image of superior power and authority. When the captain arrived, he first repeated his wish to be certain of the peace. Before the friar could answer, the chief of the pueblo thrust his bow and arrow before the captain, offering both, in view of both God and Benavides, as a pledge of peace before placing them on the altar. He asked the mass of Indians gathered around the negotiation if they agreed. In unison, all shouted their assent. In response, the Navajo drew an arrow from his quiver and announced ‘I do not know who this one is whom you call God, but since you

¹⁷⁶ *BM*, 46 (‘colored feather’, ‘envious rivals’).

¹⁷⁷ *BM*, 47.

invoke him as witness and assurance of your promise that you will not, under any condition, break your word, he must be a person of great power, authority and goodness'. He turned to Benavides and offered him the arrow, claiming 'to that God, whoever he may be, I also...give my word and promise in the name of all my people, that on my part and on the part of my people peace and friendship will never be lacking'. Accepting the arrow, Benavides offered to explain the figure of God. The captain agreed.¹⁷⁸

Crucially, the Navajo's acceptance of his offer seemed derived from a reasoned understanding of God. Benavides, in his description of Navajo society, wrote of their reverence for the truth and disgraceful connotations associated with lying.¹⁷⁹ His speech accepting the Tiwa offer of peace demonstrated a roughly syllogistic reasoning. A promise of peace had been offered; God had been invoked as an assurance of its sincerity; so God appeared as a custodian of truth, and thus a figure of significant authority. Furthermore, for the captain this was his only understanding of the Christian deity. No event had suggested that Benavides could command a rival supernatural power or shocked the Navajos into thinking their own was insufficient. His welcome of evangelisation was based on his measured conclusion that the divinity of the God of Santa Clara was proven by his protection of truth.

In mid-1629, Friar Roque de Figueredo entered Zuni territory with a contingent of Franciscan friars and the Governor of New Mexico, Manuel de Silva Nieto. He was part of an evangelistic drive across the region. Nineteen priests accompanied the Governor. Two had left the party at Santa Fe to travel to begin missions among the Apaches, one remained at Acoma after the group travelled west, and another pushed on to encounter the Hopis.

¹⁷⁸ *BM*, 48-49 ('proud and spirited', 'simple ways', 48; 'person of great power', 'peace and friendship', 49).

¹⁷⁹ *BM*, 41.

When Roque and the others arrived at the pueblo, they were welcomed with ‘festive applause – a thing never before heard of in those regions, that so intractable and variant nations should receive the Frailes of St. Francis with equal spirit and semblance’. Their fulsome reception prompted the Governor to order that no soldier enter an Indian house, or otherwise upset them. Shortly after, de Silva Nieto returned to Santa Fe. Roque remained to establish his mission at Zuni. He wasted no time in announcing his intentions to the Indians there, and their chief, Zibola. He described his task ‘to free them from the miserable slavery of the demon and from the obscure darkness of their idolatry; and to make them dwellers of yonder great House’.¹⁸⁰

Relations, however, quickly soured. The cause was unclear, but Indians at the pueblo abruptly stopped assisting Roque, and each night ‘a great din of dances, drums and rattles, which among them is a signal of war’ was heard. One night two Indians, adorned with feathers and carrying weapons, entered the Franciscan’s dwelling. For Roque, their intention was unmistakable. He knelt and surrendered his life to God. He was, however, wrong. They made signs to convey their peaceful intentions, and Roque assured them that he had not come to steal from them, but only to provide a route to the one true God. He further encouraged them by claiming the Christian God to be so powerful ‘that having Him on their side they would be protected and defended as well against their spiritual as their corporal enemies’. Embracing the faith that Roque offered would banish all fear of the ‘nocturnal shades of those false gods whom they were adoring’. But his pitch had not been to his hosts; the warriors informed him that they were from settlements ‘five leagues away’, and had visited to request he go there. They warned him of the consequences of staying at Zuni ‘with a people

¹⁸⁰ Lansing B. Bloom. ‘Fray Estevan de Perea’s *Relacion*’, *New Mexico Historical Review*, Vol. 8, (1933), pp. 211-235, 227-230 (‘festive applause’, 227-228; obscure darkness’, 229-230).

that met his paternal love with so much ingratitude'. Before they left, they promised to calm the pueblo's hatred.¹⁸¹

The next day, the captains of the pueblo asked for Roque's forgiveness. They claimed an 'oracle of their god' had deceived them by threatening that baptism would cause their death. Now aware of this deceit, the entire pueblo coveted baptism. After careful instruction from Roque, several received the blessing. The ceremonies were performed on a high platform built in the plaza. The most influential was baptised Agustin; following the rite he turned to the audience and declared that, rather than it weakening or killing him, he now 'judged that he was more valiant than before'.¹⁸²

The change appeared to be prompted by the visit of the two warriors. This was key. Zuni Indians were either placated by their proposal or feared that Roque could abandon their pueblo for a potential rival, taking any power he could offer with him. In either case, there had been a stunning shift. Zuni, Acoma and Awatovi had been a particularly violent field for both missionaries and the Spanish expeditions of the sixteenth century. The region had erupted into conflict with each exploration, but the influence of the two warriors appeared to arrest this cycle. The mission field stabilised. Zuni and the newly receptive Navajo and Apache communities now constituted an arc of new, hopefully steady sites ready for further evangelism.

This expansion of the Franciscan world to previously hostile spaces had, furthermore, not been prompted by devastating disease or rivalling supernatural abilities. In these cases evangelisation had been welcomed by Indian communities because it accorded with the Navajo logic of truth and honour, and because the friars offered access to a formidable cache

¹⁸¹ Lansing B. Bloom. 'Fray Estevan de Perea's *Relacion*', 232-233 ('great din of dances', 232; 'corporal enemies', 'nocturnal shades', 'five leagues', 'paternal love', 233).

¹⁸² Lansing B. Bloom. 'Fray Estevan de Perea's *Relacion*', 234 ('an oracle', 'more valiant than before').

of spiritual and imperial power in a highly competitive and hostile Indian world. This new missiology relied not on fear or awe, but a careful, considered incorporation of Franciscans and their power into Indians' own conceptual and diplomatic universes.

Franciscan Perfection

Just like le Jeune, Benavides found New Mexico a region that strongly encouraged fidelity to a Christian life. Its environment was exceptionally harsh; freezing temperatures enveloped the region for about four months of the year, followed in the summer by cloying, inescapable heat. Any vestiges of the apparently civilized world that they had left behind were absent, leading Benavides to conclude that the friars lived 'in a province where they concern themselves with nothing but God'.¹⁸³

More particularly, however, Benavides found the region distinct from others in how it allowed the Franciscans to live in accordance with both of the impulses fundamental to his Order. His *Memorial* to the King stated that the friars' 'continuous occupation is that of Martha and Mary', the biblical sisters visited by Christ and recorded in the Gospel of Luke.¹⁸⁴ Like the former, Franciscans in New Mexico led 'the active life' – planting crops, raising cattle, building homes, teaching reading, writing and trades. Crucially, these occupations were supplemented by the second impulse; 'like Mary, the priests do not fail to observe the contemplative life, that is, the monastic state which they have embraced'. The friars in New Mexico lived 'just as if they were leading a community life', always observing the critical times for specific worships, the necessary fasts, or 'many other spiritual exercises'.¹⁸⁵ In a closing statement supplied to Benavides' report by Juan de Santander, the Commissary

¹⁸³ *BRM*, 37-38 & 103 ('nothing but God', 103).

¹⁸⁴ Luke 10:38-42.

¹⁸⁵ *BM*, 65-66 ('active life', 65; 'the monastic state', 'community life', 'spiritual exercises', 66).

General of the Indie, made a similar statement. Santander pleaded with the Crown for more friars for New Mexico by arguing that the Franciscans currently there were working diligently toward the ‘perfection and observance of the Rule’.¹⁸⁶ For Benavides and Santander, the eremitic and evangelical imperatives could now be observed simultaneously in New Mexico.

This was more significant than Benavides described. His description was written for the King as a powerful advert for his continued favour toward the Franciscan order in the Spanish borderlands. He had, however, also articulated a key difference between early America and previous Franciscan efforts in Mexico. Franciscans in the latter struggled to reconcile their ideals and practices with the practicalities of evangelism on the Mexican frontiers. The eventual result was a tired ambivalence. They were frustrated by their work among the Indians there and the corresponding inability to observe the eremitic spirituality so central to their order. Furthermore, Franciscans gradually lost the continued conflict between their Christian universalism and the parochial imperialism of the Spanish crown. Gerónimo de Mendieta, a Franciscan missionary and historian who worked throughout Mexico in the 16th century, eventually concluded that Hispanization and Christianization were mutually exclusive strategies.¹⁸⁷

Franciscans in Central America had therefore been unable to navigate either the confusing new dialogue between evangelism and monasticism, or the difficult relationship between the interests of the faith and those of the Crown. By contrast, both Benavides and Santander found in New Mexico a region in which these conflicts could not only be resolved, but where these previously irreconcilable impulses could be utilised for the benefit of both.

¹⁸⁶ *BM*, 73 (observance of the Rule’).

¹⁸⁷ Steven E. Turley. *Franciscan Spirituality and Mission in New Spain, 1524-1599*, 2-3 & 187-188; John Leddy Phelan. *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*, 2nd Ed., (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 88-89.

A Continental Empire

Like with the Jesuit mission following peace with the Iroquois in 1645, steadily increasing optimism among Franciscans added a new, expansive spatial component to the missions in the Spanish borderlands.

Martín Prieto had arrived at St. Augustine in 1605, and was sent to the Indian region of Potano, southwest of the city in Florida's dense interior. Potano was a Timucuan community, encircled by territory under the rule of the cacique of Timucua. This cacique accepted baptism in 1608, but a more general conversion of his territory was being stifled by constant conflict with the Apalachee Indians to the west. Fearing that the conversion of this influential chief would mean nothing if his community remained endangered by endemic warfare, Prieto told the cacique that he would travel to Apalachee to forge a peace.

He succeeded. In July 1608 he arrived, with the Timucua chief and 150 other Indians, at Cotocochuni. From this settlement sat precariously on the eastern edge of Apalachee territory Prieto sent two captives westward, back to their chiefs in Apalachee to warn them of the company's journey and the reason for it. Releasing and then sending these prisoners as messengers produced the desired effect; when Prieto finally arrived at Juitachuco, the principal settlement in a vast region under Apalachee control, seventy caciques and 30,000 Indians surrounded the friar and the Timucua. Negotiations were apparently short, but extremely genial and positive. The caciques of Apalachee agreed to a peace with the chief of Timucua 'with great satisfaction'. Of the seventy-strong contingent of chiefs, one was delegated to travel to St. Augustine to submit obediently to the Governor.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ Oré, *The Martyrs of Florida*, 114 & 116-117 ('great satisfaction', 117).

The crucial consequence of this success, however, would not be recognised until over two decades later. Practically, in the meantime missionization faltered as friars complained of the tortuous journey to Apalachee and a shortage of personnel. The importance of missions in Apalachee were felt most keenly in their offering even further expansion westward, across the Gulf Coast toward Franciscans in New Mexico.

With the addition of Apalachee, by 1630 the Franciscan mission field now sprawled across New Mexico, arcing around the Rio Grande to encompass Navajos, Hopi, Apaches, Zuñis, and Tiwas; in Florida, it reached along the coast, into the interior and across the peninsula to incorporate Guale, Timucuas and Apalachees. Viewing these advances, Franciscans began imagining a missiological crescent stretching along the entire coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Benavides claimed that the missionization of the Jumanos, in the vast plains east of the Rio Grande Valley, had opened the road to Espiritu Santo, a bay on the Gulf Coast that would drastically ease travel between New Mexico and Havana and plug the lands of the Rio Grande into Spain's formidable maritime empire. In the same year, in 1630, Francisco Alonso de Jesus, a Franciscan in Florida, saw the possibility that the missionaries could now push westward, beyond Apalachee, to link with their fellow friars in New Mexico.¹⁸⁹ The possibility of a vast contiguous Franciscan empire, stretching from the Guale communities on the Atlantic coast to Awatovi and Zuñi, now seemed to require only a brief burst of further expansion; the geographic expression of Franciscan activity in early America was now continental in scope.

¹⁸⁹ *BRM*, 62-65; Francisco Alonso de Jesus & John H. Hann. '1630 Memorial of Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesus on Spanish Florida's Missions and Natives', *The Americas*, Vol. 50, (1993), pp. 85-105, 103.

Missiological America

The first decade of the seventeenth century had seen Franciscans seize on violent expressions of Indian agency to rescue the missions of the Spanish borderlands from abandonment. The next twenty-five years saw key Franciscan figures follow this campaign by generating a new early America in the Spanish borderlands. Like the Jesuits', this creation was defined by new understandings, relationships and strategies. Decades of awkward, antagonistic or aggressive interactions with imperial officials was apparently resolved by proposing a new appreciation of providence, in which the Crown and missionaries both bore equal obligation and responsibility; missiological space expanded as friars carved out positions for themselves in the volatile, shifting Indian worlds in the borderlands; New Mexico functioned as a region in which Franciscans could truly fulfil the competing demands of their order, and observe the Rule of St. Francis with increasing fidelity; and evangelical expansion conjured grand visions of a contiguous Franciscan empire stretching from Spanish Florida to the western edge of the Pueblo world.

As for the Hurons, Algonquins, Montagnais, Pueblos, Timucua and Apalachee Indians that they missionized, for the Jesuits and Franciscans the evangelisation of early America was highly confusing, difficult and novel. Their innovative invention of the North American continent as its own distinct missiological space proved that their only dogma was Catholic; beyond this, their crafting of the meaning and significance of their new mission field required malleability and responsiveness.

In addition to its promise of conversions, its offer of martyrdom, and its more general salvific potential, Le Jeune and Benavides both concluded that early America was a site where Jesuits and Franciscans could reach the most comprehensive form intended by the founders of their orders. In New France the former could expect to experience an intense

conviction of one's rightful place in the Society of Jesus; in New Mexico the latter could finally reconcile an adventurous evangelical impulse with a contemplative eremitic one. Both therefore distinguished early America as a site where missionaries themselves could further develop, and ultimately confirm, their identity as Jesuit and Franciscan evangelists.

The progress made in both colonies eventually conferred a powerful spatial component, forming an imagined evangelical geography that reached across and through the early American continent. With the Iroquois peace, Jesuits imagined themselves advancing into the woodlands to the south and east of the Great Lakes, without a clearly defined southern end to halt them. Similarly, Franciscans imagined pushing west and east along the Gulf Coast to link both halves of the missiological project in North America.

The Franciscan response to imperial plans to abandon New Mexico and Florida had been reactive. By contrast, the actions that forged the new understanding of early America that blossomed in the first half of the seventeenth century was proactive, requiring from Jesuits and Franciscans a potent combination of religious zeal, conceptual innovation and intellectual adaptation. With this, just as early America acquired a comprehensive infrastructure of Catholic missions, so did Catholic missiology acquire a distinct and bounded early American component.

Chapter 3

An Evangelical Continent: Puritans and Jesuits, c. 1645-1675

While Benavides, Brebeuf, le Jeune and their fellow missionaries were carefully constructing an early America in which effective missionization could take place, English competitors to the French and Spanish colonial projects were establishing themselves at Massachusetts Bay. The Puritans, emigrants pushed from England by growing religious oppression, were working diligently to establish the ‘City upon a Hill’ that Winthrop had grandly theorised aboard the *Arbella*. Until the mid-1640s, however, missionization was not a significant feature of this design. When evangelism finally did become a priority for a few Puritan ministers, they grappled with the competing demands of Indian evangelism and doctrine to, like Franciscans and Jesuits, craft a new missiology that could be applied to the sprawling Indian worlds pressing on the New England frontier.

This chapter traces the creation of a Puritan missiology by its most famous figure, the Congregationalist minister John Eliot. Navigating persistent crises, Eliot articulated a rationale for missionization in New England; clarified the required character and abilities of a Puritan missionary; and finally, most importantly, defined his missiological project further as one led by Indian evangelists themselves. However, reconciling his vision of missionization with Puritan doctrine proved impossible when Indian converts translated his instruction. Specifically, Puritan interiority – an obsession with constant examination of one’s spiritual condition, framed by an overwhelming conviction of one’s utter and ineradicable depravity – was a fundamental feature of Puritan faith. This relentless practice functioned as a constant reminder of humanity’s innate sinfulness since Adam’s Fall; practically, it thereby

deliberately distinguished Puritans from all other reprobate denominations and sects, who were either less consistent in such exacting practice or rejected it as a priority altogether. But when this peculiar imperative was adopted by Eliot's converts, they found that the consequent anguish it provoked discouraged their own evangelism. As Indians better understood and embraced this critical component of Puritan practice, they were convinced that their own evangelism would not meet the demanding requirements of a successful missionary. In short, Eliot's missiology created a paradox; as converts showed increasing fidelity to their new religious identities, the less enthusiastic they were about instructing other Indians.

Simultaneously, Jesuits continued to adapt to chaotic changes in early America. As each Iroquois nation variously pursued diplomacy or war, Jesuits were forced to contend first with the destruction of Huronia and then the establishment of unstable missions in Iroquois communities. By the late-eighteenth century Jesuit missiology had undergone further radical transformation, as missionaries worked assiduously to both determine the continued potential of early America and navigate between the competing demands of martyrdom and continued expansion of their mission itself.

The Need for Evangelism

Eliot's arrival in November 1631 was, however, not as a missionary. Within a year he had been ordained pastor of the Congregational church at Roxbury, a small town lying to the southwest of Boston. A letter written during his first year as pastor there referred incidentally to the Indians in New England but displayed ambivalence toward them. He wrote that 'we are at good peace with...the natives & they doe gladly intertaine us & give us possession, for we are as walls to them, from their bloody enemies, & they are sensible of it'. He recognised the

possibility that they could eventually comprehend and embrace Christianity, but made no suggestion that he would personally endeavour to this end: 'I trust, in Gods time they shall larne Christ'.¹⁹⁰

Eliot's was an attitude shared by many. Several distinguishing features of the early Puritan experiment in Massachusetts militated against extensive evangelical efforts among the Indians. The basic requirements for the survival of the colony had to be met first; the decentralized structure of Puritan churches bound ministers closely to their local congregation; imagining Massachusetts a contemporary Canaan to be conquered and occupied discouraged broad attempts to convert its Indian inhabitants; and the foreseen 'city upon a hill' was not considered a base from which missionization could spread but, rather, a new Zion that through its exemplary practice would, like a magnet, draw the unconverted to it.¹⁹¹

Puritanism in New England, then, required profound change before missionization would be first conceptualised, standardized, and then seriously attempted. Two crises quickly effected such a change. The most important was Parliament's apparently hardening view of Massachusetts. A dispute with Samuel Gorton and Randall Holden over the legal ownership of Narragansett Bay, the return to England of Thomas Lechford, and Roger William's efforts to secure protection for his new colony at Providence led to a highly embarrassing literature

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in William Kellaway. *The New England Company 1649-1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1961), 82 ('theire bloody enemies', 'larne Christ'). Eliot's attitude was illustrative of a larger ambivalence among almost all of the first-generation Puritan emigrants to New England. Of the expressions of missionary idealism in the charter for the colony and other official documents, Richard Cogley writes that it clearly 'reflected a regnant convention in the literature of colonization rather than the central priority for the leading planters'. For this context for New England missionization, see: Richard W. Cogley. *John Eliot's Mission to the Indians Before King Philip's War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 1-23 ('regnant convention', 2).

¹⁹¹ Henry M. Knapp. 'The Character of Puritan Missions: The Motivation, Methodology, and Effectiveness of the Puritan Evangelization of the Native Americans in New England', *The Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (Summer, 1998), pp. 111-126, 114-116.

criticising the leadership of Massachusetts - at the very time that English Puritans were seizing power from Charles I. When Holden sailed back into Boston in September 1646, despite his banishment, he carried a letter of protection from Parliament instructing Massachusetts to leave the men at Narragansett Bay alone. A more general sense of Parliament's displeasure with the Bay Colony must have been easy to deduce. Puritans in Massachusetts needed to restore their waning reputation in England. Missionization now offered a vital opportunity.¹⁹²

Eliot understood this new political need. The future 'Apostle' also, fortunately, had been on the right side of the most serious crisis in New England Puritanism, and consequently held an intellectual position that encouraged evangelism to the Indians. The Antinomian Crisis had engulfed the spiritual leadership of the new colony in 1636. Anne Hutchinson's trial and eventual exile split Puritan orthodoxy into competing factions. One continued to stress a pure, spiritist faith and denounced any other view as a 'covenant of works'; the second offered a preparationist consideration of conversion, emphasising practical steps that one may take to prepare themselves for God's grace. Eliot took a position on the preparationist side. By extension, this position allowed for missionization to the Indians, who could gradually build a corpus of acts and thought conducive to the reception of grace. In addition, his personal embrace of millenarianism stimulated his missiologial efforts. He appealed to the leadership of New England to agree with him that 'the design of Christ in these last days is not to extirpate nations but to gospelize them'.¹⁹³ Motivated by an

¹⁹² Francis Jennings. 'Goals and Functions of the Puritan Missions to the Indians', *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Summer, 1971), pp. 197-212, 203-204.

¹⁹³ David Thomson. 'The Antinomian Crisis: Prelude to Puritan Missions', *Early American Literature*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2003), pp. 401-435 ('covenant of works', 408); Richard W. Cogley. 'Idealism vs. Materialism in the Study of the Puritan Missions to the Indians', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1991), pp. 165-182 ('design of Christ', 178). It should be noted that Cogley's article is a direct challenge to Jennings'. Whether Eliot was motivated by cynical political calculation or millenarian fervour is less important here than the recognition that the mid-1640s encouraged missionization for a number of urgent reasons.

awareness of New England's precarious reputation, supplied with a guiding methodology sharpened by the Antinomian Crisis, and convinced that the millennium was fast approaching, Eliot began his evangelical efforts in late-1646.

'Dry Bones' on the Merrimack

The first tentative missiological encounters with the vast Indian world surrounding Boston were key to forming the first strands of Eliot's evangelical strategy. In late-1646 he delivered his first two sermons. The first was to Cutshamoquin, a Massachusetts sachem at Neponset. Though the Indian leader had formally submitted to the authority of the Bay Government two years earlier, he was uninterested in religious instruction. Neither he nor any other Massachusetts at Neponset paid any attention to Eliot's preaching. Undeterred, Eliot's second lecture was delivered a month later to Waban, another Massachusetts sachem at Nonantum. He spoke for seventy-five minutes, then conducted a question and answer session to address curiosity. Unlike Cutshamoquin, Waban appeared receptive to Eliot's preaching. Eliot's mission began.¹⁹⁴

Many New Englanders' conception of Indians was very similar to the cynicism about the environment of New England itself. The 'woody and rocky soile' blighting the region had disappointed the first settlers in the 1630s. They could not see how agriculture could flourish in such an environment; 'so', claimed Eliot, 'wee have thought of our Indian people, and therefore have been discouraged to put plow to such dry and rocky ground'. Waban and his fellow Massachusetts, however, directly countered this pessimism. Yet unlike the Jesuits and Franciscans, Eliot's vision of his personal role in missionization was limited. Despite the

¹⁹⁴ Cogley, *John Eliot's Mission*, 40-41.

promising reception Indians had given to missionization in 1646, an extensive and permanent missiological program was not considered valuable ‘because God is wont ordinarily to convert Nations, and people by some of their owne country men who are nearest to them, and can best speake’.¹⁹⁵ Evangelism certainly appeared viable, but Eliot considered his own contribution a platform from which Indians themselves would be the instrumental agents expanding Christianization within their own communities.

Eliot’s preaching provided further justification for this ambition. In 1647 a small contingent of English and Waban’s Indians, including Eliot, drove along the Merrimack River to find Passaconaway. The Penacook sachem was an exceptionally powerful figure in the region, but Indians under his authority had also been spotted listening intently to Eliot’s preaching and carefully observing the examples of piety set by Waban’s men. Like the Massachusetts sachem, his value was in the delicate balance between his imposing power and his obligation to those under his command, who had begun to clearly demonstrate growing interest in Eliot’s instruction. The meeting, though important as establishing a positive relationship between Eliot and Passaconaway, was also critical for the missionary’s own conviction in his plan. Preaching to the gathered Penacooks, Eliot found justification for his vision of Indian evangelism in Scripture. He spoke forcefully about ‘the dry bones’ of Ezekiel, which stated ‘that by prophesying to the wind, the wind came and the dry bones lived’. The Indian word for wind was understood to be ‘Waubon’ – identical to the ‘Waubon’ of Nonantum who was now ‘the most active Indian for stirring up other Indians to seek after the knowledge of God’. Those gathered recognised this connection, which further affirmed the fundamental role played by Indian evangelists in any future missionization.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ *Day-Breaking*, 20 (‘rocky soile’, ‘rocky ground’, ‘best speake’).

¹⁹⁶ *Clear Sunshine*, 62-63 (‘dry bones’, ‘stirring up’, 62).

The Nonantum Indians themselves also suggested that this first component of Eliot's missiology was appropriate. At one of his regular sermons, in October 1647, a question was shouted from the audience. One Indian asked 'suppose there should be one wise Indian that teacheth good things to other Indians, whether should not he be as a father or brother unto such Indians he teacheth in the wayes of God?' Thomas Shephard, another Puritan minister who often accompanied Eliot in his preaching, recognised the implication of such an enquiry. He inferred stirrings of Indian evangelism, suggestive of a imminent moment 'when the Lord shall raise up some or other like themselves to go among them and preach the Word of life'.¹⁹⁷ Waban continued to embody the wind that gave life to the 'dry bones'; another of his contemporaries now displayed similar sentiments by suggesting that evangelism by Massachusetts Indians could extend beyond familial units to the dynamic Indian world that surrounded New England's settlements.

But the Indians at Nonantum also quickly complained that Eliot's scheme invited profound confusion. They accepted wholeheartedly his specific command to observe the Sabbath, but could not figure out the most appropriate way. They asked Eliot whether they should attend sermons with the English – delivered in English, a language with which they remained unfamiliar – or meet among themselves. Their dilemma threatened Eliot's vision. If the Nonantum Indians attended the English meetings, they warned him, they understood nothing; but if they met together as a gathering of Indians, with no minister, there was no one to teach them appropriately. Eliot's answer was illustrative of his developing missiology. He advised that they meet together, first without a minister, 'and desire those that were the wisest and best men to pray, and then to teach the rest'. These 'best' men would relay Eliot's teaching, followed by questioning. If acceptable answers eluded the Indians in charge of these meetings they could then ask Eliot at a later stage. Eliot was clearly intent on applying

¹⁹⁷ *Clear Sunshine*, 65 ('wayes of God', 'Word of life').

his conviction that mass conversion in New England could only be actioned by Indians themselves; the advice he gave the Nonantum Indians was a corollary of this belief, intending that ‘the wisest and best’ would develop the interpretive and communicative skills necessary to function as a vehicle of further missionization.¹⁹⁸

Eliot’s stubborn reliance on Indians as the most effective evangelists, even after his listeners had made clear its contradictions, was first validated by Thomas Mayhew Jr’s missionization on Martha’s Vineyard. Hiacoomes and Mumanequen, Wampanoag Indians among the first of his converts, both visited Mayhew every week to discuss the subject for their next lessons. Both men also taught twice a day at their communities of Christians. Most importantly, their efforts were also linking together Indians across New England who had welcomed missionization, grafting a new layer of religious geography onto the Indian world. Mumanequen had travelled to the mainland with Mayhew and preached to the neophytes at Dorchester, not far south from Boston itself.¹⁹⁹ Like the spiritual world anchored in Sillery, Tadoussac and Trois-Rivieres, Christian communities on Martha’s Vineyard and mainland New England were integrating through shared participation in religious instruction, confirming the possibility of consciously expansive Indian evangelism.

Finally, Eliot’s plan for his most able neophytes to function as uniquely effective evangelists themselves was justified most effectively by one of his own converts in the early-1650s. On the 8th October 1651, only a few weeks after the first Indians had crafted and ratified a covenant to confirm their commitment to Christianity, Eliot gave another lecture. The most remarkable speech, however, was not his, but rather a thorough exegesis of a Scriptural passage by one of the Christian Indians. His chosen subject was the nature of the kingdom of Heaven. He deployed four verses from the Gospel of Matthew, which likened the

¹⁹⁸ *Clear Sunshine*, 51 (‘wisest and best’).

¹⁹⁹ *Strength out of Weakness*, 24 & 45.

kingdom of Heaven to a treasure hidden in a field, a prize that would cause one to sell every other possession just to claim it. The last two verses clarified this comparison, describing Heaven as a singular pearl for which even a merchant would sell all that he had.²⁰⁰ The Indian then carefully analysed the terms of the passages. The ‘treasure’ laying hidden in the field was ‘Repentance for sin, Faith in Christ, and pardon of sin, and all grace, as also praying to God’. The field was the church itself, and the possessions that an Indian would sell to claim it were ‘their sins’ and ‘their old Customes’. Moving on, the merchant seeking pearls was each Indian that now prayed to God and repented for sin. His only mistake, though slight, was his characterisation of the pearl itself. Eliot wrote that, unfortunately, he ‘did not pitch it on Christ alone...but he did pitch it on Faith in Jesus Christ, and Repentance for Sin, and stood upon the excellency and necessity thereof’.²⁰¹ But, more generally, the Indian’s exegetical ability and pedagogical flair crowned the development of Eliot’s vision of a Christian Indian community primarily sustained by Indian evangelists themselves.

Eliot’s conviction that Indian evangelism was the primary vehicle for Christianization therefore received quick validation from Scripture and his Massachusetts Indian audience, who made clear the unfortunate contradiction that it produced. Eliot refused to reorganise his scheme, however, retaining his function as a detached mentor whose only role was to clarify the instruction provided by charismatic Indian preachers. Wampanoags guided by his fellow missionary Mayhew, and one of his most capable converts, both fortunately provided evidence that this was viable. Eliot had crafted the first feature of Puritan missiology in New England.

²⁰⁰ *Strength out of Weakness*, 20.

²⁰¹ *Strength out of Weakness*, 20-22 (‘treasure’, ‘Repentance’, 20; ‘their sins’, ‘old Customes’, ‘pitch it on Christ’, 21).

Structuring the New Mission

But this grand vision of preparing enough of Indian communities' 'best men' to evangelise first required more Puritan missionaries; in turn, this required a cogent rationale for their participation and a coherent strategy to guide their activity. Eliot skilfully crafted both.

Finally, Eliot began to articulate the requirements for missionaries eager to follow him into evangelism in New England. Indians had expressed 'sundry philosophical questions', answers to which required 'some knowledge of the arts'. Consequently, for missionaries to the Indians there was far greater 'need of learning' than ministers for the English or those already Christians. The combat between competing theologies that was central to missionization was, therefore, exceptionally complicated in New England; Massachusetts Indians, the most 'deeply degenerated since Adams fall', consistently asked questions that interrogated the fundamentals of Protestant orthodoxy. By contrast, as a population the English, though highly sectarian, were habituated to accept without issue the conceptual pillars of Christianity. His strategy was partly derived from Indians' responses to the utterly devastating impact of disease over the previous two decades. He stated explicitly that 'there is no necessity of extraordinary gifts nor miraculous signes always to convert Heathens...for there bee but few that are left alive from the Plague and Pox'. The Massachusetts Indians that Eliot had preached to had appeared so receptive to his message partly because their own program of spiritual and religious remedies had been proven so ineffective. The 'remnant' left alive therefore only needed excellent teachers, and missionaries were not required to rely on a potentially catastrophic economy of miracles.²⁰²

²⁰² *Day-Breaking*, 21-22 ('philosophicall questions', 'the arts', 'need of learning', 21; 'Plague and Pox', 21-22; 'Adams fall', 22).

Eliot, grappling further with the peculiar epistemological demand that demographic catastrophe imposed on potential missionaries, proposed that one of the institutions of evangelism in New England be a school dedicated to teaching medical practice. This ambition derived from Indians' own responses to Eliot's preaching. In a letter to Thomas Shephard he recited a question heard often from his Indian audiences: 'If they leave off Powwawing, and pray to God, what shall they do when they are sick?' The solution, he proposed, was to 'informe them in the use of Physick', teaching them anatomy and a few relevant biological principles. The Indians had been receptive to his strategy but appeared unable to fully learn medical principles by teaching alone. Eliot therefore proposed a school be financed from England to instruct Indian students more thoroughly in this regard. Those who were thus taught would return to Indian ceremony to 'confound and root out their Powwaws' with their new knowledge.²⁰³

Eliot was therefore rejecting the economy of miracles that Jesuits and Franciscans had navigated. This mode of instruction – unpredictable, and therefore dangerous – was unnecessary in mutilated Indian communities already on the verge of totally abandoning their inadequate religious systems. Massachusetts were interrogating Protestantism as a cache of spiritual power, desperate to determine if it provided a lucid alternative to previous praxis. In this uniquely inviting early American space, Eliot's corresponding concern was therefore solely for missionaries with exceptional didactic ability; he did not mention toleration of suffering or persecution, qualities valorised by his Catholic competitors, as necessary.

The religious imperialism that Puritans viewed in Spanish colonies in South America provided then helped to clarify Eliot's strategy further. Settlers in New England had rejected the utility of preaching to Indians, but Eliot fought back. If, the missionary claimed, the

²⁰³ *Clear Sunshine*, 56-57 ('pray to God', 'Physick', 56; 'Powwaws', 57).

Indians were coerced into baptism or allured by the offer of material gifts such as clothing - 'as the Spaniards do about Cuzco, Peru, and Mexico, having learnt them a short answer or two to some Popish questions' – then thousands could already have been claimed as converts. Mass baptism therefore threatened the integrity of Puritan evangelism, even potentially leading one to embrace Catholic methods in their efforts. More practically, however, Catholic missions in South America had provided one useful example. Eliot's preaching at Nonantum soon attracted curious Indians from neighbouring settlements. One was near Concord. The sachem of this new group asked specifically for a new town, to reside near the English settlements quickly expanding around Boston. Puritans were delighted; 'for what more hopefull way of doing them good then by cohabitation in such Townes, neare unto good examples, and such as may be continually whetting upon them, and dropping into them of the things of God?' This hope was provided and fuelled, furthermore, by the similar strategy applied to the 'Cuzco and Mexico' Indians, who were consequently 'more civill then any else in this vast Continent'.²⁰⁴

More important, however, was Thomas Shephard's reference to the growing Catholic empire of the Franciscans in the Spanish borderlands. The foundations of the Spanish empire to the south had been 'laid in the blood of nineteene Millions of poor innocent Natives'. These Spanish possessions, and the Catholic missions that dotted their landscapes, would soon be 'utterly rooted up by some revenging hand' as vengeance for the millions murdered. Once robbed of the mineral riches that sustained this evil empire, the Indians currently cowering under Franciscan authority 'also may come in'. New Spain offered an exemplary practical example while providing an evangelical and moral template against which Puritan

²⁰⁴ *Day-Breaking*, 19 ('Popish questions'); *Clear Sunshine*, 38-39 ('cohabitation in such Townes', 'more civill', 39).

missionaries could develop their own. They seized both opportunities to further clarify the aims of their endeavour.

Finally, missionization in New England had to be attractive. Other missionaries articulated varying reasons for their activity. William Leveridge, for example, was not motivated to missiological work among the Indians by political necessity, by a sudden divine inspiration, or by millennial expectation. Instead, he was motivated by sheer frustration with his fellow Englishmen. The ‘singular Conflicts’ that he had suffered with them included their ‘rejecting of all Churches and Ordinances’ and a creeping spirit of ‘Pharisaisme and formality’, all part of a general scheme to ‘introduce all Atheisme and profaneness’. He briefly considered leaving New England in disgust at the spiritual condition of those around him, but was persuaded to stay by Eliot’s invitation to join him in missionization, and by a visit from an Indian who asked him to preach to the former’s community nearby. Comparing the ‘Contemners’ among the English colonists with the Indians who ‘wandered in the high wayes, lanes, and hedges’, walking ‘lame, and halt, and blind’, Leveridge was compelled to continue his ministry among those who apparently welcomed it.²⁰⁵

Thomas Mayhew Jr. had arrived as the preacher, with one hundred other settlers, on Martha’s Vineyard in 1642. His father, Thomas Mayhew Sr., had acquired the royal patent for the island, as well as the Elizabeth Islands and Nantucket, the previous year. Mayhew Jr.’s missiological efforts were motivated by the conviction that a shared faith would bring a harmonious future between the island’s settlers and the 3,000 Wampanoag Indians that they shared it with. The neglect of this obligation would invite divine judgment, perhaps by seducing the English with the ‘savage’ example of the unreformed Indians, or by Indian violence that could threaten Mayhew Sr.’s claim to ownership of the island. The religious

²⁰⁵ *Strength out of Weakness*, 31-32 (‘Conflicts’, ‘Churches and Ordinances’, ‘Pharisaisme’, ‘Atheisme and profaneness’, 31; ‘Contemners’, ‘high waves’, ‘halt, and blind’, 32).

character of colonization in New England was complemented by these more practical considerations to create a zeal for missionization on the Vineyard.²⁰⁶

Thirdly, Eliot's zeal was itself a product of a potent combination of political pragmatism and millennial fervour. Together, Leveridge, Mayhew Jr. and Eliot's reasons for missionization were varied. This was potentially positive. Three different expressions of the evangelical imperative suggested that such conviction could stem from a broad range of contexts, which made shortages of personnel less likely. But such diversity was equally dangerous; the decision of all three was highly contingent, derived from perceived spiritual decay, the need for amenable coexistence between settlers and Indians, or political expediency. For Eliot's evangelical vision a more stable referent was required, transcendent of these peculiar and therefore inconsistent contexts, that could inspire capable men to join the mission to the Indians.

Fortunately, Eliot's second meeting with Passaconaway then took place at Pawtucket in 1648, southwest of Boston. He had learned of 'a great confluence' of Indians there every Spring. 'Like Faires in England', these gatherings hummed with activity. Indians gathered to fish for the salmon that danced through the falls, to gamble, and to trade. It was a geopolitical centre of the Indian world around New England, as old alliances were affirmed and fresh conflicts resolved. The short missionization among the Massachusetts Indians had also introduced a new feature to this bustling landscape. Pockets of prayer and observation of certain Christian rules now dotted the site. This new and varied human geography was the context in which Eliot met Passaconaway again.

²⁰⁶ David J. Silverman. *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 18-19.

The structure of the encounter was familiar. Eliot gave a sermon, quoting first from Scripture, moving quickly on to a promise that ‘the time was now come wherein the Lord did begin to call them to repentance, and to beleieve in Christ for the remission of their sins’, and finishing by commanding them to abandon their faith in the pawwaws that continued to delude them. Questions were then shouted from his audience, the most salient expressing the worry that all Indians before Eliot’s arrival had therefore gone to Hell as unbelievers. The missionary seized this opportunity to further elaborate on the ‘twofold estate after this life, for good and bad people’, which he found accorded usefully with the Indians’ own tradition of an afterlife consistent with one’s ‘demeanour in this life’. Fortunately for Eliot, Passaconaway recognised this similarity as well. He confided that he now believed Eliot’s preaching to be true and was animated ‘thenceforth to pray unto God’. After the sachem had made this promise, he approached Simon Willard, a fur trader who had accompanied Eliot to Pawtucket. They exchanged beaver and otter skins, then Passaconaway proposed that both the trader and the missionary come and live near them to further cement and promote their new ties of religion and commerce.²⁰⁷

Eliot was not ignorant of the significance of extending this invitation to both himself and Willard. Passaconaway may have been convinced of the truth of his preaching, but the lure of thicker ties with a fur trader central to the exploding market was equally strong. Instead of reacting with cynicism, however, Eliot seized on this chance to craft a new Christology that could equally inspire missionaries from wildly divergent contexts. The Indians ‘barbarous course of life and poverty’ meant that evangelists ‘must carry all things with us, and somewhat to give unto them: so that the comming of Jesus Christ into these parts of the world, is not as he formerly came amongst the Gentiles, a poore underling...But Christ will come unto these, rich, potent, above them in learning, riches, and power; and they shall

²⁰⁷ *Glorious Progress*, 9-10 (‘remission of their sins’, ‘twofold estate’, ‘demeanour’, 9; ‘pray unto God’, 10).

flock unto the Gospel, thereby to receive externall beneficence advancement, as well as spirituall grace and blessings'.²⁰⁸ For Eliot and other missionaries, then, embracing a triangular relationship between neophyte, merchant and evangelist would not corrupt the latters' endeavour; instead, constructing such a system became an act of Christological mimesis.

New England missiology was becoming more complicated as Eliot's commitment to evangelism grew. Defined against the horrors associated with Spanish imperialism, embracing ties with commercial interests as a Christological opportunity, and prioritising outstanding knowledge as the most important feature of a missionary's capability, the new logic of missionization sustained the religious encounter.

Indians and the Apocalypse

For Eliot, the success of this missiology assumed greater importance as his millennialism intensified. By 1649 one Puritan was bold enough to assign a new significance to the Puritan experiment in New England. The Great Migration of the 1630s had been a flight from 'Prelaticall persecution' in England, as Laudian forces worked relentlessly to root out Calvinism. The extremely promising first years of missionization had, however, suggested this escape was an acutely important providential event; Puritans had been driven across the Atlantic to the shores of early America by Christ 'to make known his name to those poor soules, who have been Captives of Satan these many Ages'. The quality of apparent conversions among the Massachusetts Indians further confirmed this. The advance

²⁰⁸ *Glorious Progress*, 10 ('barbarous course', 'they shall flock').

of the Gospel among them ‘appears not to be in word only...but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance’.²⁰⁹

By mid-1649, Eliot had also found the reassurance that he was searching for in his missiologial endeavours. Jesuits had found confirmation of their work in the mounting evidence that New France was a site particularly conducive to personal salvation, while Franciscans had established the Spanish borderlands as spaces uniquely suited to reconciling eremitic and evangelical impulses. Eliot found similar comfort in the growing conviction that the New England Indians were descended from the lost Ten Tribes of Israel. The first reports from the missionary field in New England were replete with agitated inquiries about the ethnic origins of the Indians in the region. At first, the proposal was made that they were the descendants of Tartars who travelled from Asia to America across the Straits of Anian, a fabled land bridge that remained undiscovered.²¹⁰ Soon, however, Eliot and those publishing his reports dared to reach a striking consensus; that the Indians of New England represented at least one of the lost Ten Tribes. Edward Winslow, an eager ambassador for the mission in New England, suggested that ceremonial activity among the region’s inhabitants bore unmistakable similarities to Mosaic law. Eliot had also heard numerous reports that Indian communities south of Boston practised circumcision.²¹¹

The significance of these claims intensified as Eliot looked upon the utter chaos engulfing England in the 1640s. He considered events of the Civil War to be irrefutable signs buttressing his claims. In 1648 he wrote plainly that ‘the Lord Jesus seemes at this day to bee turning upside down the whole frame of things in the world, Kings, Parliaments, Armies, Kingdomes, Authorities, Churches, Ministers’. Furthermore, this intense disruption

²⁰⁹ *Glorious Progress*, 25 (‘Prelaticall persecution’, ‘poor soules’, ‘much assurance’).

²¹⁰ *Day-Breaking*, 18.

²¹¹ *Farther Discovery*, 14-15 & 24; *Glorious Progress*, 5 & 30.

foreshadowed an even more significant year. Referencing an interpretation of the prophecy of Daniel, Eliot predicted that 1650 would witness the ‘Eastern Jewes’ violently reclaiming their lands from the Ottomans. When this occurred, ‘these Western Indians will soon come in, and that these beginnings are but preparatives for a brighter day than we yet see among them, wherein East and West shall sing the song of the Lambe’. However, the most concrete sign of the imminent millennium did not occur until five years later. Cromwell seized power in England, and was swiftly proclaimed Lord Protector of the entire country. Eliot’s reaction was to dedicate his *Tears of Repentance* to the new ruler. He now considered Cromwell an instrument guided by the divine will to prepare the stage for Christ’s return. His history was of millenarian significance; his claim to dominion of England, Scotland and Ireland indicated that its fulfilment loomed.²¹² Puritans therefore saw in Native Americans one of the keys to Christ’s return to earth, which would institute the millennium before the final apocalypse. Stitching together various tantalising signs, from Old England and New, Eliot became convinced that his work reached beyond the evangelical imperative and touched upon the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy itself.

²¹² *Clear Sunshine*, 60-61 (‘Eastern Jewes’, ‘song of the Lambe’, 60; ‘turning upside down’, 61); *Tears of Repentance*, 11. In making these claims Eliot was acting as a prominent figure in the more general Puritan utopian tradition, a corpus of thought that searched eagerly for signs of an imminent millennium which would replace monarchy with egalitarian theocracy, institute a new program of civil and religious discipline, and bring forth the return of Christ. Eliot’s millenarianism was a mode of historical interpretation that interpreted significant events through the prophetic calendar revealed in Scripture, specifically in the Books of Daniel and Revelation. The ‘Hebraic Indian theory’ was critical to the growing conviction that its fulfilment was imminent, as it suggested the possibility of finally converting the lost tribes as a feature of the necessary universalisation of Christianity. For the utopian tradition in Puritan thought and its millenarian component, see: James Holstun. *A Rational Millennium : Puritan Utopias of Seventeenth-Century England and America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), esp. 102-166; Richard W. Cogley. ‘John Eliot and the Millennium’, *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Summer, 1991), pp. 227-250. For the swift rise of the Jewish Indian theory, see Elizabeth Fenton. *Old Canaan in a New World: Native Americans and the Lost Tribes of Israel* (New York: New York University Press, 2020), 21-55; Richard H. Popkin. ‘The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Indian Theory’, in *Menasseh ben Israel and his World*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, Henry Méchoulan & Richard H. Popkin (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989), pp. 63-83.

The Paradox of Indian Evangelism

Eliot's converts, however, did not share this fervour for a role in the Second Coming. They instead pleaded for their incorporation as a recognised Puritan church to institutionalise their zeal. Yet the formal ceremony of examination, the most critical ritual that would integrate Eliot's neophytes into the core of Puritanism in New England, presented a daunting hurdle. Between 1652 and 1659 a small group of the most devout were examined three times by the Elders of several colonial towns. They were expected to provide as detailed an account of their conversion experience as possible, then submit to an interrogation of their doctrinal knowledge and understanding. The requirements were exacting; church membership in New England relied on a measured blend of confidence in the veracity of Puritan ecclesiology, an unshakeable commitment to constant examination of the self, and a corresponding valorisation of uncertainty as a fundamental feature of saintliness. Appropriate confessions would demonstrate an interior journey from knowledge of Christianity, to conviction of its truth, to internal combat with conflicting ideas, culminating in a reassuring, though constantly unstable, interior belief of one's position among God's elect.²¹³ If their piety was not sanctioned by Elders, the converts' function as effective evangelists would be threatened.

The three public examinations that followed are important records of Eliot's ability as a preacher and instructor. But they are equally valuable as a record of the implications of the missiology he had crafted since 1646.

Some confessions appeared to confirm that it was effective. An Indian called Monotunkquanit, one of those eventually selected as the first Indians to be admitted into an

²¹³ Edmund S. Morgan. *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), 64-113; Perry Miller. *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 365-398 & 432-463. See also the brief chapters on Puritanism as a religious and intellectual movement in David D. Hall, ed. *Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 14-34.

English church, gave an account of his conversion. He had first heard of Christianity when journeying to Cohannit, a small settlement east from Pawtucket. His initial reaction was ridicule; the sachems and ‘rich men’ were suspicious of it, a distrust that Monotunkquanit himself adopted. His next encounter with the mission was an interaction with Eliot himself. At one of the minister’s sermons Eliot confronted Monotunkquanit directly, asking if he had ever prayed to God? The Indian replied no, answering ‘for I am a poore man, and naked: they that pray are cloathed. Therefore I will not pray’. Shortly after, Waban and another convert, Toteswamp, both visited Monotunkquanit’s home. They implored him to begin praying and taught him the commandments, but he remained sceptical. There followed his extensive instruction by a combination of Eliot, Waban and Toteswamp. He was taught that the Word of God was the supreme authority; that God himself was the only deity to be recognised; that all humans possessed a common ancestry; and that God had made a covenant with Abraham which must be observed. This teaching effected a transformation. It was slow – he questioned whether God would ever recognise his devotion considering his previous fidelity to other deities, and whether English and Indians did indeed descend from the same Biblical figures – but he soon asked ‘to be in this Covenant of God’, resolving to ‘pray as long as I live’.²¹⁴

Waban’s clear utility as a symbol drawing other Indians to Christianity was later confirmed by other confessors. John Speen testified that he first prayed not from a fear of God or a love of Christ, but simply because, among others, Waban was doing so. Wutasakompauin assigned an even more decisive role to Waban’s influence. He claimed that having been taught of God by the English, he ‘hated it, and went out’ and ‘did not love such teaching’. Waban eventually persuaded him to pray and helped to instruct him, reversing his previous rejection of Christianity.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ *Further Account*, 65-67 (‘rich men’, ‘a poore man’, 65; ‘this Covenant’, ‘pray’, 67).

²¹⁵ *Further Account*, 58 & 63 (‘went out’, ‘such teaching’, 63).

In the first years of the New England mission, Eliot, Waban and Toteswamp formed a triangular evangelism that was formidably effective in the Indian world. Eliot's sermons were centres of orthodoxy that could bind new Christians into a shared community of faith; Waban's socio-cultural authority functioned as a powerful magnet for those unsure of the implications of this new doctrine; and Toteswamp fanatically encouraged prayer and devotion to those wavering in their new commitment.

But though others' descriptions of the ability of both Waban and Toteswamp appeared to authenticate Eliot's firm reliance on Indian evangelists, their own confessions were disastrous. Each formed one half of a dichotomy that threatened Eliot's entire vision.

According to Monotunkquanit, Toteswamp eagerly encouraged other Indians to explore Eliot's teaching in the several years after his own commitment. Shortly before the second public examination, before Elders at Eliot's Roxbury church, the extent of his own conviction also became clear. Two weeks before the scheduled assembly, three Christian Indians acquired 'severall quarts of Strong-water' from an English trader at Watertown, and got drunk. Eliot identified these men as 'the unsound sort of such as are amongst them that pray unto God, who are hemmed in by Relations, and other means, to doe that which their hearts love not'. Nevertheless, they were considered among the Praying Indians. They had been punished several times before for drunkenness, but this time was different. Toteswamp's son, only eleven, had met the three men at Watertown. He had been sent to the town to trade for corn and fish. The three Indians, however, seized the opportunity to avoid yet more punishment for this new sinful episode, and gave Toteswamp's son 'drink till he was very drunk'. One of them stated explicitly their intention, asking 'whether your father will punish us for Drunkenesse...seeing you are drunk with us for company'.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ *Late and Further Manifestation*, 6 ('Strong-water', 'their hearts love not', 'very drunk', 'Drunkenesse').

Their ruse devastated both Toteswamp and Eliot. The latter judged it ‘the greatest frowne of God that ever I met withal in the work’. The Indians’ actions were so severe that Eliot had doubts about proceeding with the second round of questioning. Toteswamp, for his part, was gripped by an even greater fear. At Natick a meeting was held to discuss the appropriate response. The boy’s father articulated the terrible dilemma the incident had caused him. God, he claimed, was clearly testing him ‘whether I love Christ or my Child best’; citing the story of Abraham and Isaac as a precedent, he was convinced that ‘I must correct my Child, if I should refuse to doe that, I should not love Christ’. The others gathered agreed, and all four were sent to the stocks, to be followed by twenty lashes as punishment. The following day, the boy was whipped by Toteswamp himself before all the children at the school.²¹⁷ Fortunately for Eliot, this concluded the matter. Most importantly, Toteswamp’s response had also clarified his specific understanding of his new Christian role. His commitment to his new faith now overrode all familial ties, and would apparently determine his actions in any such decisions in the future.

Toteswamp’s reorganisation of his obligations evoked the zeal conferred by Eliot’s astute management of his early evangelical endeavour. But this extreme conviction encouraged Toteswamp to construct a second element for his piety. At his first confession, at Natick in October 1652, he had given a long and pained analysis of his spiritual condition. His first reaction to English settlers’ encouragement to pray was equivocal. No-one else in his community had shown interest in colonists’ religion, so neither did he; but, if the epidemics sweeping New England killed those sceptical, he resolved to trial praying to the Christian God. Disease did eventually decimate those Indians, and Toteswamp began praying. His first

²¹⁷ *Late and Further Manifestation*, 7-8 (‘greatest frowne’, 7; ‘Christ or my Child’, ‘correct’, 8).

experience of Eliot's preaching completed this transformation. His 'heart grew strong', and his devotion rapidly increased.²¹⁸

But as he learned more Christian fundamentals from Eliot, such as the Commandments and his identity as Adam's posterity, Toteswamp grew anguished. He became acutely conscious of both his sinful nature and the sins he regularly engaged in. He resigned himself to the excruciating understanding that 'my heart is full of evil thoughts'; that 'I break Gods Word every day; and 'I deserve no pardon'. In short, Toteswamp interpreted the narrative contained in Eliot's preaching as a condemnation. Before the Elders at Natick he claimed decisively that 'I deserve death and damnation'.²¹⁹

This intensely negative interiority was central to Puritanism. It was also valuable for Eliot, expressing in a public forum before religious authorities an orthodox reaction to his missionization. But Toteswamp continued. Another of Eliot's lectures narrated Christ challenging the Scribes and Pharisees in the New Testament, who asked both 'why do ye make void the Commandements of God?' The logic of Toteswamp's reaction was unclear, but the Indian was struck by a fear that he, likewise, was violating the demands of Christianity by teaching other Indians, 'because I cannot teach them right, and thereby make the word of God vain'. He reacted with similar terror to Christ's warning about the blind leading the blind. He confessed 'therfore I feared that I am one blind, and when I teach other Indians I shal caus them to fall into the ditch'.²²⁰

Toteswamp's two confessions in October 1652 therefore exposed the contradiction between Eliot's missiology and certain fundamental features of Puritan piety. The severity with which Indians reacted to a key message of Puritan preaching - the unshakeable

²¹⁸ *Tears of Repentance*, 4 ('grew strong').

²¹⁹ *Tears of Repentance*, 4-5 ('evil thoughts', 'Gods Word', 'no pardon', 4; 'death and damnation', 5).

²²⁰ *Tears of Repentance*, 6 ('make void', 'cannot teach them', 'fall into the ditch').

conviction that one sinned constantly and inevitably, and deserved damnation - could militate against their embrace of an evangelical duty. This rejection of their obligation to teach and promote their new faith was not derived from indifference or unwillingness, but rather from an overwhelming consciousness of their own inadequacy. Toteswamp's reluctance to evangelise was a reasoned response to his Puritan interiority. He was terrorised by this consciously exceptional standard of piety when instructing other Indians, quickly concluding that his ability was inadequate. The Christianity he had crafted was therefore suitable only for consolidating a community in fidelity to the new faith. It could not function as a container for the expansive evangelistic Indian faith that Eliot imagined would thrust Christianity across the Indian world.

Toteswamp's unsuccessful attempt to reconcile his the evangelical imperative of Eliot's missiology with a serious acceptance of his own depravity was not unique. Nishohkou, another of Eliot's converts, was one of those eventually selected for admission into the Roxbury church. Nishohkou would occasionally teach others on Sabbath days. But he was convinced that 'I do not do as I ought'. He was tormented particularly by his attempts to reproach sin. Whenever he would try he would recall the injunction to 'first cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou mayest see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brothers eye'. Furthermore, when praying he felt a hypocrisy to 'do it to be seen of men'. Like Totheswamp, he appeared eager to instruct others of the Christianity he understood, to identify and criticise sin, and to set a useful example for others to follow with public prayer. Yet the Scripture that he had encountered had apparently crushed this enthusiasm, instead possessing Nishohkou with an overwhelming conviction that his efforts to teach others were rendered ineffective by his own failings.²²¹

²²¹ *Further Account*, 42 ('as I ought', 'the beam', 'seen of men').

Waban's confessions also failed to accord with Eliot's plan. Following Toteswamp at the first examination in 1652, the sachem made three important claims. He admitted, first, that he did not know how to confess his sins properly, and 'little do I know of Christ'; he went on to declare that, though he was ashamed of his actions, he nevertheless 'neither have done, nor can do the Commandments of the Lord'; and he finished by claiming that 'I do not truly pray to God in my heart'. The Elders, unsurprisingly, were not satisfied with his confession. Eliot quickly interceded, however, arguing that Waban possessed certain 'gifts' that compensated for his stated lack of knowledge or zeal. His two unique abilities lay in 'Ruling, Judging of Cases...insomuch that he is respected among them, for they have chosen him a Ruler of Fifty', and in acting as a 'great drawer on to Religion; I replied, so he was in his way, and did prevail with many'.²²²

This rescue of Waban from further, possibly very embarrassing questioning was significant. Eliot had crafted a distinction between the sachem's apparently lax obedience to the fundamentals of the Puritan creed and his use as a powerful example to draw other, perhaps reluctant Indians toward the new faith. Its competing impulses – the development of an interior faith motivated by a conviction of one's utter depravity and sinfulness, and the creation of an exterior example to be emulated by fellow Indians curious of the implications of embracing Christianity – appeared irreconcilable. Totheswamp had been struck with severe anxiety at the thought of trying to instruct other neophytes, because he believed he was innately incapable of doing so. Whereas Waban, though convinced of his nature as an irredeemable and constant sinner, appeared significantly less zealous than Totheswamp, yet much more successful at drawing others to the faith through his daunting political and social authority.

²²² *Tears of Repentance*, 8 ('little do I know', 'Commandments', 'truly pray', 'gifts', 'Ruler of Fifty', 'great drawer').

Eventually, the elders and magistrates decided that the most appropriate course of action would be to call the most capable Christian Indians into an English church before they could be permitted to form their own Indian one. Eliot worried about the impact this would have on the rest of the neophytes. They would therefore be robbed of the influence of ‘the principal and most able’ among them, thus violating one of the fundamental principles of Eliot’s plan for mass missionization. An uneasy compromise was agreed, in which the Indians to be admitted into the English church would attend only ‘for participation in the Seals, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, and for any Special Exercise of Discipline’; otherwise they were to spend time within their Indian communities, further instructing those who asked for it. With this agreed, eight Indians chosen for this purpose stood before the elders of the Roxbury church on 15th February 1659, to confess once again. Their performance was again promising, and on the 5th May their final examination took place. To fully confirm the accuracy of their testimony, and Eliot’s interpretation thereof, the entire infrastructure of the Puritan mission was brought to Roxbury. Peter Fouldger, the master of the Indian school on Martha’s Vineyard, was present with his own Indian interpreter; Eliot’s son, almost proficient in the Massachusetts language, stood by; two sons of Thomas Stanton were likewise available; and finally, five Indians being taught at Harvard College stood waiting to answer questions if required.²²³

Lord Increase Our Faith

By recognising and addressing the paradox embodied by Toterswamp and Waban, Eliot deftly balanced the demanding orthodoxy of Puritanism with its promotion by newly converted Indians raised in a radically different religious milieu. Yet the 1650s saw a

²²³ *Further Account*, 1-2 & 35-37 (‘principal and most able’, ‘Exercise of Discipline’, 2).

growing number of other challenges to his evangelism. Countering them further clarified Puritan missiology in New England.

Obstacles to the continued success of missionization continued to multiply. One was unique to New England. In May 1650 two Indians who had been regularly attending Eliot's sermons travelled to Providence and Warwick, to the south of Boston. Samuel Gorton had, after embarrassing the Puritan leadership in Massachusetts, returned to America to become a key figure in the colony at Providence. It is not clear if the two Indians encountered Gorton himself or some of his followers, but whoever it was tried desperately to undermine Eliot's efforts. They presented a different understanding of Christianity by asking probing questions. When the Indians asked for clarification, they encountered a fundamentally different Christianity from that which Eliot had taught them. The Gortonists proposed a faith without a physical Heaven and Hell, that rejected infant baptism as a meaningless ceremony, and that required no ministers, both because of the equality conferred by the Bible and the inability of men to authentically convert non-Christians.²²⁴ To Eliot's relief, the Indians were not convinced by this new dogma. But this brief encounter remained ominous. The orthodoxy that the first settlers had carried to New England in 1630 had, by 1650, been fractured by multiple controversies. Roger William's exile and the Antinomian controversy had pushed supposed heretics away to the coastal lands to the south. This was not far enough; the Native world navigated by Massachusetts, Narragansetts, Penacooks, Mohegans and other Indian nations encompassed every settlement in New England. There was little Eliot could do to stop his Indian audiences encountering dissenting Christian opinion.

Hostility from within Indian communities also began to pulse with greater intensity. Opposition to the new faith that Eliot was offering had previously only been demonstrated by

²²⁴ *Farther Discovery*, 33-34.

pawwaws. These were the religious authorities in Indian New England. Recognised as such through the visions they received of the deities populating the Indian spiritual pantheon, these practitioners were responsible for performing acts from a ritual apparatus that ordered Indian communities by determining the causes of past, present and future events, by diagnosing the reasons for illnesses or other misfortunes, and by wielding mystical forces to predict the outcome of conflict or hunts. In short, they were intermediaries between often muddled or dangerous everyday life and the powerful metaphysical forces that could confer stability and harmony on Indian communities.²²⁵

But the sachems were now beginning to reject Christianity with equal confidence. Acutely aware of the implications of embracing Eliot's teaching, Indian leaders understood 'that Religion will make a great change among them, and cut them off from their former tyranny'. Two conventions that sustained their power were particularly challenged by Christianity. The first was tribute. Formerly, sachems would demand money or goods from their subjects, threatening those who refused with death. The second was a more general respect for the sachem's authority. In both cases, Eliot's teaching had apparently compelled Indians to refuse to pay tribute and openly admonish the sachem who demanded it. These Indians argued that the appropriate method for sustaining one's authority was labour, which was God's command.²²⁶ Unsurprisingly, the sachems had quickly learned to resent the new faith infecting their communities.

Finally, the promotional material produced and distributed by the New England Company contributed even more problems. Eliot had deliberately asked that he not be

²²⁵ For extended discussions of the function of powwows in New England, see: Simmons. *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 37-65; Kathleen J. Bragdon. *Native People of Southern New England, 1500-1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 200-231; Neal Salisbury. *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 43-44 & 74-75.

²²⁶ *Farther Discovery*, 37 ('former tyranny').

referred to as an ‘Evangelist’ in any publications advertising or narrating his efforts. He recognised the implication that this identified him with ‘that extraordinary office mentioned in the New Testament’. He hoped instead to be represented as acting in ‘all things with all humility’.²²⁷ His pleas, however, apparently fell on deaf ears. The prefaces and introductions to the various tracts published by the New England Company were full of references that valorised the missionaries in New England and afforded them a significance that Eliot himself refused to take credit for. After eight of the Praying Indians had finally been admitted into the Roxbury church Joseph Caryl compared the Christian Indian community to the apostolic Church. He referenced the apostle Paul, chosen to ‘preach the Gospel where Christ was not named’; then drew an equivalence between his actions and those of the ministers in New England, who were also striving to ‘preach the Gospel where Christ was not named’.²²⁸

Eliot’s reaction to such obstacles were in contrast with that of the Jesuits and Franciscans. The winter of 1650 saw another wave of disease fall heavily on the Indian world in New England. One of the most significant casualties was an Indian carpenter who had begun to build Eliot a house. His death was important; the house therefore laid ‘not yet raised’, which made the missionary’s ‘abode amongst them more difficult, and my tarriance shorter than else I would’. In responding to this setback Eliot had to be reminded of the divine instruction to ‘Endure thou hardnesse as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ’. That he had to be reminded of this, rather than welcoming and celebrating such difficulties, was a fundamental difference between himself and his Jesuit and Franciscan competitors. Brebeuf had valorised suffering as a vehicle for his own salvation, while Benavides and Zarate both attributed the nascent Christian Indian community in New Mexico to the violent deaths of the

²²⁷ *Farther Discovery*, 18 (‘extraordinary office’, ‘all humility’).

²²⁸ *Further Account*, fol. 2^r (‘Christ was not named’).

Franciscans that had preceded them. Eliot assigned no such significance to such obstacles, merely identifying them as manifestations of a providential design.

Illness likewise struck Monequassan, the schoolmaster at Natick, an exceptionally important responsibility at this critical time. Eliot suspected the cause to be an ulcer in his lung. His illness was, however, so severe that Eliot feared he would die. His reaction to this threatened 'great hindrance of our work' was simple, begging only 'Lord increase our faith!' This attitude toward Monequassan's fate was significant. Jesuits and Franciscans had interpreted each setback in their missionization as an instrument to either confirm the extent of one's devotion to their task, or as a confirmation of a missionary's or Indian's salvation. Eliot, by contrast, was seized by a fear that he was not devoted enough, and therefore asked for a greater and more intense faith than possessed at that moment. For the Puritan, obstacles were therefore arising not as an invitation to further suffering or as divine sanction, but as a devastating reminder of the inadequacy of one's faith.²²⁹

Like all other missionaries in early America, Eliot was obsessed with upholding the appropriate standards for baptism. Unlike the Catholic orders in New France and the Spanish borderlands, though, his was not motivated by concern for the Indians themselves. If an Indian 'betrusted with that Treasure of Christ' violated the new commandments that they were now obliged to follow, his concern was not for the Christian's soul but that they should 'scandalize' Christ; furthermore, they would receive no punishment since 'he could easily run away (as some have done)'. This concentration on Christ himself as the primary victim of apostasy was confirmed again in 1654, after the second session of confessions by the Indians at Roxbury. The eight Indians questioned remained 'in such danger of polluting and defiling

²²⁹ *Late and Further Manifestation*, 6 ('great hindrance', 'increase our faith').

the name of Christ among their barbarous friends and Countrey-men' that it was appropriate to further delay their incorporation into a formal church.²³⁰

In 1655 Eliot considered the progress that his missionization had made. His conviction that the Indians were sincere in their conversion, and that they would eventually be permitted to form a church of their own, was supplemented by a belief that his missiological work was improving Christ's 'faithfull Covenant and Promises'. Aside from confirming the significance and legitimacy of the evangelism he was undertaking, these beliefs strengthened him against the 'suspicious jealousies, hard speeches, and unkindnesses' of English settlers who were hostile to his efforts. Finally, the steady progress he had made had convinced him to wait patiently for 'the Lords time, when year after year, and time after time, I meet with disappointments'.²³¹

Eliot therefore added a final critical component to his missiology in the 1650s. Setbacks were to be interpreted as commands to increase one's faith, or to guard the reputation of Christ himself over the progress of evangelism. These attitudes were confirmed as Eliot surveyed Indian converts' devotion, recognising their faith as evidence of his and theirs' obedience to the covenant with Christ.

The Dialogues

Eliot's final published writing was a series of conversations between Christian Indians and those who had not yet embraced the faith. One of the discussions recorded in the *Indian Dialogues* was between two of the most influential praying Indians, William and Anthony,

²³⁰ *Tears of Repentance*, 1 ('Treasure', 'scandalize', 'run away'); *Late and Further Manifestation*, 21 ('polluting and defiling').

²³¹ *Late and Further Manifestation*, 22-23 ('Covenant', 22; 'suspicious jealousies', 'meet with disappointments', 23).

and the Wampanoag sachem Philip. Eliot was not present and acknowledged in the preface to the publication that were not reproductions of interaction between the characters involved. Yet the significance of these imagined *Indian Dialogues* was not whether they were true or false. Rather, they were extended expressions of Eliot's fully developed missiology.²³² William and Anthony met Philip at his home in Pokanoket, an important settlement in a constellation of Wampanoag communities in southern New England. Anthony immediately recorded the reason for their visit: to convert the sachem.

Like other sachems who had begun to articulate strong opposition to Eliot's efforts, Philip's most pressing objections were not toward the doctrine of Christianity, but its implications. He made two points. He feared, first, that Christian Indians were rejecting their sachems across New England. An incontrovertible link had been established whereby the attitudes manifest in, by, and through prayer were smashing traditional power structures. In their places, it left only a fragile egalitarian system. In this arrangement the exercise of authority, sanctioned now by fidelity to the demands of Scripture, could swell from any Christian Indian and be applied to any of his contemporaries, including the sachem. Philip had concluded that he would be the next victim of these sweeping changes; undoubtedly he would 'become a common man among them, and so lose all my Power and Authority over them'.²³³ This terror was not unfounded – an Indian had once asked Eliot 'If a man be wise, and his Sachem weak must he yet obey him?' and 'We are commanded to honour the Sachem, but is the Sachem commanded to love us?'²³⁴ Furthermore, being admonished or

²³² The *Dialogues* have been recognised as a training manual for native missionaries, as an attempt to prove the orthodoxy of the praying Indians' faith to a still sceptical Puritan establishment, as an advert to the Commissioners of the United Colonies, and as an allegorical exploration of the struggle to define and sustain English Protestantism. For these analyses, see: Henry W. Bowden & James P. Ronda, eds. *John Eliot's Indian Dialogues: A Study in Cultural Interaction* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1980), 3-56; Thomas Scanlan. *Colonial Writing and the New World, 1583-1671: Allegories of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 155-187.

²³³ *Indian Dialogues*, 44-45 ('a common man', 44-45).

²³⁴ *Farther Discovery*, 29 ('obey him', 'honour the Sachem').

even punished by those who previously deferred to his leadership would be ‘a bitter Pill, too hard for me to get down and swallow’. He continued his line of thought by referencing the calamitous consequences of all this. Those opposed to the new faith would swiftly desert a Christian sachem and ‘adjoyn themselves unto other Sachems...if I be a praying Sachem I shall be a poor and weak one, and easily be trod upon by others, who are like to be more potent and numerous’.²³⁵ His quarrel was, therefore, not with the Word itself but its implications. Christianity would strip his authority, force him into deference to those who could wield Scripture most effectively, and leave him a feeble figure on the increasingly fractious spiritual battlefield.

In response, William and Anthony did not attempt to appease his anxieties about the radical and sweeping changes that the new faith would impose. Rather, they confirmed them. It was true, they explained, that sachems in a Christian community must accept reprimand and penalties from their Christian brethren. In order to accept this, Philip was urged to consider the consequences of his current arrangement – ‘If Sachems might sin, and no body might admonish them, because they be rulers, and the Ministers and people are the subjects, it were the most miserable condition in the world to be a Sachem or a ruler, they run to hell without controll’.²³⁶ The praying Indians had seized on Philip’s self-interested concerns. Submitting to a community in which he would be constantly held to account for his apparent sins would sting, but the cost of doing otherwise was immeasurably worse.

After addressing Philip’s most personal concerns, they spoke powerfully on his perceived loss of strength that would accompany the label of ‘praying Indian’. He would, indeed, lose subjects to other sachems implacably opposed to Christianity. However, in abandoning a position in the sprawling Indian world that encircled New England he would be

²³⁵ *Indian Dialogues*, 46 (‘bitter Pill’, ‘more potent’).

²³⁶ *Indian Dialogues*, 51 (‘run to hell’).

embraced by an immense network dedicated to the propagation of the faith in early America. This comprised the now considerable constellation of praying towns and the Indians that inhabited them; the civil administrations of Massachusetts and Plymouth, as well as the Commissioners of the United Colonies; the New England Company; and the King of England himself.²³⁷ Aligning himself within this increasingly powerful configuration was what William and Anthony had both done; their very conversation was a reminder of the conviction this conferred

The following day the final meeting between William, Anthony and Philip was held. For this final gathering, the praying Indians encountered a new adversary. Another sachem arrived and was invited to attend the meeting. He agreed to be present, but warned that his opinion of Christianity was already exceptionally low. He echoed Philip's concerns about the drastic alterations that would be expected of a Christian Indian community, making obvious that he would not disregard ancestral belief and so practice so frivolously. He announced 'we and our Forefathers have through all generations lived in our Religion, which I desire not to change'; reading and comprehension of the Bible, therefore, was to be suppressed as much as possible, since its poisonous contents threatened in Indians 'new light and notions, which withdraws them from our obedience'.²³⁸ Yet William and Anthony countered this appeal to antiquity with one of their own, reasoning that the age and coherence of Scripture proved its validity. Despite the other sachem confirming his initial suspicions, Philip was convinced by this final gambit.

He was immediately tortured by the same revelations that Toteswamp had suffered. The Wampanoag lamented the 'mountains of sin have I heaped up in my wicked life'. He was particularly troubled by his corresponding failure to provide a virtuous example for his

²³⁷ *Indian Dialogues*, 48.

²³⁸ *Indian Dialogues*, 55 ('our Forefathers', 'light and notions').

Indian subjects. He had done ‘quite contrary to my duty’, performing instead ‘an example of lust, of profaneness, yea of all sin’. This model, he realised, had been a vehicle for others’ damnation. Linking both painful insights, Philip asked William and Anthony how to rectify his past failings; crucially, he wanted both to ‘escape damnation’ and rescue those ‘going to hell upon my account’.²³⁹ Philip therefore embodied Eliot’s archetypal Indian missionary. He was a sachem, possessed with Toteswamp’s interiority but acutely concerned with his pivotal role in saving his subjects from Hell by converting them.

Eliot’s rendering of William, Anthony and Philip’s meeting narrated archetypal accounts of missionization and conversion, eventually fully articulating Eliot’s vision of Indian evangelism. William and Anthony had been unequivocal about the radical changes that Christianization would bring to Philip and his community; then, when the sachem eventually accepted their offer, he blended the Puritan consciousness displayed by Toteswamp with the successful evangelism performed by Waban. By 1671, then Eliot’s construction of his missiology was complete. He had reacted shrewdly to the peculiarities of his mission in New England by prioritising Indians as agents of missionization, codifying the required characteristics for new missionaries, manipulating Christology, overcoming the disastrous contradiction between Puritan orthodoxy and Indian evangelism, rationalising success or failure, and finally articulating exemplary models for each stage of his endeavour.

Recalibrating the Jesuit Mission

As Eliot was beginning to build his missiology in New England, Jesuits in New France, buoyed by the recent agreement with the Mohawk emissaries, were further inspired

²³⁹ *Indian Dialogues*, 68-69 (‘wicked life’, ‘my duty’, ‘example of lust’, 68; ‘escape damnation’, ‘going to hell’, 69).

by the opening of more avenues for missionization. Very quickly, however, this promise would disintegrate. The 1640s ended with renewed Iroquois belligerence; warriors from all of the Five Nations began raiding again, with unprecedented intensity. Jesuits confident in the missiology that they had crafted in the previous two decades were suddenly faced with the devastation of their most successful space, Huronia, and the corresponding loss of so many other potential mission fields. Over the following three decades, Jesuits fundamentally changed their evangelical paradigm in early America once again, an evolution that sustained their activity into the 18th century.

First, however, the potential expansion into Mohawk territory suggested by the peace in 1645 was supplemented by two more extremely promising events. Fathers Claude Pijart and Leonard Garreau spent the winter that year with a band of Nipissings, in the sprawling space north of Lake Huron. Several Achirigouan traders had visited the Nipissings' winter camp. Their presence was significant - their territory extended westward, even 'approaching the tribes of the Sault...with whom these have their principal trade and very close association'. Pijart and Garreau imagined, therefore, that conversions of Achirigouans would open an even greater vista for missionization, inviting the western spread of Christianity through a vast diplomatic and commercial corridor. Fortunately, one of the traders, Mixisoumat, asked directly for instruction. The two Jesuits found him an exemplary neophyte and granted him baptism after only six weeks. From the east a report also arrived from Jacques de la Place, the Jesuit at the mission on the island of Miskou, of a new peace agreed between Betsiamite Indians and those at Miskou and Acadia. One of the Indian mediators was a Christian captain from Tadoussac named Simon Nechabeouit. In a cabin at Miskou Montagnais, Algonquins and Betsiamites all asserted and agreed that 'they all have banished from their hearts the former enmity'; they exchanged gifts of porcelain, blankets, guns, powder, and lead; and finished the day by dance and feasts. De la Place expressed a hope that

this peace could offer an even further expansion of Jesuit activity, since ‘all our Savages seem to have inclination to receive holy Baptism’.²⁴⁰ Within a year the spatial promise of the Mohawk peace had been supplemented by more, new configurations of evangelical potential. The westward promise of the encouraging encounter with Achirigouan traders, together with the new peace encompassing the northern shores of the St. Lawrence and the zone between Quebec and Acadia, combined with the Mohawk agreement to form a vast semi-circular arc around New France that invited further missiological expansion.

In 1646 the Jesuits also saw the first deaths of their colleagues in early America. They were two key missionaries from the early years of the mission in New France. One was Massé, the other Anne de Noue, who had been, along with Brebeuf and le Jeune, among the first to arrive at Quebec after the Laurentian shift. Jérôme Lalement, Superior of the Huron mission for seven years before his promotion to leader of the entire mission in New France in 1645, eulogised both in his *Relation* that year. Unfortunately, neither had suffered extensively like Jogues, nor had they been killed. De Noue had frozen to death on a journey to Richelieu to say Mass and administer the Sacraments to the French at the garrison, and Massé died simply of old age. Yet their deaths remained a chance to further promote the mission in New France, and Lalement seized the opportunity. He valorised aspects of their character such as obedience, a total renunciation of self, and willingness to help practically when their ability to learn languages or further evangelize failed them.

Without the rhetorical refuge of a familiar martyrdom for either, however, Lalement’s descriptions of these first deaths hinted at the ongoing tension between the salvific and missiological impulses in the Jesuit mission. After praising de Noue for his qualities, Lalement recalled that someone active in the mission had at one point suggested to the Jesuit

²⁴⁰ JR XXX: 113 & 139-143 (‘close association’, 113; ‘former enmity’, ‘holy Baptism’, 143).

that he return to France. He was growing more and more ‘infirm’, and they were apparently concerned for him. His reply was the strongest articulation yet of the struggle between the two competing impulses of the mission. He began by recognising ‘that the Mission is burdened, and that I hold the place of a good workman’. His obedience to his Superior would compel him to leave if ordered, but he strongly hoped that he would be allowed to continue in New France, and ‘to die in the field of battle’. Despite his admiration for those who made way for other fresher and more able Jesuits, he was inclined to ‘employ my life in the service of the poor Savages and of those who are converting them’. No further suggestions of his departure were made.²⁴¹ De Noue had been clear. He felt keenly the contradiction between his own desire for death in service of the New France mission and the damage this impulse would do by denying a more capable Jesuit the chance to enter it. The practical disadvantage of the latter, however, was overridden by his own zeal for an appropriate death. Furthermore, this decision appeared sanctioned by other Jesuits in New France, who made no further reference to the matter.

This tension – between soteriological and practical concerns – had been a persistent feature of the Jesuit mission in the mid-seventeenth century. Brebeuf, le Jeune, and Jogues had skilfully incorporated both into components of their new early American martyrdom, but this relied on a peculiar blend of extreme suffering, that one nevertheless survived, and the corresponding expansion of Jesuit influence. De Noue had not embodied this narrative. His relatively banal death could not be celebrated as martyrological, so Lalement was forced to concentrate on his personality. The Superior lauded his determination to persist in evangelizing, but by doing so exposed a contradiction in Jesuit missiology. If a priority of missionization was stubbornly zealous activity, this could be inimical to practical success.

²⁴¹ *JR* XXIX: 29 (‘infirm’, ‘good workman’, ‘field of battle’, ‘service’).

Six Martyrdoms to Manipulate

Immediately confronting this contradiction was, however, soon made unnecessary. Between 1646 and 1649, six Jesuits were killed by the Iroquois. The Mohawk peace had been the first instance of potential peace between one of the Five Nations and the Indians allied to the French in early America, crowning a new understanding of the continent with the promise of spatial extension. Yet it quickly broke down. Jesuit fears were realised, and the door was quickly shut once again to the Iroquois world. Jogues was the first to be killed after he volunteered to travel back to the sites of his former captivity as an ambassador of the new peace. Five others followed in the relentless violence that engulfed the Indian world of the Great Lakes: Antoine Daniel, Brebeuf, Chabanel, Charles Garnier, and Gabriel Lalement. Their fellow Jesuit Paul Ragueneau, Jérôme Lalement's successor as Superior of the Huron mission, was the author responsible for eulogizing them. Though practically devastating, Ragueneau used their deaths as an opportunity to return to a more familiar, and perhaps more reassuring, form of martyrdom, and to a renewed and stronger connection between exemplary Jesuit practice, the salvific and missiological impulses, and early America itself.

His Superior's response, however, was to narrow the criteria for martyrdom. He found the atmosphere of utter devastation intolerable. Previously, the steady progress of the Huron mission and promising forays into further territory were understood as coeval with the salvific impulse. The new martyrdom articulated by Brebeuf and le Jeune, and fully instantiated by Jogues, was of fundamental importance to the development of the missions in New France. It was therefore welcomed and celebrated as an evangelical necessity that provided for both Jesuit and Huron salvation. But the relentless assaults by each Iroquois nation had discouraged this paradigm. Lalement, describing the general state of ruin that the most successful feature of the Jesuit mission had been reduced to, wrote that missionaries

would still eagerly seek death ‘if it were not followed by the general desolation of our poor Churches, and if the loss of the Shepherds did not cause also that of the Sheep’. He gave a practical example confirming his concern. A community of Christian Hurons had been taken captive by Seneca raiders sometime during the years of chaos. They were, apparently, ritually adopted into Seneca families and communities. The greatest tragedy, however, was that this band had previously ‘borne many excellent fruits for Paradise’, but was now ‘deprived of the succor necessary to enable it to bear fruit a Hundredfold’.²⁴² A Jesuit obsessively seeking the prize of martyrdom was now considered a detriment to the missions themselves. In the relatively barren Christian landscape that had, under persistent assault, smouldered for almost a decade around the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, the imperatives of personal salvation and missiological endeavour – which Jesuits had skilfully crafted into a single paradigm – became deliberately detached. Lalement himself had been shocked into reversing the logic he had expressed when describing de Noue. In the context of Iroquois violence, intense concern for one’s own salvation deprived communities of Indian converts of the necessary instruction for sustaining their faith. This was a dangerous conclusion; its implication, that Jesuits’ torment and death were no longer desirable if the churches and converts similarly suffered, threatened to confine Jesuit activity to Indian communities and individuals that uniformly welcomed their preaching. Given Brebeuf and Jogues’ experiences in the previous two decades this would narrow Jesuit missionization at a time when it was most inclined to expansion.

Fortunately, Rageuneau offered a competing interpretation. Crucially, he did not attempt to reconcile the dichotomous aspects of mission that pained Lalement. Instead, he focused squarely on the newly diverse potential of the early American mission to confer a martyrological death. Collectively, the abilities of each Jesuit and the precise manner of their

²⁴² *JR* XLV: 189 (‘general desolation’); *JR* XLVI: 73 (‘Paradise’, ‘bear fruit’).

death offered Rageuneau a chance to further complicate the typology of martyrdom that Jesuits had constructed in the previous two decades and connect Jesuit practice with this reward.

His analysis of Chabanel's death was similar to Lalement's interpretation of de Noue's. The martyred Jesuit was not unique in his devotion or character, but was to all practical purposes peculiarly unsuited to missionization in New France. After five years of diligent effort he remained unable to learn the Indian languages that chattered throughout the missions. His inability to understand the Indians that he encountered meant that 'the temper of his mind was so opposed to the ways and manners of the Savages, that he saw in them scarce anything that pleased him'. He was consequently possessed by thoughts of returning to France, where he could exercise his concern for conversion in a more familiar and productive setting. He, however, bluntly refused these thoughts. In 1647, despite his many practical failings, he made a vow to continue as a 'perpetual servant' of the mission in Huronia. His death two years later was, therefore, not a reward for any progress made in evangelisation; instead, it was a decisive sanction of his personal courage in refusing to abandon a mission field which, through his inability to adapt properly to it, offered no consolation for his suffering.²⁴³

Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalement's death further complicated the typology of martyrdom. Their deaths distinguished two types. The first was voluntarily placing oneself in jeopardy even when, easily and without sin, one could have sought safety elsewhere. The second definition was much more intense, and one that both Jesuits deserved. This martyrdom could be claimed only when 'hatred for the Faith and contempt for the name of God have been among the most powerful incentives which have influenced the mind of the

²⁴³ *JR* XXXV: 151-153 & 157 ('perpetual servant', 157).

Barbarians to practice upon them as many cruelties as ever the rage of tyrants obliged the Martyrs to endure'.²⁴⁴ The latter part of this definition was evoked by his extremely lurid description of Brebeuf and Lalement's tortures at the hands of their Iroquois captors. Some of their tormenters were Hurons who had been previously captured by the Iroquois, having derided Christianity while the Jesuits had been in their communities. These filled kettles with boiling water and dumped it over the missionaries' heads in a mocking parody of baptism. The Jesuits' former preaching was weaponised to justify this; applying the same evangelical logic guiding the missionaries' efforts, the Hurons claimed to be assisting the missionaries by this 'baptism', without which they would not receive salvation, and by assuring them that the pain this induced would benefit them 'for, the more thou sufferest, the more thy God will reward thee'.²⁴⁵

Finally, Rageneau had once made a direct request to Garnier, shortly before the latter's death, to leave his mission for a short while to recover his health and strength at either Sainte Marie or Quebec. Rageneau was clearly concerned that his missionization would suffer if Garnier's health deteriorated any further. But Garnier replied as de Noue had. He conceded that he was, indeed, suffering from severe hunger. His greatest fear, however, was not this but that 'in leaving my flock in the time of their calamities, and in the terrors of war, - in a time when they need me more than ever, - I would fail to use the opportunities which God gives me of losing myself for him'. Unless absolutely debilitated, Garnier would not 'come down from the Cross on which his goodness has placed me'.²⁴⁶ Garnier had articulated a new conception of the relationship between the salvific and missiological potential of New France. Unlike de Noue, he was confronted with his decision at a time of relentless conflict. His reaction to this was not to dichotomise the progress of the mission and his own personal

²⁴⁴ *JR XXXIV*: 137-139 ('rage of tyrants', 139).

²⁴⁵ *JR XXXIV*: 143 ('God will reward thee').

²⁴⁶ *JR XXXV*: 127-129 ('leaving my flock', 127; 'the Cross', 129).

salvation, but to integrate both into a paradigm concentrated heavily on the latter. The Iroquois attacks pushing ever further into Huronia and tumbling over the missions themselves were divine invitations to Garnier's martyrdom. Through Garnier's decision, missionization and personal salvation entered a dialogic and complementary relationship, rather than a contradictory one.

The six martyrdoms that rocked the Jesuit mission in the late-1640s were therefore not simply embraced as examples of providential favour. Garnier's response to pleas to leave his mission, occurring in a much more violent context, was fundamentally different to de Noue's. His own logic restored the relationship between missionization and personal salvation, a tie that had been briefly broken by his former contemporary.

But as their killings were utilised to broaden the salvific potential of Jesuit activity in early America, so they were used to further sharpen Jesuit identity at an institutional level. Ignatian spirituality, manifest most comprehensively in the Exercises, was a peculiarly effective method for intensifying the desire for a saintly demise, to such an extent that Brebeuf was able to endure the brutalities of the holiest torments and death in Rageunau's typology of martyrdom.

Brebeuf had completed the Spiritual Exercises regularly in New France. In 1634, deep in the meditation required by them, he received a vision of Christ assuring him that the Holy Spirit itself would anoint his preaching. In 1640, again while completing the Exercises, he received another vision of Christ 'holding out his loving arms to embrace me'. Brebeuf had been engrossed in contemplation of his own sins, yet the Christ in his vision pardoned them all and reminded Brebeuf of his duty to evangelisation. These were only two instances of the abundant spiritual and mystical power conferred on the Jesuits by their participation in and observance of the Spiritual Exercises. The intensified fervor that was the product of this

practice was linked directly to the desire for martyrdom; ‘it was in the ardor of this zeal that he offered himself very often to God, to suffer all the martyrdoms in the world, for the conversion of these peoples’.²⁴⁷ The desire for martyrdom was, therefore, inconsistent. It remained, steadily, a valued fate, but grew drastically in appeal when the Jesuits performed the program of devotion unique to their Order. Daniel was utilised by Rageuneau as another figure demonstrating an apparent connection between the specificity of Jesuit practice and the holy death he was granted. The ‘Divine Goodness’ evident in his violent demise appeared heightened by the fact that only four days before the Iroquois attack on his mission, the Jesuit had completed eight full days of ‘continuous spiritual Exercises of the Society’ in the Jesuit cabin at the mission of Sainte Marie. The day after he concluded these devotions, on 2nd July, he travelled from there to the site of his killing. Performing the Exercises had conferred a ‘zeal for God more intense than any flame that consumed his body’.²⁴⁸ Garnier, thirdly, was equally exacting in his observance of the rules of his order. Regardless of his missiological obligations he always prayed at the required times, and never neglected his ‘spiritual reading’ or ‘self-examination’.²⁴⁹

In a letter to Vincent Caraffa, then the head of the entire Jesuit Order, Rageuneau summarised the effect of the six martyrdoms. He concluded with absolutely no mention of the Indians in early America. His emphasis was, instead, solely on the Jesuit themselves. All collectively demonstrated the piety, obedience, humility and patience expected of them, as well as scrupulous observance of the rules of the Society. Sainte Marie was a centre of holiness in early America, where everyone did ‘seriously attend to his soul’s salvation’. This, rather than their missionization of the Indians, reassured Rageuneau. The Jesuit mission in New France had been left reeling by the shocking efficiency of the Iroquois assault; the

²⁴⁷ *JR* XXXIV: 183-185 & 189 (‘embrace me’, ‘this zeal’, 189).

²⁴⁸ *JR* XXXIII: 265 (‘Divine Goodness’, ‘spiritual Exercises’, ‘flame that consumed’).

²⁴⁹ *JR* XXXV: 141 (‘reading’, ‘self-examination’).

Jesuits' corporate identity as archetypal figures of devotion, rather than their evangelical endeavour, was therefore 'our rejoicing, our peace in war, and our great security'. Regardless of how the divine will continued to manifest in early America, this was Rageuneau's consolation.²⁵⁰

So for the Superior, his six dead colleagues invited the temporary prioritisation of soteriological themes over effective Indian conversion or the establishment of further missions. Rageuneau's comprehensive description explained why the dead Jesuits were all deserving of martyrdom and connected this legacy with the specificity of Jesuit practice, an analysis crowned by his statement to Caraffa that his fellow missionaries' piety was his greatest comfort.

Many other Jesuits in New France agreed. The martyrdoms that had invited this intensification of the salvific potential of early America heightened the surviving Jesuits' desire to enjoy the same fate. But this was incompatible with the remaining Huron converts' plans. At the height of the Iroquois assaults, two of the most respected Christian Hurons held a secret meeting with Bressani, the then-Superior Lalement, and several other Jesuits. Their plan to finally escape the relentless Iroquois assault forced Jesuits to confront the implications of the conceptual shift made by Rageuneau.

The two Hurons opened with a portentous description of the imminent fate of Huronia. The land would 'open very soon to swallow us, and to put us among the dead'. In view of this, a previous secret council composed of Huron captains had resolved to abandon their territory before this happened. There had been disagreement on the destination. Some fled to the forests, reckoning their intimate knowledge of the expansive woodland could elude Iroquois trackers; others took an arduous trek north to join up with friendly Algonquin

²⁵⁰ *JR* XXXIII: 267-269 ('soul's salvation', 'great security', 269).

Indians; the rest looked to New Sweden, almost five hundred miles away, as a safe haven. Despite the controversy over where to flee to, all agreed that Huronia was irrevocably lost. So, the two asked the Jesuits, ‘what wilt thou do alone, forsaken by all, in this Island?’ They warned the missionaries that, where bustling Christian Huron communities had previously been, only the trees and the rivers would remain. It would, furthermore, be utterly fruitless to follow the refugees as they scattered. The two Hurons were highly sceptical about their prospects; if hunger did not kill them the Iroquois would. Their solution was simple. The battered remnants of the Huron church should immediately be sent to ‘the shadow of the fort of Kebek’, the only setting in which their Christian faith could continue to flourish. The example of the Algonquins and French would sustain and continue to enrich the Huron’s faith. At the very least their plan would provide the consolation of dying near those who may encourage them, rather than from abandonment to their fate in the woods.²⁵¹

Bressani and the others were tortured by the two Hurons’ proposal. Their reasoning was sound, but to leave the territory of the most extensive and promising mission field was almost unthinkable. Huronia, besides its own stature as the most significant missiological site in early America, remained the key ‘to so many missions to a thousand unknown peoples’. Furthermore, the martyrdoms of Brebeuf, Lalement, Daniel, Chabanel and Garnier had finally soaked the region in ‘the blood of our brethren’, which both promised ‘an abundant harvest’ and gave ‘all of us the hope of imitating them, both in life and in death’.²⁵² This was the core of the Jesuit dilemma. Huronia, through the deaths of the Jesuits there, was finally offered as a site offering both the strong possibility of personal salvation and the most convincing replica of the primitive church. A serious contradiction had become apparent. Jesuits were most compelled to missionization in Huronia by the same forces that were

²⁵¹ *JR XL*: 53-55 (‘swallow us’, ‘forsaken by all’, 53; ‘Kebek’, 55).

²⁵² *JR XL*: 55-59 (‘unknown peoples’, 57; ‘blood of our brethren’, ‘imitating them’, 59).

driving their Huron converts to abandon the region altogether. To fully seize the unique opportunity conferred by their contemporaries' violent deaths the Jesuits would have to abandon the devastated Huron church that had sustained their activity there in the first place. They eventually agreed to the two Indians' plan, and escorted a ragged group of three hundred Hurons eastward to Quebec, arriving at the end of July 1650.

Shortly after, Lalement sailed back to France to procure aid for the colony. As the two Christian Indians had predicted, Huronia had disintegrated as a geopolitical entity under the force of the Iroquois' assault. Hurons who survived fled; the communities that they either joined or created dotted the Great Lakes world, melting pots for refugees from every Indian nation that had experienced the explosion of Iroquois power. Lalement left Quebec in November 1650, arriving at the port of Le Harve on the north-western French coast a month later. The voyage would have been a chance for reflection, to excavate the meaning and significance of the Hurons' destruction. He discovered many reasons to remain hopeful.

He reflected on his first arrival in early America. When he had first reached New France only a single Huron family had been converted. Two or three constituted the Algonquin and Montagnais church. By contrast, by 1650 there were very few families, either Huron, Algonquin or Montagnais, not thoroughly Christianized. His second reason for optimism was Scriptural. Lalement found solace through the Biblical assurance that 'all Nations' must 'have a knowledge of their Redeemer', and approve such knowledge, before the day of judgment. Finally, he considered the collapse of the Huron missions a reward from Heaven for the conversion of, at most, twelve thousand Indians. The brutal Iroquois attacks that had laid waste to Christian Huron communities were provided 'as a slight respite while tranquilly awaiting fresh commands'.²⁵³ The disaster of the late-1640s had, therefore, invited

²⁵³ *JR* XXXVI: 49-51 ('Redeemer', 'slight respite', 51).

a change in emphasis for Lalement. Previous *Relations* had, of course, assigned providential direction to the actions of Jesuits themselves. But the agency of the Jesuits was always emphasised. The success or failure imagined because of missionaries' actions was always providential, but the Jesuit himself exercised this agency as a demonstration of devotion and fidelity to his evangelical calling. By contrast, the rupture produced by the demise of the Huron mission invited a more intense focus on providence itself. His hope that Jesuits would return to 'the upper Nations' was motivated by recognising that the conditions for the millennium demanded it, and that the devastating reversal of fortune was gifted to allow the Jesuits to prepare themselves for new mission fields. These points, rather than propel the missionaries to further evangelisation, 'should be to us a great consolation, and greatly strengthen our patience to await the times and moments ordained by the divine wisdom and goodness'.²⁵⁴

In this providential interval, Rageuneau made a final contribution to Jesuits' evolving missiology. He gave new instructions to Jesuits willing to join the mission in New France, one that signalled a profound change of strategy. Reflecting on the progress made so far, he admitted bluntly that Jesuits had been 'too severe' in condemning Indian customs that were not in direct violation of Christianity or too obviously blasphemous. He advised caution. Practices that the Jesuits had rushed to condemn as irreligious or diabolical were often 'merely stupidity'. Such actions were not to be condemned but gently mocked, so that Hurons themselves would eventually also ridicule them. Fortunately, the severity of this approach had yielded exceptionally devout converts from those willing to entertain the missionaries' orders. But such strictness was now no longer necessary. Rather, it could now be detrimental; the less rigorous approach now championed by Rageaneau would 'doubtless open the road to Heaven to a great many persons who have not those abundant graces for displaying such

²⁵⁴ *JR XXXVI*: 51 ('strengthen our patience').

extraordinary virtue' shared by their converted contemporaries.²⁵⁵ Austere and uncompromising evangelism had produced Christians of the most capable Hurons, but would actively harm the conversion of the rest if persisted with. The diminished Huron population made this approach imperative.

The sudden onslaught of Iroquois raids provoked a reconsideration of the relationship between salvation and missionization in early America. Again, Jesuits articulated competing imperatives of the mission in New France. But the missionaries again showed their adaptability, and overcame this disjuncture, by adding components to their developing missiology. The disaster was reimagined as an interval, granted by providential design, that affirmed a connection between Jesuit practice and the prized deaths granted to the six slain.

Ecumenical Mission

Such conceptual accretions were the result of the Five Nations' calculated policy of belligerence. But the formidable expression of Iroquois power in the late 1640s did not just menace New France. The confederacy's geographic reach was so great, and its strength so vast, that it forced competing colonial agents to propose alliances to counter them. Another Jesuit, Gabriel Druillettes, eagerly assumed a pivotal role in these negotiations, thrusting the French missionaries into their first entanglement with the young English colonies establishing a foothold on the Atlantic coast.

Gabriel Druillettes' first encounter with English colonists came after he established a mission among the Abenaki Indians in August 1646, after Noel Negabamat had encouraged them to request a Jesuit for Christian instruction. Abenakis occupied the strategically critical

²⁵⁵ *JR* XXXIII: 145-147 ('merely stupidity', 145; 'too severe', 'extraordinary virtue', 147).

junction between the Acadian peninsula and settlements along the St. Lawrence, wielding effective control over the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers.²⁵⁶ A feature of Druillette's first few months among them was a tour down the Kennebec to its mouth, at which he encountered multiple English settlements dotting its shores. One of these was Coussinoc, a small fur trading post established on the riverbank in 1628 by colonists from nearby Plymouth. His first visit to the post came shortly after a brief stay at Pentagoët, a small French settlement to the east. The commander there, Sieur Chaste, appeared cognizant of the potential friction that a Jesuit could stir up along the Kennebec, so sent him to Coussinoc with a letter for the English leaders there. His words assured the traders that Druillettes was solely an evangelist and had not arrived for any seditious reason. The Jesuit consequently received a warm welcome at the post and established his mission further upriver shortly after.²⁵⁷

His second visit to Coussinoc, made in the frigid winter months at the beginning of 1647, was more significant. The Englishman who had received Chaste's letter had, shortly after, left to visit both Plymouth and Boston. At the latter he had related the letter and the news of Druillette's arrival to 'twenty-four of the foremost persons in new England, among whom happened to be four of their most famous Ministers'. Not one of the ministers or the other leaders – men with an emphatic commitment to Puritan orthodoxy – disapproved of Druillette's efforts. Rather, they endorsed them, 'frankly saying that it was a good, laudable, and generous action to instruct the Savages'. The Jesuit's Abenaki hosts were, furthermore, aware of this sentiment. They found it 'astonishing, the English, who have neither the same country nor the same language, have respected him'. His treatment by France's colonial

²⁵⁶ Abenaki bands formed part of the Wabanaki confederacy, a competitor to the Iroquois League in incessant conflict with western Mohawks. See Frank G. Speck. 'The Eastern Algonkian Wabanaki Confederacy', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (July-September, 1915), pp. 492-508).

²⁵⁷ *JR XXXI*: 185-189.

rivals was considered evidence that the deity he preached of was extremely powerful.²⁵⁸

Druillette's first exposure to English power on the eastern coasts was therefore remarkably genial. The English traders almost certainly recognised the authority he already held among the Abenakis, so reasoned his welcome would deter any awkward threats to their continued participation in the fur trade along the river; and the oddly ecumenical response of the ministers clearly considered even Catholic instruction an improvement over Indian religious custom. Both approaches functioned as critical tools for evangelism, as the Abenakis were further disposed to Druillette's preaching by the reaction of France's colonial competitors to him. Unfortunately, the Jesuit was forced to return to Quebec, arriving back in the town in June. Capuchins, another Catholic order, had claimed Maine as their jurisdiction; Druillette's extremely promising first months along the Kennebec had been abruptly stopped.

Yet this obstacle did not persist. Druillettes returned in September 1650 and acquired formidable authority among the Abenakis. On one of his visits to a settlement close to the English, one of the latter was present in one of the cabins while the Jesuit was instructing catechumens. His motive for doing so was unclear, but the servant rushed back to his English master to warn that Druillettes was preaching against the English along the Kennebec, apparently hoping to undermine their relations with the Abenakis. The Indians themselves shortly heard of this accusation. They visited the Englishman and assured him that Druillettes had said nothing negative about the traders. Critically, they finished their speech with a warning. Druillettes, they assured the Englishman, had been adopted into the Abenaki nation. He was considered both 'the wisest of our Captains' and 'an Ambassador of Jesus', held in such esteem that 'whoever attacks him, attacks all the Abnaquiois'. This caution produced

²⁵⁸ *JR XXXI*: 203-205 ('respected him', 203; 'most famous Ministers', 'instruct the Savages', 205).

such paranoia for the trader that he sent directly for Druillettes to, through an interpreter, assure the Jesuit that the English no longer gave any credence to the report.²⁵⁹

The Abenaki mission was also the site of the first practical encounter between competing evangelisms in early America. Wielding the considerable diplomatic power he embodied as a hugely respected figure in Abenaki settlements, Druillettes had been sent back to the mission in 1650 with a vital task. He was to act as an emissary to New England to request the assistance of the United Colonies, an alliance formed by Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven colonies for mutual defence, against the Mohawks. To accomplish this, he returned first to Coussinoc, where he met John Winslow, a member of one of the most powerful families in Connecticut. Like Druillette's previous interactions with the English, he was welcomed; Winslow expressed his 'love and respect' for the Jesuits, which Druillettes attributed to his brother Edward, then 'trying to institute a brotherhood to train and instruct the Savages'. John Winslow agreed to escort Druillettes to Boston and Plymouth to deliver his message personally to the Governors and magistrates.²⁶⁰

After meetings with the merchant Edward Gibbons at Boston and Governor Thomas Dudley at Roxbury, the thirteenth of December was appointed for the magistrates to hear Druillette's proposal at Boston. After making his case, he travelled to Plymouth a week later to do the same. On his way back he stopped, again, at Roxbury, where John Eliot had returned. The Puritan was equally welcoming. In his final few days at Boston he was told by William Hibbins, one of the magistrates, that 'it was very reasonable to succor one's Christian brethren, even if of another religion, - and especially against a pagan persecutor of

²⁵⁹ *JR* XXXVIII: 29-31 ('wisest', 'Ambassador', 'all the Abnaquiois', 31).

²⁶⁰ *JR* XXXVI: 83-85 ('love and respect', 'brotherhood', 85).

the Christians'. Hibbins presented the response of the Boston leadership to d'Ailleboust's requests; Druillette's returned to his mission on the Kennebec the following month.²⁶¹

In April, John Winslow returned to Coussinoc. He brought promising news that both the magistrates at Plymouth and its two commissioners to the United Colonies had resolved to encourage Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven to join the conflict against the Iroquois. Plymouth had a particular interest in defending the Abenakis, who were legally under the colony's protection and provided one sixth of the trade along the Kennebec in return. They probably hoped to spread the human cost of this responsibility across the other New England colonies. On the 24th, a Sokoki ambassador also arrived at Coussinoc, bringing a collective message from Sokoki, Penacook and Mohegan villages. Druillettes had met the ambassador while travelling across New England in November. The Abenakis had gifted them fifteen large collars and twelve bracelets of porcelain to encourage them to obey both Onontio and Negabamat. The villages had held a council during the winter to discuss the implications of such an agreement. Druillettes was delighted to hear that they had agreed; the Iroquois remained such a threat to the Indian nations that they would join the war.²⁶² With this assurance that Plymouth's delegates would lobby for united action against the Mohawks, and a declaration that numerous Indian nations would confederate regardless of the English decision, new alliances that would benefit the mission in New France appeared imminent.

Druillettes had, furthermore, intended to travel beyond Plymouth to Connecticut, to meet with John Winthrop Jr. Winthrop was the son of the famous first Governor of Massachusetts, and had received a commission to establish Saybrook Colony on the mouth of the Connecticut River in 1635. The Jesuit was unfortunately prevented from visiting him in person, his journey made impossible by an unusually brutal winter and deep snowfall.

²⁶¹ *JR* XXXVI: 85-95 ('pagan persecutor', 91).

²⁶² *JR* XXXVI: 99-103.

Instead, he wrote a letter. In it, Druillettes compared the Christian Indians either assaulted or threatened by the Iroquois to ‘that Hundredth Sheep Straying and forsaken in the Desert’. One who claimed, as Winthrop did, to be animated by their Christian commitment ‘must likewise embrace, with the most tender affection of his heart, that hundredth sheep’. Furthermore, Mohawks were striking against their targets because of an explicit hatred of Christianity, giving the conflict an unmistakably religious character. These reasons compelled Winthrop to defend the faith by warring with the Iroquois.²⁶³

This first extended interaction between Jesuits and a cast of Puritan missionaries, promoters, merchants and magistrates demonstrated an ecumenical component to Jesuit missiology. It was crucial that Christian evangelism be protected and advanced across early America. No account of Druillettes’ manouvres even gestures to the competition between Catholics and Calvinists; instead, each mention of missionization helped to craft a shared sense of Christian evangelical responsibility. The spiritual borderland was not the shifting zone between Boston and Quebec, where Catholic and Calvinist interests intersected, but the liminal spaces where Iroquois power pushed hard against Christianized Indian communities, delineating a diabolical paganism from Christians who required protection.

An Iroquoian Missiology

Though Druillettes failed to arrange intercolonial action against the Mohawks, the Five Nations themselves began pursuing radical changes in their strategy toward New France in the 1650s. The Iroquois confederacy was the most imposing power bloc in early America, but it was not a monolith. Each of the five tribes retained extensive autonomy over diplomatic

²⁶³ JR XXXVI: 77-79 (‘Hundredth Sheep’, ‘likewise embrace’, 77).

affairs, a freedom which instigated a chaotic narrative of peace negotiations, simmering tensions and sporadic violence between New France and individual Iroquois nations throughout the 1650s and 1660s. Diplomats, messengers, and ambassadors from each Iroquois nation began travelling to Montreal and Quebec to establish and then maintain an advantageous relationship with the French colonial leadership. They knew the Jesuits were a fundamental feature of French policy in early America, so allowed the missionaries their first sanctioned entry into the territory of the Five Nations itself.²⁶⁴ With the Huron mission in ruins, this was an opportunity to expand Jesuit missionization into another comparable space. Again, both the Jesuits directly involved and their Superiors at Quebec had to manipulate their missiologies in response to this new territory, composing new strategies and ideas to sustain this new stage of early American missionization.

The most comprehensive Iroquoian effort to forge a new peace was initiated in 1653. A Jesuit, Joseph-Antoine Poncet de la Rivière, had been captured by a Mohawk raiding party in August. He received customary torture and was ritually adopted into an Iroquois family, but his captors also recognised his value as a diplomatic tool. Four Mohawk ambassadors brought Poncet back to Quebec in October, ostensibly as a first move in an effort to secure yet another truce between the former and New France. It was a calculated ruse. At Quebec the Mohawk emissaries had met secretly with the Hurons huddled outside the town. They gifted three large porcelain collars, representing a blunt proposal; the Hurons were invited to leave Quebec and establish new lives among the Mohawks, specifically among their fellow Hurons who had been captured and adopted into the Iroquois' society. Poncet's safe return and negotiations for peace were cloaks intended only to secure the clandestine meeting that was taking place. The Hurons had, by now, a long experience implying that such proposals

²⁶⁴ For this change of approach toward New France, the reason for individual tribes' efforts at peace with the colony, and the complicated shift between truces and conflict within and across the confederacy, see: Brandão. *"Your fyre shall burn no more"*, 92-105.

were not to be trusted, but they dared not reject the collars. They reciprocated with other gifts to sustain the uneasy peace, terrified of the consequences of doing otherwise. The French only learned of this clandestine agreement after the Mohawks had left, when the Hurons felt secure enough to tell them.²⁶⁵

In September, shortly before the Mohawks arrived in Quebec to implement their scheme, several Onondaga ambassadors had also visited the city. Initial discussions about a possible truce were promising, and the Onondagas agreed to return in the winter. The following February, on the 5th, a council was held between them and the French leadership. The chief emissary opened by showing six large porcelain collars, indicative of six points. All tended toward a calming of relationships between New France and the Onondaga nation. The third collar represented the most evocative suggestion; a May tree, to be symbolically planted in the middle of the St. Lawrence, in view of Onontio himself, that ‘should rear its summit above the clouds’, so that ‘it might mark a rendezvous where all the world could rest in Peace under the shade of its leaves’. The French eagerly accepted the Indian’s proposals.²⁶⁶

But they were, again, deceived. The following day a Huron Christian anxiously reported more covert negotiations, by which the Onondagas ‘cherished the same design’ as the Mohawks. The same captain that had proudly displayed the six collars had suggested a strategy by which the Hurons could flee the orbit of French authority and escape to Onondaga territory. They would claim to prefer Montreal over Quebec and request to travel there. Once on the way, they would ascend the river north of Montreal, where five hundred Onondagas would be waiting to receive them. The captain was aware of the Hurons’ attachment to the French, so warned those receptive to the idea to keep it secret even from the rest of the Hurons themselves. The unsuspecting Hurons, perhaps once recovered from the surprise,

²⁶⁵ *JR* XLI: 45-49

²⁶⁶ *JR* XLI: 51-53 (‘summit’, ‘mark a rendezvous’, 53).

would 'be only too happy to become friends of the conquerors, and to go to a victorious country and a land of Peace'.²⁶⁷

The Hurons, for their part, were not seduced by the Iroquois' careful offers of sanctuary. Their captains considered their offers part of plots for revenge; for thirty-four Onondaga warriors slain three years before, or for the torture and burning of the Mohawk captain Torontisati two years previously. Despite this clear view, the Hurons remained trapped. That there were two Iroquois nations making similar offers - nations quietly resentful of the other, if not openly hostile – meant that whatever response they gave, positive or negative, would invite the anger of at least one. If they chose to reject both offers both Onondagas and Mohawks, 'seeing themselves both alike deceived, they will conspire to effect our ruin'. They refused to make a decision, instead telling the Governor of New France Jean de Lauzon, as Onontio, that he was responsible for their next strategic move.²⁶⁸

Unfortunately, the French were also perplexed. If the Iroquois emissaries were confronted with their betrayal they could lash out, against the Hurons, French, or both. Yet doing nothing was a potentially disastrous sign of weakness that would further encourage them in their dishonesty. They stalled for time; the Onondaga emissaries were told that the French approved the Hurons' plan to move away from Quebec, while the Huron captains urged the ambassadors to communicate their secret scheme without implying the previous conspiracy. A second council was held to make formally public what had been clandestine. Four more porcelain collars were gifted by the Iroquois, again to invite the Hurons to move to Onondaga territory; Hurons gifted two presents to delay the execution of the plan and to encourage Onondagas to build a house for Jesuits, who continued to act as the Hurons' teachers; and Onontio concluded with six more offerings, the final one 'designed to create

²⁶⁷ *JR* XLI: 55 ('same design', 'friends of the conquerors').

²⁶⁸ *JR* XLI: 57-59 ('effect our ruin', 59).

anew a union of sentiment among all the Iroquois, who are composed of five different nations, in order that this Peace might be general'. Simon Le Moyne, a veteran of the Jesuit mission in Huronia, considered the whole affair a diplomatic triumph. Every party was at least temporarily satisfied, and the Onondagas and Mohawks remained hopeful of claiming the Hurons for themselves. The former had agreed to the request for Jesuits among them, instituting the first mission among the Five Nations.²⁶⁹

Division between the Iroquois nations became even sharper when a small Seneca delegation arrived at Quebec shortly after the first two Jesuits selected for the mission, fathers Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot and Claude Dablon, had left for Onondaga. Three Senecas arrived at Quebec to negotiate a separate truce with Huron and Algonquins. Within a month, by November, this had been agreed. One of the party agreed to stay at Quebec as a hostage ensuring Seneca compliance, while the other two left to report the news. Near Montreal, however, their corpses were found, 'covered with wounds and blood'. Another embassy followed in January 1656. Ten Senecas, including one of the most powerful leaders in their entire territory, gave presents asking for Christian instruction, which had been spoken of so highly by Christian Huron captives adopted into Seneca communities. All twenty-one of their proposals had been agreed to; but while hunting in the fields between Trois-Rivieres and Quebec the captain was shot and killed. All three murders were attributed to Mohawk warriors, who were 'jealous of the friendship which the other Iroquois nations seek to form with us, and endeavour to thwart it by every possible means.'²⁷⁰

The autonomy of each nation under the Great League of Peace and Power thus opened new spaces for Jesuit expansion in the mid-1650s. Jesuits seized on this opportunity to extend their authority across Iroquoia, with missions in Onondaga and Seneca territory. Geography

²⁶⁹ *JR* XLI: 59-65 ('union of sentiment', 63-65).

²⁷⁰ *JR* XLIII: 99-103 ('wounds and blood', 'thwart it', 101).

was a factor intensifying the new optimism. Establishing a mission in Onondaga territory would place the Jesuits in the spatial centre of the Five Nations. The missions could therefore easily spread into Mohawk, Oneida, Seneca and Cayuga territory, and would be encouraged to do so by the bustling trade that brought Iroquois across and through Onondaga lands.²⁷¹ Their experience within, and of, Iroquois nations during these first efforts was transformative. While protecting their prized status as intermediaries in the new diplomacy between New France and Iroquois leaders, Jesuits embarked on a comprehensive adaptation of their missiology.

Their first reaction was shock. The apparent reversal of Iroquois attitudes towards Christianity was spectacular. The same nations that had slain Jogues, Daniel, Brebeuf, Chabanel, Lalement and Garnier now demonstrated ‘more fervor than those whom they have exterminated’. They themselves were rebuilding the Church that they had devastated by almost destroying the Hurons, building more chapels in their territories than they had razed in Huronia. Providence had an obvious role to play in this transformation, but equally important were ‘the exhortations of our Martyrs, more ardent than the flames and the fires from the midst of which they preached’. The abstract, ethereal influence of the martyred Jesuits caused more Iroquois to convert in two months than several years had produced among the Hurons. Finally, the general fervour with which Christianity was adopted was exceptional even compared to established Churches, in which it would be difficult to find such devotion to the duties of a neophyte.²⁷² Once again, the extreme dynamism of the Iroquois world coupled with its members’ malleability had offered Jesuits a new and even greater significance to their efforts in early America. A brief interlude of apparently total resignation to providential design had been replaced by a renewed optimism, in which the nascent missions among the

²⁷¹ *JR* XLIV: 47.

²⁷² *JR* XLIII: 283-285 (‘more fervor’, ‘more ardent’, 283); *JR* XLIV: 59.

Iroquois produced even greater results than previous efforts in Huronia and the surrounding nations. Furthermore, Jesuits as a collective in New France quickly assumed a pivotal role in this; the example of the six missionaries martyred in the 1640s was critical to this unprecedented progress. After a brief separation, personal salvation had, again, merged with the institutionalisation of Christianity in early America. The church triumphant and the church militant stood in harmony again.

The Jesuit who most embodied the novelty of the Iroquois missions was le Moyne. He was a veteran of the Huron missions. He arrived at Quebec in June 1638, and by September had reached the missions there. His most conspicuous role in the Jesuit efforts in early America, however, came later. He would become indispensable within the context of the strategic oscillation of the Iroquois between agreeing peace with New France and attacking its interests throughout the 1650s. Acting as Onontio's intrepid ambassador for peace, le Moyne made multiple journeys into Iroquoia. Ultimately, his embassies would be recognised as an important new addition to the Jesuit efforts in early America, and one that contributed to the growing typology of mission.

In late-April 1656 two Mohawks prowling the woods south of Quebec had shot two Hurons hunting there. One died immediately, while the other managed a narrow escape back along the river. One of the killers was quickly captured by a Huron scouting party and burned to death on the island of Orleans. The Jesuits attempted to prevent his execution, acutely aware of a formidable force of three hundred Mohawks threatening the small Huron colony on the island, but the anguish of the dead Huron's family overrode their objections. Three captains from this Mohawk force soon entered Trois-Rivieres to reaffirm the peace between them and the French, but the latter were sceptical. Their vengeance for the executed Mohawk threatened to outweigh their careful diplomacy. Le Moyne was therefore sent to visit the three hundred. The Jesuit enjoyed an excellent relationship with the Mohawks. After lengthy

debate the Indians admitted ‘that his voice has an all-powerful effect on them’; the group was dispersed and small bands scattered to hunt, scout, or simply return to their territory.²⁷³

The policy of the Five Nations toward New France was, however, impossible to predict. Intervals of peace, such as that facilitating Jesuit entry into Onondaga, were brief and often limited by the assent of only one Iroquois nation. Five years after his successful mediation between hostile Mohawks and Hurons, Le Moyne would also, by undertaking a perilous journey at the demand of Cayugas, institute a new kind of mission in early America. In July 1661 two canoes floated toward Montreal, carrying Onondaga and Cayuga emissaries waving a white flag of peace. They asked for a council to discuss an urgent matter, discharging from the boats four French prisoners as evidence of their sincerity. On the day of the meeting, the by-now familiar diplomacy of Iroquois envoys was demonstrated again. The Cayuga captain displayed twenty porcelain gifts representing their proposals, the most urgent being the release of eight Cayuga prisoners in custody at Montreal. The final gift, however, symbolized a new demand. With a ‘more serious tone...and not such as to admit refusal’, the captain commanded that ‘a black Gown’ accompany him back to Iroquoia. If this order was not met war would continue and twenty French captives in Onondaga territory would be killed.²⁷⁴

The Cayuga’s demand confused the French. The lives of the twenty Frenchman were valued but acceding to the captain’s instruction would ‘expose themselves again to the faithfulness of those traitors’. Messengers were dispatched to Quebec to return Onontio’s response. Deliberation among Jesuits and French officials there centred on the divisions within the Iroquois confederacy. Mohawks would feel betrayed by a sudden realignment of relations between New France, Onondagas and Cayugas, and would react violently; but the

²⁷³ *JR* XLIII: 105-113 (‘his voice’, 113).

²⁷⁴ *JR* XLVI: 225-227 & 229-231 (‘admit refusal’, ‘black Gown’, 231).

latter two nations were contributing to the utter desolation in the Laurentian world. This second consideration was strongest. The Cayuga's order was agreed to, 'as no other means offered for arresting the course of so many tragic events as were then laying waste to all our settlements' had been offered. A Jesuit was therefore required to undertake this hazardous mission. Le Moyne was delighted to be chosen.²⁷⁵

Le Moyne's task was not, however, simply another proto-martyrdom or optimistic attempt to forge a Christian community. The negotiation of the lives of twenty French captives in return for a Jesuit conferred a unique importance on le Moyne. He would 'offer himself as a substitute to those barbarians, in order, by his own captivity, to deliver the French captives who were sighing for that glorious ransom'. Le Jeune responded by explicitly recognising this new responsibility as novel: 'Behold, then, a new Mission, a Mission of blood and fire, and one which makes its Missionaries wear their Master's colors, wash their garments in the blood of the Lamb, and purify their souls in the fire of his love'.²⁷⁶ In short, the Cayuga's diplomacy had invited another evolution in the missiology of New France. Le Moyne, by agreeing to offer himself for the deliverance of the French captives, was acting in the most literal Christological manner. This specific feature of the proposed Cayuga mission merited the description of 'new', inviting le Moyne to display the most intense and faithful fidelity to the example of Christ himself.

Le Moyne's preparation to return to Iroquoia in 1657 was also an occasion for le Jeune, now writing from France after his return to advocate for more funding for the early American mission, to consider his ambitions for the new missions being established among the Five Nations. He gave five reasons for the mission in Mohawk country: 'to prepare the way for the Gospel', to baptize the children and the dying, to preserve the shaky peace that

²⁷⁵ *JR* XLVI: 233-235 ('those traitors', 233; 'many tragic events', 235).

²⁷⁶ *JR* XLVI: 237-239 ('those barbarians', 'blood and fire', 239).

New France had enjoyed for several years, to encourage that peace across all Five Nations, and to forestall the jealousy between Onondagas and Mohawks, particularly since the latter still had no established mission among them.²⁷⁷

This grandiose vision was derived from le Jeune's obvious commitment to the institutionalisation and expansion of Jesuit missions, over anxiety about one's own salvation. François-Joseph le Mercier, another Jesuit waiting at Montreal for his imminent departure to the Onondaga mission, suggested that this was indicative of a nascent generational divide developing among the Jesuits in early America. He first noted the renewed occupation with martyrdom for the Jesuits in early America but assigned this desire to Jesuits in France who may wish to travel to New France to achieve this. Iroquoia was, of course, a promising missiologial region; but these Jesuits were clamouring to travel there primarily to 'obtain the greatest favor that a member of the society of Jesus can expect to obtain; for he can never hope for a greater honor than sacrificing himself to carry into barbarism the name of his leader'. By contrast, the Jesuits who had laboured in the Huron missions in its infancy, and who therefore now possessed excellent linguistic ability, were motivated to suffer but apparently not to die. Instead, they were fixated on the potential to resume their teaching among different groups of Indians, whose languages were conveniently similar to that spoken in Huronia. Le Mercier wrote that it was this prospect, rather than a violent and holy death, 'that revives their fervor and gives to old men, broken down after glorious labors, the courage to desire to go among these people...with the same zeal that they manifested fifteen or twenty years ago'.²⁷⁸

Though the new Iroquois missions had therefore further enhanced Jesuit missiology in early America - by encouraging an exceptionally strong connection between Jesuits and

²⁷⁷ *JR* XLIII: 209-211 ('prepare the way', 209).

²⁷⁸ *JR* XLIV: 61-63 ('carry into barbarism', 61-63; 'revives their fervor', 63).

Christ - it soon posed novel challenges. Most pressing was the need to redefine the Iroquois as targets of evangelism, in an effort to justify continuing missionization. Practically, le Moyne's agreement forged with the Cayugas was more indicative of Jesuit efforts among the Iroquois than his negotiations with the Mohawks. By the mid-1660s more Jesuits had been invited into the Five Nations, but their results were disappointing. Painfully familiar problems beset the Jesuits at Onondaga. The most powerful was the Indian reliance on dreams, utilised for and influential on military or hunting success. They also knew that this spiritual association was incompatible with the Jesuits' preaching, but many remained obstinate. The remnants of the Huron nation in Onondaga were considered potent reminders that abandoning dreams for Christianity as a religious program began a fatal decline to 'final total destruction'. Some Hurons affirmed this fear, relating how the missionaries formerly wrote down the names of Huron children, sent them to France and marked their bodies with charcoal; as the markings smudged and distorted the children became ill and died.²⁷⁹ Further jeopardising the potential efficacy of the missions, these unconverted Hurons made unfavourable comparisons with colonial rivals. They pointed out that the Dutch 'have preserved the Iroquois by allowing them to live in their own fashion'; the Jesuits, by contrast, ruined Huronia by preaching to them.²⁸⁰

Elsewhere in Iroquoia Jesuits began to recognise a fundamental difference to that of the Hurons, Algonquins, Montagnais or Abenakis; this time, however, distinguishing members of the Five Nations invited even greater pessimism. Evangelism among other Indian nations had made such progress in the first extensive Jesuit effort in early America that they were quickly distinguished from other Indigenous groups across the globe. For this, comparison with Xavier's neopyhtes in Asia was necessary. His conclusions were again

²⁷⁹ *JR* XLII: 135.

²⁸⁰ *JR* XLIII: 291 ('their own fashion').

necessary when defining the Iroquois, who were defined negatively in comparison. The Five Nations were, wrote one Jesuit in 1661, ‘worse than the bonzes and brahmans: they are not to be defeated with the pen, but by force of arms’. Furthermore, the necessity of coercive power invited another problem. There were ‘no Pirates on the China Sea so dangerous, and who ravages are proportionately so general’.²⁸¹ An explanation for why force was the only viable evangelical strategy was provided later by another Jesuit. The Iroquois were, unfortunately, ‘Not capable of reasoning as The Chinese and other civilized nations do’. Attempting to demonstrate the truth of the Christian message through logic and reasoning was therefore futile. The only tactic that could compel the Iroquois to take the missionaries’ preaching seriously was a potent combination of effusive gift-giving and military intimidation. For these reasons Jacques Bruyas later warned other Jesuits eager to apply their efforts in Iroquoia that ‘they need not expect to see thousands of Unbelievers converted, as in the missions of china, Tonquin, etc’. This caution was necessitated by the Five Nations’ dramatic demographic decline. Bruyas estimated that only two thousand warriors remained.²⁸²

Indeed, the most valued effect of the establishment of missions in Iroquois communities was located elsewhere. Significance was found in the explosion of Iroquois violence that began in the 1640s. Their relentless raids against virtually every Indian nation that bordered them had caused almost as much loss to the Five Nations as they had to their enemies. Their villages were therefore depopulated to such an extent, and the mechanism of adoption so critical to their continuation, that many Iroquois settlements ‘now contain more Foreigners than natives of the country’. Individuals from seven different Indian nations now lived in Onondaga; Seneca territory held eleven. This demographic revolution, caused by their own belligerence, gave Jesuits ‘the advantage of preaching the Faith to a number of

²⁸¹ *JR* XLVI: 291-293 (‘bonzes and brahmans’, 291-293; ‘Pirates’, 293).

²⁸² *JR* LI: 139 (‘Not capable of reasoning’, ‘missions of china’).

various Nations, whom we could not visit and instruct each in its own country'.²⁸³ Likewise, when the Jesuits had established their privileged position across Iroquoia, the traditional ritual torture and execution of captives acquired a new soteriological dimension. Prisoners from 'the most distant regions' were led back to Iroquois territory 'in order to make them find, in the prisons and fires of the Iroquois, the holy liberty of the children of God'. Whereas Jesuits had looked distantly at such a custom as an expression of savagery, when they were firmly established among the Five Nations it became a vehicle of providence, by allowing the missionaries to quickly instruct and baptise the captives before their death.²⁸⁴

Finally, the Iroquois missions contributed to a newly experiential feature of the early American mission. One of those selected for the Iroquois missions was Jacques Bruyas. His was the mission to the Oneida. He wrote from there in January 1668 reporting on the painful experience of evangelisation there. Casting a strong parallel with Brebeuf's early years in the Huron effort, Bruyas stated bluntly that 'the life which one leads in Company with these barbarians Is a continual martyrdom, and the fires of the Iroquois would be easier to bear than the trials one Endures among Them'. In addition to the choking smoke in the cabins, the incessant yelling of his hosts, the awful stench emitted by the Oneidas' greased hair, the bitter cold and the unsavoury food, Bruyas continued to endure his hosts' contempt and mockery as he struggled to grasp the complexities of their language. Put simply, the Jesuit warned that 'There is a great difference between meditating upon the canada mission in one's oratory, and finding oneself Exercising the duties of a canadian missionary'.²⁸⁵

Bruyas' attitude complemented a more general distinction made between preparing for mission and the emotions associated with performing it. A Jesuit who had arrived at

²⁸³ *JR* XLIII: 265 ('more Foreigners', 'could not visit').

²⁸⁴ *JR* LIV: 103 ('distant regions', 'prisons and fires').

²⁸⁵ *JR* LI: 137 ('continual martyrdom', 'finding oneself Exercising').

Quebec in the 1640s reported to Lalement that the Christian community at Trois-Rivieres evoked almost indescribable consolation. He witnessed ‘five or six of the principal nations of this new world’ singing hymns and praising Christ. The effect was profound. He had, he assured Lalement, dutifully read the *Relations* of previous years in preparation for his involvement in the mission, ‘always with admiration and satisfaction’. Unfortunately, his actual experience of New France cast previous reports in a new, colder light; this inter-Indian religious ceremony, like all the others, was ‘one of those spectacles that are more easily imagined than described’. His esteem for the reports in the *Relations* was, correspondingly, lessened. Another group of Christians at another mission chanted hymns and canticles as competition to hostile war songs intoned by visiting Indians. Lalement concluded the description of this second affair with a general warning that ‘much sequence must not be expected in this Chapter, for good sentiments contain more love than Rhetoric’.²⁸⁶ In short, the Jesuits’ message in New France had been so absorbed by the growing Christian Indian community that their intense displays of devotion could not adequately be described with words. This suggested a new, experiential aspect to early America.

Jesuits therefore reacted to the challenges of missions in Iroquoia by developing new concepts and strategies that could sustain their efforts in these new spaces. The reconciliation of New France and the Five Nations had demonstrated the apotheosis of divine power. Le Jeune wrote firmly that ‘It is difficult to find any instance in which God has shown himself more absolute Master of hearts than in our reconciliation with the Iroquois’. Jesuits could now travel without fear among Indian nations ‘whose shadow, and whose very name, filled us with dread but a short time ago’.²⁸⁷ Most importantly, Onondaga, Mohawk and Seneca requests for missionaries validated the martyrdoms of the six slain between 1646 and 1649.

²⁸⁶ JR XXXII: 195-197 (‘admiration’, ‘more easily imagined’, 195; ‘more love than Rhetoric’, 197).

²⁸⁷ JR XLIII: 275 (‘Master of hearts’, ‘filled us with dread’).

The nascent Mohawk church was a product of Jogues' martyrdom more than two decades before. That conversions were now apparently achieved in the same region of his death verified the dictum that 'the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Christians'. Jogues' killing had 'earned for those infidels, who murdered him in time past, that God should give them, by means of his successors, the science of the Gospel'.²⁸⁸ Equally, the circumstances of le Moyne's invitation into Cayuga territory was seized on by le Jeune to craft the strongest level of association between Jesuit activity and the example of Christ himself. Finally, the peculiar sufferings of the early American mission, of which Bruyas' mission was an intense example, added an experiential component to the increasingly complicated Jesuit missiology.

But such vast new territory had also brought new challenges. A generational divide became obvious, threatening to swell the ranks of Jesuits in early America with zealous arrivals manic for martyrdom rather than effective missionization; and the Iroquois became distinguished by their peculiar immunity against Christianization. Jesuits desperately assigned meaning to the Five Nation's demographic complexity by arguing that this facilitated evangelism to individuals from several Indian nations otherwise inaccessible; but this did not, unfortunately, directly address the other problems. However, Bruyas and his colleagues' conclusion that coercion was vital to missionization of the Iroquois was prescient. In the 1660s Jesuits began advocating for a greater military presence in New France. This, combined with the imposition of royal control in 1664, facilitated a turn away from the disappointment of Iroquoia, providing new contexts that allowed the most radical evolution of Jesuit missiology since the 1630s and 1640s.

²⁸⁸ *JR* LII: 141-143 ('blood of the Martyrs', 141; 'science of the Gospel', 141-143).

'The Fairest Land Possible to Behold'

The continued threat from Onondagas, Oneidas, Cayugas, Senecas and Mohawks prompted a new understanding of the requirements of New France. In its infancy the colony had been valorised as a space devoid of the corruption of soldiers; an idyll sustaining a bustling fur trade and a religious homogeneity shared by genteel, respectable French families. The experience of the previous decade had, however, rendered this vision untenable. In 1660 Lalement joined the other Jesuits labouring in Iroquois to call openly for a contingent of soldiers to fight the Five Nations. Pacification through Jesuit activity, an optimistic strategy encouraged by the councils in the mid-1650s, had been shown to be fanciful. Only coercion would halt the Five Nations. The possible success of the missions in New France had previously been juxtaposed with any potential martial element in the colony. These factors now became complementary.²⁸⁹

The necessity of militarization for evangelisation was heightened by Jesuits' expanding spatial consciousness. The geographic extent of potential mission fields in New France remained vast. 1660 saw a new and excited consciousness of the lands north of the Great Lakes. One Jesuit had ascended the Saguenay River from Tadoussac and encountered a band of eighty Indians. Their leader, Awatinik, had been baptised a decade before, at a mission for the Nipissings. He quickly became a vital guide to the new refugee region where Algonquin nations had fled in terror of the Iroquois assault. This was critical; the Iroquois presence on the St. Lawrence continued to prevent Jesuits travelling along the River. Awatinik now offered the knowledge to navigate the vast territory north of the Great Lakes, allowing the missionaries to bypass the treacherous river systems to the south and resume their efforts. Two *coureurs* had also met the Jesuit at Quebec shortly after. They had wintered

²⁸⁹ JR XLV: 199-201.

on the shores of Lake Superior with the Algonquins who had fled. While there they had made multiple expeditions to the surrounding Indian nations. Southwest of the Lake they had encountered the pitiful remnants of a small Huron community that, ‘fleeing and pushing their way over mountains and rocks, through these vast unknown forests’, had eventually been incorporated into an Illinois Indian village. They had also encountered a Sioux settlement where women had been disfigured, their noses cut off and the skin on their scalp torn away. Through questioning they learned, ‘to their admiration’, that it was a punishment for adultery. Lalement was equally impressed, wondering ‘if Barbarians, who are instructed only by the law of nature, have such excellent sentiments of chastity, what reproaches will they make some day to the libertine Christians’. In short, these reports of refugees’ locations, a blending of formerly Christianized Hurons with an Illinois community, and promising attitudes toward adultery among the Sioux gave Lalement new optimism. Jesuits now had an obligation to ‘break down all obstacles, and, passing through a thousand deaths, leap into the midst of the flames, to deliver therefrom so many poor Nations’.²⁹⁰

In attempting to demonstrate the urgent necessity of military assistance against the Iroquois, even more territories were listed where Indians were actively seeking a Jesuit for instruction or where the expanding westward trade for furs, guns, and tools had brought formidable new Indian nations into the orbit of French commerce. To the east, Abenakis, Sokokis and Narragansetts arced southward along the Atlantic littoral; to the west the Sioux, who remained somewhat mysterious but were nonetheless considered ‘a great Nation of 40 Villages’; and various configurations of Indian power dotting the northern route from the Great Lakes to Hudson’s Bay. The Onandagas, Oneidas, Cayugas and Senecas were still considered to invite evangelisation, but their awkward and jealous relationship with

²⁹⁰ *JR* XLV: 217-219, 235-237 & 239 (‘mountains and rocks’, 235; ‘admiration’, ‘sentiments of chastity’, 237; ‘midst of the flames’, 239).

Mohawks made this too hazardous.²⁹¹ In short, the early American panorama imagined as missiological space was no less vast than that envisioned in the mid-1640s, but its direction had changed. Mohawk territory had beckoned after the first peace agreements in 1645, inclining Jesuits to the continental interior to Quebec's south and south-east. This door had, however, been firmly shut; intervening efforts across Acadia, from Tadoussac northward, and toward the eastern tip of an exciting new Indian world on the southwest edges of Lake Superior had, fortunately, shown excellent potential. The recognition of these new missiological theatres had produced a corresponding shift in the spatial gaze of Jesuit missionization.

Furthermore, by the mid-1660s the geopolitical power of the Iroquois confederacy appeared to be receding. The Five Nations had appeared to commit too many warriors to too many raids across too vast a territory. Collectively, the Iroquois were now engaged in hostilities with Abenakis, Mohegans and other 'people of the East', as well as the Susquehannocks, in addition to their decades-long conflict with Algonquins and Hurons to their north and west. Encompassed by new and old foes, only Mohawks and Oneidas could continue to spare warriors for raids into French territory, attacks clustered mainly around Montreal.²⁹²

Jesuits were keenly aware of this growing vulnerability, conscious that even the Five Nations could not fight successfully and consistently on so many fronts. Lalement recorded two instances where Iroquois raiders had been soundly defeated. A joint expedition of one

²⁹¹ JR XLVI: 69-77 ('a great Nation', 69).

²⁹² JR XLVII: 107 & 111 ('people of the East', 107). The mid-1660s saw the zenith of Iroquois conflict in a century that saw the Five Nations attacked by twenty different configurations of Indian power. The Iroquois themselves attacked fifty-one. Between 1603 and 1701 Iroquois warriors were involved in at least 465 hostile encounters, not withstanding the myriad clashes that have escaped the historical record. For this statistical history of Iroquois conflict, see: José António Brandão. *"Your fyre shall burn no more": Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), esp. 31-45 & 169-279.

hundred Mohawk and Oneida warriors in the spring of 1662 surged through the woods towards Lake Huron to ambush an Odawa band navigating its waterways. On the shores of the Lake, however, they were themselves surprised by a band of Sauteurs, who attacked with guns, bows and arrows, and hatchets. Only a few of the hundred-strong group escaped. Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca likewise undertook a doomed expedition, this time against the Susquehannocks. A huge flotilla of canoes bearing eight hundred of these Iroquois embarked onto Lake Ontario in April, and moved speedily to the Susquehannock River. When they reached their target, the village of Andastogué, they were surprised to find palisades and cannon ringing one side, and the river rushing past the other. Their intended strategy of a violent assault on the settlement was abandoned. They decided, instead, to pretend to negotiate for peace, hoping thereby to craft a suitable opportunity for attack. Twenty-five warriors from the force were admitted to the village, but were immediately seized. They were quickly dragged to a high scaffold where ‘in sight of their own army, they were burned alive’. Humiliated, and devoid of any other strategy for attacking the village, the force swiftly disbanded and returned to their respective nations.²⁹³

This turmoil was considered the most promising missiological opportunity since the Huron mission had collapsed. If the French Crown sent sufficient military force to New France to intimidate the Iroquois into submission, the colony could claim authority over both the latter and the nations with which they had waged almost relentless war. Forcing such a ‘Colossus’ into compliance would throw open the vast Indian tapestry that unfurled across the Great Lakes and their hinterlands to evangelisation.²⁹⁴

There was a final implication of finally subduing Iroquois attacks. In 1665 the Jesuit Superior, Francois le Mercier, celebrated the possible expansion of the definition of ‘Canada’

²⁹³ *JR* XLVIII: 75-79 (‘burned alive’, 79).

²⁹⁴ *JR* XVII: 111 (‘Colossus’).

itself. The region designated as such had been necessarily bounded by overwhelming Iroquois power; ‘we have considered only its rigors and ice, and the severity of its winters’. Canada - ‘so closely confined that we have been unable to clear our fields...to enjoy the fair realms either occupied, or close to us, by our foes’ – was regarded as a frigid and benighted zone composed of small settlements shivering on the banks of the St. Lawrence. The Crown’s initiative to send a contingent of soldiers to finally intimidate the Five Nations into compliance would, by contrast, ‘make a Kingdom’ of the vast territory patrolled by Iroquois scouts and warriors, transforming both the forests and deserts into towns and provinces.²⁹⁵ The imagined borders of New France would be thrust southward with each military action, and would invite missionization at each stage. Le Mercier’s expression of this renewed, consciously expansive appreciation of the scale of missiological potential in early America received further confirmation six years later.

For these Jesuits’ radically new conceptualisation of their early American mission to reach fruition, greater imperial oversight was necessary. They were fortunate; Louis XVI made New France a royal province in 1663, seizing it from private ownership by the Company of One Hundred Associates. A comprehensive transformation of its political structure followed, complemented by schemes to encourage emigration to Quebec, Montreal, and their satellite settlements along the St. Lawrence. A key feature of this change was a growing contingent of soldiers to meet future Iroquois aggression.

After this imperial pivot toward greater royal oversight and control, the Jesuits’ influence remained critical. In Autumn 1670 a few Iroquois accompanied a French delegation into Odawa country, carrying presents to confirm their alliance. They wintered there, during which time the Odawas learned that the Dutch sold merchandise at significantly cheaper

²⁹⁵ *JR IL*: 213 (‘rigors and ice’, ‘clear our fields’, ‘Kingdom’).

prices than French traders. They marvelled at the news that a single beaver skin sold at Albany could fetch four times as much as one sold in New France. The Iroquois in the delegation offered to escort Odawa traders to the Dutch. Officials in Quebec were horrified. Their design had simply been peace between Iroquois and Odawas, not a commercial relationship that threatened to sever a critical link the fur trade in New France.²⁹⁶

The Jesuits were ordered to help. The Governor gave them strict instructions: to warn both Iroquois and Odawas that uniting for trade risked conflict. Both nations' 'tempers and mode of acting did not accord'; for the Iroquois it was dangerous to receive so many of their former enemies, who were still resentful for past slaughters, and who would use trading expeditions as cover for reconnaissance of their villages and hunting grounds; for the Odawas they should remember the history of Iroquois treachery, and suggested that the latter were using trade to ensnare the Odawas. The missionaries diligently spread these accusations, planting the seeds of doubt in those who had first welcomed the alliance. The Iroquois were seized by 'several panics' of imminent Odawa attacks, and assured the French that they would never again offer to mediate trade between them and the Dutch. Only twenty-five young Odawa traders entered Iroquois territory in the spring. They did little business.²⁹⁷

The union of renewed royal interest in New France, the influence of missionaries as intermediaries between Indian and colonial power, and the widening geographical range of the Jesuit mission, was expressed most clearly in June 1671. Talon, sent back to New France with a royal order to promote the authority of the Crown, commissioned St. Luson to secure royal possession of 'the territories lying between the East and the West', from Montreal to the Gulf of Mexico. St. Luson chose Sault Sainte Marie as the site of this ceremony. He invited every Indian nation to send ambassadors, fourteen of which did so. On June 4th, the French,

²⁹⁶ *NYCD*, IX: 84.

²⁹⁷ *NYCD*, IX: 85 ('several panics').

Jesuit and Indian delegations gathered on a hill overlooking the settlement, where a cross affixed with the Crown's standard was planted. The Jesuit Superior Dablon blessed the cross and offered prayer to the escutcheon, symbolizing the unshakeable association between the imperial and evangelical imperatives in New France. St. Lusson then swiftly declared possession of the regions coveted by the monarch. A silence fell upon proceedings, broken only when Allouez extensively described the power of the French King, who could command 'ten thousand Onnontios'; he himself had 'slain so many with his sword that he does not count their scalps', and enslaved countless more. St. Lusson then concluded the gathering by congratulating the Indian ambassadors for the royal protection that they had just been granted. The ceremony concluded with the lighting of a large bonfire, around which hymns were sung to solemnize the newly declared relationships.²⁹⁸

The *Relation* of 1671 narrating this event included a map, drawn up by several Jesuits. Dablon supplemented this visual representation of the potential range of Jesuit missions in early America with a brief description of the area it defined. From the mission at Chequamegon the Mississippi River flowed southward, which Dablon suggested 'must empty somewhere in the region of the Florida sea'. West of the River lay the Sioux. Beyond them lived an unknown nation 'beyond which, it is said, lies the Western sea'. Thirdly, the Kilistonons ranged across the northern lands beyond Lake Superior, sharing uneasily a swathe of territory with 'the peoples of the Interior, or of the North Sea'.²⁹⁹ The rush of discovery that had followed the establishment of Jesuit activity on the shores of the westernmost Lake had appeared to finally define, for Dablon, the scope of the continent. The course of the Mississippi linked New France with the southern extents of Spanish Florida; only one alien nation separated the newly receptive Sioux from the western shores of North

²⁹⁸ JR LV: 105-107, 111-113 & 115 ('East and the West', 107; 'Onnontios', 111; 'count their scalps', 111-113).

²⁹⁹ JR LV: 97-99 ('Florida sea', 97; 'Western sea', 'North Sea', 99).

America; and the nomadic range of Indians in the cold regions beyond Lake Superior was bounded by a body of water further north. Dablon was thus able to finally imagine a continental missiologial space, encompassed by ocean.

For the Jesuits, this diplomatic feat therefore functioned as part of a larger complex of discoveries that encouraged a revived discourse of continentalism. Environmental and ecological factors were also key to this expansive new optimism. The western borders of the Jesuits' conceptual world invited the missionaries into the Mississippi and Missouri River valleys. One of the Indian nations that Jesuit explorers encountered along the former was the Illinois. Meeting these new communities, the bustling settlement of Kaskaskia most enticing among them, led Jesuits to a new, generalised understanding of Indian religion that linked ecology and environment with religious praxis. The novel ecology of the newly discovered territory was eventually significant. On their journey to the Mascoutens, Dablon and Allouez were awed by their first encounter with the ecology of the prairie. Dablon described it simply as 'the fairest land possible to behold'. Forests and mountains were absent, the land sustaining vast herds of buffalos and cows.³⁰⁰

Allouez followed Menard into the new exciting lands around Lake Superior. He spent considerable time at Chequamegon Bay, a diplomatic and commercial centre jutting out into the western lands now considered potential missiologial space. He was the first Jesuit to encounter individuals from the Illinois nation. The structure of their religious practice was, like the other nations that Allouez had attempted to preach to, composed of many 'spirits' to which they made various sacrifices; but, apparently distinct from the others, 'they honor with a very special worship one who is preeminent above the others', a belief that made them more receptive to Allouez' instruction. Coupled with a demographic decline occasioned by

³⁰⁰ *JR LV*: 193 ('fairest land').

their unfortunate location between the hostile Iroquois and Sioux, Allouez reported that ‘this Mission is the one where I have labored the least and accomplished the most’.³⁰¹

Both he and Dablon had learned more about the Illinois Indians’ system of belief in 1670. He and Dablon floated along the Fox River, a tributary of the Illinois river, on an expedition to the Mascoutens. Among a village composed of them and Miami Indians, the two Jesuits received a warm welcome. They were invited to a feast and pleaded with to show favour to the hosts’ intended revenge raid against the Sioux to the west. Allouez and Dablon carefully refuted his conviction that the Jesuits could affect the success of his plan, but the Indians at the village continued to submit similar requests. Their attitude toward the missionaries was, of course, appreciated by the two men; but the most enticing prize appeared elsewhere.³⁰²

The chief of the village was considered an example for the rest of the Illinois nation, the bulk of which lived in large settlements on the banks of the Mississippi River to the south. The Miamis living in the village were an appendage to this population, having migrated further north. The chief, and by extension the Illinois he represented, were uniquely eager to attend preaching and appeared extremely conducive to further missionization. Their advantage, Dablon wrote, was ‘that they have hardly any superstitions, and are not wont to offer Sacrifices to various spirits, as do the Outaouacs and others’. Yet where such practice had elsewhere been ascribed simply to the influences of diabolism and corruption, Dablon suggested an environmental cause. The amazing fecundity of the region allowed relatively easy and stable agriculture, and the teeming game that appeared to blanket the prairie meant hunting was rarely unsuccessful. As a consequence, they had no need to fish. It followed that they had ‘no fear of the perils of the Lakes’, a terror that beset many other Indian nations who

³⁰¹ *JR LI*: 47-51 (‘spirits’, 47; ‘special worship’, 49; ‘accomplished the most’, 51).

³⁰² *JR LV*: 203-205.

had seen relatives and friends drown in the treacherous waterways of the Great Lakes. These latter Indians, searching desperately for ways to minimize the peril of navigating these routes, created water spirits ‘which devour them...and hence they try to appease them or to win their favor by numerous Sacrifices’. By contrast, the Illinois occupied a region of unusual abundance, so had no need to craft and then appease a panoply of spirits to survive. Their only troubling worship was of the Sun, but Dablon was convinced that they would soon recognise it as simply another creation of the Christian God.³⁰³ The example of the Illinois was therefore used to determine the evangelical significance of the vastly different geological space that the Jesuits had discovered beyond the Great Lakes world. The prairie had been described as a fundamentally different space from anything the Jesuits had grappled with before; Allouez’ and Dablon’s brief sojourn on the banks of the Fox had suggested this novelty was extremely advantageous for missionization. Against this example Jesuits saw the religious systems of the Great Lakes world as comparatively dense, and valorised the difficulty of missiological activity that this caused.

This new continental consciousness had been crafted from the increasing knowledge of a growing region far beyond the settlements of New France. The new landscape of the prairie, and specifically its abundance, had produced Indian nations better suited to missionization than those that lived around the Great Lakes. This incorporation of new territories into early American Jesuit missiology was just one element of the creative adaptation obligated by Iroquois belligerence in the mid-seventeenth century. As a collective, this process had once again made Jesuits in New France confident in early America as an evangelical space. Between the late-1640s and the mid-1660s the explosion of Iroquois violence had produced a disorientating confusion about the viability and potential of evangelism in New France and beyond. The early interactions with Illinois Indians and the

³⁰³ *JR LV*: 213-215 (‘offer Sacrifices’, 213; ‘perils of the Lakes’, ‘win their favor’, 215).

novel ecology of the prairie, however, together constituted a massive new zone where missionization would be relatively simple. Furthermore, in the eastern woodlands Iroquois aggression functioned as a magnet drawing Indians into the orbit of missionization, either unwillingly as captives or as refugees searching for the security and spiritual consolation of the missions themselves.

The most significant innovations in Jesuit thought during this period were therefore not in their practical approach to missionization. Debating the practicalities of missiological activity declined in importance as the established missions in Huronia were destroyed and before new missions to the Illinois and the western interior could be made permanent as institutions. Adaptation was more critical at the conceptual level, as New France was forced to adopt a heavier militaristic character while Jesuits worked to comprehend the violent martyrdoms of their colleagues. Jesuits, again, met this challenge. The inventions of the first half of the seventeenth century were either adapted or replaced, creating a new martyrology, a new Christology, an appreciation of ecological and environmental factors, a reconsideration of the importance of a formidable martial aspect to the missions colonial framework, and a profound geographic shift from the heart of the Great Lakes to the spine of the entire continent through avenues such as Chequamegon and the Mississippi River.

New Comparisons

Together, Jesuits and Puritans, from the mid-seventeenth century to the mid-1670s, invented radical new missiologies in response to a bewildering array of Atlantic and continental forces. Furthermore, as derivatives of competing Catholic and Protestant faiths, they appear to invite comparison that distinguishes them as fundamentally different creations. Previous comparisons of Puritan and Jesuit missions in early America have focused either on Eliot

himself as a stubborn, inflexible proponent of missionization, or on the doctrinaire Puritanism he advocated that considered evangelism in New England of secondary importance to its own purity. In both cases, Puritan missiology appears paralyzed by a rigidity that Ignatian instruction deliberately forbid. For example, in the Jesuit missions in New France, Axtell found a unique confluence of factors that made evangelisation uniquely ‘successful’ in early America. The relatively small population of French colonial society meant pressure on Indian lands was light, and a gender imbalance promoted intermarriage between Frenchmen and Indian women; Roman Catholicism itself offered a formidable combination of liturgical practice, belief that one could actively effect one’s salvation, and a panoply of female saints, thus presenting myriad expansive avenues for devotion; and the Jesuit Order itself produced exceptionally capable missionaries, both extremely well-educated and malleable in their endeavour. By contrast, Protestant evangelists in New England contended with a rapacious, rapidly expanding demography that coveted Indian territory, a missiology concentrated on literacy and Scriptural mastery, and an awkward, inescapable obligation to their congregations rather than Indians elsewhere.³⁰⁴

However, it is clear that Eliot’s missiology, when compared with that of the Jesuits, was derived from an equally dynamic response to the confusions and disorder presented by the Indian response to English colonialism. The paradox that beset Eliot’s efforts was therefore not a function of the theory of Puritan evangelism, which was, when wielded by the missionary himself, evidently sufficiently malleable to establish a chain of fourteen Praying Towns around Boston. Rather, it became painfully apparent that Eliot’s vision of extensive Indian evangelism could not be reconciled with the obsessive concern for interiority that he tried to impose on his converts. The Indian expression of this evangelical logic, articulated forcefully by Totheswamp and Nishohkou, was a painful consciousness of their probable

³⁰⁴ Axtell. *The Invasion Within*, 271-287.

inadequacy to missionize effectively within their communities. The paradox of missionization in New England was therefore a creation of the Indian neophytes themselves. As the piety of these exemplary converts steadily grew, so did their conviction that their catalogue of sins was a moral injunction against their own evangelical efforts. Even more dangerously, the powerful Indians who did serve as magnets for others hoping to seize on the new cache of spiritual power they hosted, such as Waban, either would or could not express an appropriate sense of dismay at their own characters. Puritan interiority, when translated by Indian agents eagerly embracing Christianity, could not be reconciled with Eliot's vision of an Indian Christianity catalysed and sustained by Indian converts themselves.

The most obvious difference was the relative importance attached to personal salvation through missionization. Jesuits retained a fierce devotion to the salvific impulse, at times so intensely that it overrode the practical necessities of the mission itself. Eliot, by contrast, did not seek confirmation of his location among the elect through suffering, practical obstacles, or death. He pleaded that promoters of missionization in New England not refer to either himself or his actions as apostolic, preferring to style himself only a labourer. He furthermore found confirmation of his salvation in his personal wealth and the continued, if unsteady, progress of his mission, and worried that certain obstacles to missionization were signals of divine displeasure and judgment rather than sanction.

More broadly, then, interiority was just as critical to the Jesuit mission as its Puritan counterpart. The difference was in its application. Eliot, Lalement, Rageauneau, and the cast of Jesuits that worked in New France all shared an acute concern with their own salvation. But only the Jesuits included a personal salvific component in their missiology. Eliot did not require this, concerning himself rather with catalysing the imminent millennium through his evangelism of the New England Indians. Yet it was the Jesuits' obsessive concern with the personal benefits to be accrued from missionization in early America that, in part, sustained

their efforts throughout the disastrous years of relentless Iroquois hostility. Eliot's only reaction to the obstacles that he faced in the seventeenth century was to worry that the endeavour itself did not enjoy providential approval, not that his own position among the elect was therefore questioned.

Another key component of Eliot's conceptual creation was the exclusive importance of Scripture. Biblical verse was as dynamic and malleable as the more performative and liturgical modes of devotion encouraged by Jesuits and translated by Hurons. In it, Eliot found justification for the apocalyptic importance of evangelism, an indication of the prophesied significance of Waban, and sanction for a Christology that connected missionization with commercialism in New England. Toteswamp and Nishohkou found Scripture equally elastic, each deriving reticence toward evangelism from different Biblical passages. The centrality of Scripture to the Christianity expected to be performed by Indian neophytes did not, therefore, encourage a dogmatic approach by those associated with missionization to the task and experience of conversion; instead, Eliot and Indian converts' manipulation of Scripture made Puritan missiology as vibrant as its Jesuit counterpart.

When connected, these two elements of Puritan missiology produced a paradox. The measure of the effectiveness of Puritan missiology, because its practitioners did not assign a personal salvific component to their action, was embodied solely by Indian converts. When this focus connected with its second foundational aspect – Scripture proven to be highly flexible in its application and interpretation – the distinction with Jesuit activity became clear. Eliot's focus on Indian evangelism, the peculiar interiority central to Puritan piety, and the reading and interpretation of Scripture as the only devotional mode was a missiological paradigm that allowed the greatest range of Indian expressions of agency. But the corresponding religious encounter produced sentiments among Eliot's neophytes that militated against the full realisation of the program's potential.

Furthermore, the negative effects of the high degree of agency granted by the Puritan obsession with Scripture were heightened by comparison with the exacting institutionalised requirements for church membership and governance. In short, the vast potential range of Indian expressions of Puritan interiority was antithetical to their mass incorporation into the New England churches, an extremely strict ecclesiological structure where standards of piety were rigorously controlled. Eliot's missiology thus included discordant features; extensive Indian evangelism and converts' incorporation into colonial churches were both extremely difficult to reconcile with a Puritan interiority derived from a focus on Scripture as the only appropriate devotional mode. The praying towns that eventually dotted the New England frontier were therefore, in part, a result of Eliot's skilled creation and then manipulation of a Puritan missiology appropriate for the Indian worlds in New England. Jesuits also created an awkward contradiction, between their interest in personal salvation and the effort to effectively missionize across an expanding territory, but resolved it by skilled navigation between the martyrological, soteriological, evangelical and institutional components of their early American mission.

This deft adaptation, first to the martyrdoms of the late-1640s and then to the new zones of missionization opened by the changes in Iroquois strategies, relied on this dichotomous understanding of mission. The destruction of the Huron mission was practically disastrous, narrowing Jesuit activity to a few centres of devotion and erasing a reservoir of knowledge and experience carried by the six slain. Yet Rageneau's careful management of the significance of their legacy ensured that misfortune remained a potent evangelical tool. By contrast, when Eliot was embroiled in New England's most threatening conflict, he was not able to wield his experience in the same way.

Chapter 4

A Continental Philosophy, c. 1675-1755

In February 1675 John Sassamon's corpse was spotted under the ice at Assawompset Pond, close to his home at the Praying Town of Namasket. His disappearance had followed his warning to the governor of Plymouth, Josiah Winslow, that the Wampanoag sachem Philip, formerly Metacom, was heading a plot to forge an alliance between as many local sachems as possible to make war against the English colonists in New England. However, decades of astute Indian diplomacy had led many colonial officials - who either misunderstood or failed to recognise this careful strategizing – to a pessimistic view of Indians as inherently untrustworthy. Winslow was one. He dismissed Sassamon's advice and disregarded his warning that Philip would murder him if his subterfuge was made public. Sassamon promptly returned to Namasket, where he served as the minister to its Christian Indian population. He disappeared within a week. When his body was pulled from the Pond, apparently confirming his fear that Philip would seek revenge, authorities at Plymouth were forced to take his claims seriously. The sachem himself met the Council, a meeting that convinced the latter of the veracity of Sassamon's claims but failed to provide proof. Several months later, in June, three of Philip's most influential counsellors - Mattashunannamo, Tobias and Wampapaquan – were accused by another Indian, Patuckson, of murdering Sassamon and later casting him under the ice to conceal their crime. A quick trial found all guilty. They were executed on June 8th. Their deaths crowned several years of Philip's attempts to retain his authority over Wampanoags learning to skilfully navigate Christian, English and Indian identities to achieve their own ambitions in southern New England. The executions were a final insult. Sixteen days after, Philip's warriors raided Swansea, killing

nine. The spiralling violence that followed engulfed Eliot's missiological project, forcing a radical recalibration of New England missiology.³⁰⁵

In the same year, New Mexico Governor Juan Francisco Treviño initiated a regional campaign against growing expressions of idolatry. Drought in the late-1660s had caused famine. The threat of starvation was soon joined by waves of raids by Apaches and Navajos who, equally brutalised by the lack of food, were seeking to steal as much as they could from neighbouring pueblos. Traditionalist Pueblos whose quiet resentment of Spanish rule had simmered for decades were now emboldened to talk openly of fighting back. The katsinas, these men argued, were angered by the steady decline in their worship; following and agreeing with this logic, and desperate to perform any propitiation that could alleviate the famine, Tewa Pueblos were the first to resume prohibited ceremonies such as dances and ritual offerings. Similar practices were renewed throughout the Rio Grande Valley, particular yet enmeshed by a general anti-Christian sentiment. Treviño's response, beginning in 1675, was to arrest the alleged 'sorcerers' conducting this traditionalist revival and have them hung, whipped, or sold into slavery. One of those flogged was Popé. His punishment was ineffective; he left his pueblo of San Juan for Taos, the northernmost pueblo and an enclave enjoying relative isolation from Spanish control, to plot a regional revolt against colonial authority. His elaborate plans reached fruition five years later. On August 9th 1680, two messengers were dispatched to each pueblo carrying knotted cords, indicating that the uprising should begin two days hence. Certain caciques, however, opposed his scheme, and informed Governor Antonio de Otermin. Though the Spanish had learned of Popé's plans, it

³⁰⁵ For John Sassamon's death, Philip's campaign to preserve his authority, and the start of King Philip's War, see: James D. Drake. *King Philip's War: Civil War in New England, 1675-1676* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press), 57-75; Jill Lepore. *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 21-47; Jill Lepore. 'Dead Men Tell No Tales: John Sassamon and the Fatal Consequences of Literacy', *American Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (December, 1994), pp. 479-512; Lisa Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 115-140.

was too late; on August 10th friar Juan Pío was killed by a war party a few miles from Tesuque, commencing a bloody few hours in which twenty-one friars and over four hundred settlers were slain. Like Philip's, Popé's destructive plan shattered many assumptions that had guided Franciscan efforts in New Mexico, forcing yet another revaluation of their early American missiology.³⁰⁶

This violence that engulfed southern New England and the Rio Grande Valley in the second half of the 1670s was a catalyst for the most radical continental reconceptualization of evangelism that early America had yet demanded. And in this confused, disorienting context, formerly distinct missiologies began to be carefully formulated into new and increasingly similar paradigms. This chapter traces first how Philip and Popé's initiation of their respective conflicts, and the ensuing assault on Christian missions, forced Franciscans in New Mexico and Puritans in New England to rationalise the almost total destruction of their evangelical projects. In doing so, they completed the provincialization of both missiologies as early American phenomena. In a comparable though less violent process, Jesuits' increasing incorporation into inter-imperial and Indian tensions catalysed similarly deliberate shifts in Jesuits' definition of effective missionization, as well as their place within the broader early American world.

Finally, fundamental features of all three institutional creations - such as fidelity to Christ and the apostolic tradition, or preaching without regard for consequence – were explicitly prioritised by Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan missionaries, creating a continental vision of evangelism out of three distinct and mutually hostile traditions. By the mid-

³⁰⁶ For the beginnings of the Pueblo Revolt, see: Gutierrez. *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went*, 130-133; Matthew Liebmann. *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 50-71.

eighteenth century, persistent common expressions of the most critical features of each therefore created an early American missiology.

'I Must Change My Ditty Now'

King Philip's War invited the entanglement of missionization with a broader discourse of spiritual declension in New England. The conflict raised serious questions about further evangelisation of the Indian communities across the region. Together, Eliot, Daniel Gookin, and the Puritan ministers Increase and Cotton Mather addressed these questions, crafting a new logic of mission that provided a platform for renewed efforts.

A generalised fear of colonists' moral decay had been created by the Puritan ministerial elite. Jeremiads, extended lamentations articulating this condition, began to ring out in churches across New England; they had been used as a mode of analysis by the first generation of Puritan emigrants, but became much more common and intense in the 1660s and 1670s. Through them, ministers incessantly expressed the constant tension between unshakeable belief in the original Puritan errand formulated by the founders of Massachusetts, and the apparently growing indifference of the swelling population toward its rigorous standards.³⁰⁷ The same impulse to interrogate the mutating meaning of the Puritan experiment led some elite figures to re-evaluate the importance of evangelism to the religious landscape of New England. In response to the War, these men first racialised, then dichotomised, Indian and colonists' religious characters, finally incorporating both into a

³⁰⁷ For summaries of the creation and spread of the theme of declension, see Harry S. Stout. *New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 67-86 & 105-127. For the jeremiad as its literary and sermonic expression, see Sacvan Bercovitch. *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 3-31.

missiology that connected evangelism with arresting the further deterioration of Puritan devotion.³⁰⁸

The escalating violence was infused with an obvious hatred for the faith that the English settlers represented. In June eight of Philip's warriors entered Swansea. While they sharpened tomahawks a settler emerged from a nearby house and criticised them for working on the Sabbath. God, he warned, would be angered. The Indians replied tersely that 'They knew not who his God was', so did not recognise the threat. After this exchange they stole some items from another house and hurried back to the trail. They encountered and detained a man, finally releasing him with the caution 'that he should not Work on his God's Day, and that he should tell no Lies'.³⁰⁹ In late-April Sudbury was assaulted by a band of Massachusetts warriors. An old man, aghast at the violence, tried to flee. One of the Indians, however, quickly caught up with him. Before he killed him he taunted the settler and 'insulted over him with that Blasphemous Expression (Come Lord Jesus, save this poor English man if thou canst, whom I am now about to Kill)'.³¹⁰ The most grisly example occurred at Providence. Another Indian raid had encountered an odd man who was apparently convinced that while

³⁰⁸ The Stuart Restoration in 1660 was followed by the harsh repression of Puritanism in England, casting New England adrift from the ideological project it shared with transatlantic collaborators. Encroaching royal authority in the 1660s caused further consternation as the Bible commonwealth was increasingly threatened with incorporation into an imperial system that would disregard religious purity in favour of institutional conformity. Elite New Englanders also began wrangling over the Halfway Covenant, a liberalizing of the requirements for church membership that many viewed with disdain. The disorientation caused by these new instabilities focused many colonists on loyalty, to both Puritanism as creed and to New England as its vehicle. Gookin's impassioned defence of the praying Indians as legitimate converts and trustworthy allies was therefore an extremely contentious claim. See Louise A. Breen. *Transgressing the Bounds: Subversive Enterprises among the Puritan Elite in Massachusetts, 1630-1692* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 145-148; Richard Slotkin & James K. Folsom, eds. *So Dreadfull a Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War, 1676-1677* (Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1978), 8-18.

³⁰⁹ Nathaniel Saltonstall. *The Present State of New-England with Respect to the Indian War: Being a Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England* (London: Tho. Parkhurst, 1675), 4 ('They knew not', 'tell no Lies').

³¹⁰ Anonymous. *A True Account of the Most Considerable Occurrences that have happened in the warre between the English and the Indians in New-England* (London: Benjamin Billingsley, 1676), 2 ('Blasphemous Expression').

he held a Bible aloft he was secure from all harm. In a decisive expression of their derision for such devotion, the Indians killed him, sliced his midsection open, and pushed the Bible into his stomach.³¹¹

Juxtaposed between these frightening examples and a self-consciously pious settler population, the Christianity of the praying Indians conferred an awkward liminality on them. Neither wholly English nor fully Indian, their status offered hostile Indians another way to simultaneously undermine the faith and further prosecute the war against the New England colonies. They ‘did very industriously endeavour to bring the Christian Indians into disaffection with the English, and to this end raised several false reports concerning them, as if they held a correspondence with them’, while sending messages to the praying Indians themselves that English colonists planned to enslave or murder them all. Shortly after the war erupted in 1675 this strategy bore fruit. On the 19th October an order was passed in the General Court of Massachusetts to fetch the Indians from the praying town of Wamesit and bring them to Boston. A report had reached the magistrates that the Christian Indians there had attacked a farm belonging to James Richardson. A haystack had been set alight, and the criminals had vanished into the night. Those at Wamesit, however, were innocent; hostile Indians deliberately attacked the farm to further undermine the already fractious relationship between an increasingly paranoid colonial populace and the Indians who shared their faith. Gookin surmised that they did so in order that ‘they might either be secured by the English or necessitated to fly to the enemy’.³¹²

³¹¹ Nathaniel Saltonstall. *A New and Further Narrative of the state of New-England: Being a Continued Account of the Bloudy Indian-war* (London: J.B., 1676), 6-7.

³¹² Daniel Gookin, *An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England, in the Years 1675, 1676, 1677* (New York: Arno, 1972), 462 & 471 (‘several false reports’, 462; ‘fly to the enemy’, 471).

The question facing promoters of missionization, then, was how to definitively classify Indians as appropriate targets for conversion in an atmosphere of growing distrust. Their function as vehicles of the apocalypse was no longer expressed. By now the millennial mania that had gripped Eliot until the 1660s had dissipated. Gookin wrote bluntly that the origin of the New England Indians was, and would forever be, impossible to discern. Their perceived ignorance of ‘letters and records and antiquity’ meant that definitive evidence for their ancestry was lost. The obligation to missionize the Indians now derived not from apocalyptic expectation, but simply recognition of their humanity. As ‘Adam’s posterity’, they were fit subjects ‘upon which our faith, prayers, and best endeavours should be put forth, to reduce them from barbarism to civility’.³¹³

But their humanity was not valued by terrified English settlers and officials. On the 17th of October 1675 John Eliot composed a pained account of his mission in New England. The intervening months between Sassamon’s murder and this letter to Robert Boyle, the Governor of the New England Company, had seen the Praying Towns and the Indians that populated them engrossed in the worsening violence along the frontier of colonial settlement. Indian converts’ race was too threatening a feature for an increasingly panicked coalition of colonists. Magistrates in Massachusetts, acceding to popular paranoia doubting the loyalty of the praying Indians, issued a series of progressively restrictive orders; praying Indians were first confined to their settlements, following which a substantial number were forcibly moved to Deer Island, a desolate space isolated in the harbour outside Boston. Eliot’s reaction was blunt. He told Boyle he had ‘much to write of lamentation’. The New England mission was ‘killed in words, wishes, and expression’. Eliot valued the metaphorical death of the mission but understood that this was not a gift conferred but a punishment imposed. Echoing the

³¹³ Daniel Gookin, *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England* (Boston: Belknap & Hall, 1792), 4-7 (‘records and antiquity’, 6; ‘Adam’s posterity’, ‘barbarism to civility’, 7).

growing terror of declension shared by New England's intellectual elite, he recognised the war as a necessary reaction to colonists' 'corruptions and infirmities'.³¹⁴

He had most comprehensively expressed this fear of decaying religious fervour months earlier, in a letter to John Winthrop Jr., then Governor of Connecticut. Even in the first few weeks of the conflict, Eliot was convinced that 'our sins have ripened us for so seveare a scourge as the warre hath, & is like to prove'. The foundational problem was, therefore, colonists' neglect of the demands imposed by New England Puritanism; the war could therefore function as an invitation to revive imagined standards of piety bequeathed by the first generation of Puritan emigrants to Massachusetts. This was critical to justify continuing missionization, an endeavour mortally threatened by colonists' general distrust of Christian Indians. Eliot predicted that such restoration would counter unconverted Indians' dangerous claims that they refused to pray because the example of many Puritans was an undesirable one. If the 'great sins' of the English were thus reformed, it would encourage such stubborn Indians that conversion to Christianity was a desirable change.³¹⁵ Eliot reacted to King Philip's War, therefore, by uniting declension and the further progress of evangelism into a single endeavour. Furthermore, countering the former was necessarily antecedent to the latter, making further conversions of Indians dependent on reviving pious behaviour among the colonists themselves.

Eliot's conclusion was, however, soon challenged. Increase Mather reacted to the War by complicating Eliot's association between declension and missionization. His efforts to do so were, in part, a feature of a personal dispute with William Hubbard, pastor of the church at Ipswich. Hubbard's analysis of the War differed from Mather's in two ways. He suggested

³¹⁴ 'John Eliot to Robert Boyle', in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. 17 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1880), 251 ('lamentation', 'killed in words', 'corruptions and infirmities').

³¹⁵ 'John Eliot to John Winthrop, Jr.', in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 5th Series, Vol. 1 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1871), 424-426 ('so seveare a scourge', 'great sins', 424).

that the government had fought the war effectively and that a period of spiritual prosperity could follow, challenging the jeremiads that spied irrevocable religious decline. His was also, despite Hubbard's orthodox obedience to a providential world view, an unacceptably secularised evaluation of the conflict. Mather interpreted this as a blurring of the boundaries between worldly and religious modes of analysis. His accounts explaining the providential significance of the War were intended to combat Hubbard's and recover the evangelical imperative as a critical force in New England's past and future.³¹⁶

He began, like Eliot, by attributing the chaos of King Phillip's War to the waning zeal for missionization. He made reference to the charter and seal of Massachusetts, which both mandated evangelization of the Indians, and claimed that the abdication of this duty meant 'that the Lord hath afflicted us by the Indians since the body of the present Generation hath no more of an heart to endeavour their Conversion and Salvation'. Land had become the 'Idol' of New England, and the rapacity with which English settlers coveted it had seen New England's errand mutate from a religious to a 'worldly' one. The booming trade network that sat uneasily alongside the religious obsessions of the Massachusetts leadership had furnished the Indians with guns and ammunition.³¹⁷ The critical role played by some praying Indians in English victories during the War further heightened these concerns. Rather than praise them for what the converts claimed were demonstrations of loyalty, Mather warned that they would be 'apt to grow insolent upon conceiting that we could not have subdued our enemyes if it had not been for them'. Impious colonists were, furthermore, likely to frustrate such warriors if not brought back under the command of New England authorities.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ For the differences between Hubbard and Mather, see Michael G. Hall. *The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather, 1639-1723* (Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 112-127.

³¹⁷ *Earnest Exhortation*, 9-10 & 18-19 ('Idol', 'worldly', 9; 'Conversion and Salvation', 19).

³¹⁸ *Earnest Exhortation*, 3 ('grow insolent').

Unlike Eliot, however, Mather complicated the relationship between the spiritual condition of Indians and colonists. He contended that declension was akin to a violation of the fifth commandment, the dictum to honour one's parents. Contravening this rule was 'one of the great and National sins' that Indian societies were peculiarly guilty of. Associating these two points explained Philip's warriors' brutal assaults along the frontier of English settlement. Puritans, by neglecting to follow the imagined standards of the first generation of emigrants to New England, were becoming Indianized. Mather explicitly stated the catastrophic results that this invited, writing that 'if we learn the way of the Heathen, and become like them, God will punish us by them'.³¹⁹ Such a statement likewise suggested its converse; that the reformation of the Indian moral and religious landscape was therefore key to addressing the damaging gulf between first and second-generation Puritan piety.

This was a significant intervention into Puritan missiology. Eliot had not been the only promoter of mission to compare English piety unfavourably against Indian. In responding to much more detailed narratives of successful missionization, the publisher Henry Whitfield added a short reaction to Eliot's letters published in 1651. Whitfield himself had been a central figure in English Puritanism; he was eventually censured by Laud in 1639, fled to New England, and then returned to a newly promising English religious scene in 1650. For Whitfield, together Eliot and Mayhew had shown an exceptionally pure Christianity among the Indians in Massachusetts and on Martha's Vineyard. He made an explicit contrast with English Christianity. Indians exalted their preachers for their 'Ordinances' and obeyed them without 'gainsaying', while in England ministers were derided; they were very eager to 'pursue the things of their salvation' regardless of their costs, while English Christians languished with 'weak and bed-ridden dispositions'; when convinced of their own sin the Indians mourned bitterly, while English sinners lived happily with 'dry eyes, and hard hearts'; finally,

³¹⁹ *Earnest Exhortation*, 11 ('National sins', 'way of the Heathen').

they were extremely diligent in their religious duties such as prayer, attending sermons and observing the Sabbath, while Christians under Cromwell were shamed by their failures to do so. Whitfield was terrified by the implications of this difference. English Christianity, he argued, did not hold a privileged position in God's divine scheme. Despite the promising political situation, His gospel could be transplanted across the Atlantic 'and make it there to shine forth in its glory' while the English were left in 'Indian darknesse'.³²⁰ Mather challenged all such fears as reductive, that English emulating Indians was just as dangerous a threat to missionization as its obverse.

Mather concluded with a warning to those condemning all praying Indians as indelibly corrupted by their racial characteristics. This attitude violated Scriptural principle. He reminded colonists that 'God never sends his Gospel to be constantly dispensed to any people, except he hath some elect amongst them'; to thus totally reject the possibility that some of the praying Indians had undergone, and continued to develop, a genuine Christian transformation was therefore impious. Mather then connected this to his obsession to revive the first generation's devotion. His father, Richard Mather, had visited Natick in 1652. His reaction has been to similarly challenge pessimistic claims that the Indians' embrace of Christianity was a thin veneer concealing more prosaic motives. The elder Mather countered that the Natick Indians' piety was so evident that 'I cannot but count it a great evil, yea a great injury to God and his goodness, for any to make light or nothing of it'.³²¹

Where Eliot had defined declension as an obstacle to evangelisation, Mather worked to reverse this association. The generational component of New England's spiritual decay was likened to the Indians' particular 'National sin'. If this Indianization accelerated greater

³²⁰ *Farther Discovery*, 45 ('Ordinances', 'gainsaying', 'their salvation', 'bed-rid dispositions', 'hard hearts', 'shine forth', 'Indian darknesse').

³²¹ *Earnest Exhortation*, 15-16 & 18 ('some elect', 16; 'injury to God', 18).

divine punishment would follow. Further evangelisation to civilize Indian communities through Christianization would therefore disintegrate the 'way of the Heathen' that Mather identified as a cause of the War.

Philip's war against the colonists who threatened his land and power had initiated growing suspicion of the praying Indians across New England. In response, Eliot and Mather articulated competing conceptions of the dynamic relationship between the phenomena of declension and evangelisation. The contradiction between the two split Puritan missiology. It became necessary to reconcile them. Increase's son, Cotton Mather, eventually did so. Events beyond the control of the ministerial elite in New England invited further manipulation of Puritan missiology. Mather responded to them by reconciling Eliot and Increase's competing visions, crafting a mutual relationship between declension and missionization, and adding a generalised Protestant understanding of mission.

The first occasion for this transformation was James II's escape to France and William and Mary's accession to the monarchy in England. Mather expressed his developing missiology through a series of sermons given in 1689, preaching given as an agitated response to the tumultuous events of the Glorious Revolution in England. For Mather, missionization was a critical bridge between the first generation of Puritan emigrants to New England and his own. Renewing intense evangelical efforts would counter declension by reviving the original errand codified in Massachusetts' charter and seal. This association, however, was not merely chronological. It was not simply that reinstating the evangelical imperative was a critical component in restoring the piety of the first epoch of New England's history; dragging Indians that remained unconverted into Christian fidelity would destroy the few remaining examples of barbarity that continued to contribute to colonists' spiritual decay. This second component of missionization was highly significant. Promoting missiology as a mechanism to rescue English Christians from an infectious Indian barbarism

suggested declension was a reciprocal process between the two. As the less pious English taught Indian neighbours profane habits, so did unconverted Indians encourage the decay of key attitudes and practices delineating civilized English colonialism from savagery. Mather later returned to this racialization of missionization, arguing that promoting education for both Indians and English colonists would prevent the ‘Criolian Degeneracy’ that had afflicted ‘the Children of the most noble and worthy Europeans, when transplanted into America’.³²² Declension and evangelisation therefore entered a reciprocal relationship, distinguishing Mather’s missiology from Eliot’s.

The final evolution of Mather’s missiology was prompted by the growing influence of the SPG in early America. Unlike Jesuits threatened by the establishment and return of Sulpitian and Recollect missionaries to New France, Mather did not view this new vehicle of evangelisation with fear or hostility. The ‘Principal Glory’ of missionization in New England, embodied above all by Eliot, had been ‘the Purity of the Christianity’. The ‘Purity’ Mather was referencing was a faith expressed only by fidelity to the most fundamental Christian icons and praxis, rather than one scarred by denominational peculiarities. Such features were limited to the worship of God and Christ, the rejection of anything that divine influence exposed as evil, and a commitment to prayer as the only mode of devotion. Neither Catholic accretions, such as liturgical practice, or other ‘Disputed Ways of Worship’ practiced by Mather’s fellow Protestants enjoyed such status. This appeal to a trans-denominational missiology was beneficial. The SPG was an important source of funding for future missions; a resource that could be jeopardised by unnecessary descriptions of a narrow doctrinal Calvinism. More significantly, however, this expediency prompted Mather into embracing a

³²² Cotton Mather. *The Way to Prosperity: A Sermon Preached to the Honourable Convention of the Governour, Council, and Representatives of the Massachusetts-Colony in New-England, on May 23. 1689*, (Boston: R. Pierce, 1690), 27 & 34 (‘Criolian Degeneracy’, ‘worthy Europeans’, 34).

definition of successful missionization that only required converts to commit to a new deity, moral code and pious practice.³²³

By the early-eighteenth century, then, Puritan missiology had been translated to adapt to the most significant challenges to its logic and concepts. This transformation was catalysed by King Philips' War, then finally fully articulated by Cotton Mather in response to the shifting religious and political terrain of New England's Atlantic network. The result was a provincialized early American missiology, where the purpose of evangelism was enmeshed with New England ministers' particular discourse of declension, while emphasising a generalised Protestant purity in response to new evangelical institutions in the region.

Pueblo Revolts and a Crisis of Conscience

Like the Puritans', Franciscan missiology in New Mexico was most provincialized by a devastating surge of Indian power. The missionaries reacted to Pueblo attempts to extirpate Spanish colonialism by abandoning most of the logics that had sustained their activity in the Rio Grande region, replacing them with others. By the eighteenth century, their crafting of an early American missiology was complete. Years before Popé's plan came to fruition, Franciscans in New Mexico had expressed anxiety that a plot to destroy the Spanish colonial presence in the Pueblo world was building. Yet they were still stunned when the assault so swiftly engulfed twenty-one of their fellow missionaries in the missions north of Santa Fe.

Francisco de Ayeta was the most important Franciscan in the subsequent Franciscan reaction. Ayeta's first response to the Pueblos' assault was to distinguish the mission itself

³²³ Cotton Mather. *India Christiana: A Discourse Delivered unto the Commissioners, for the Propagation of the Gospel among the American Indians* (Boston: B. Green, 1721), 33-34 ('Principal Glory', 'Purity', 33; 'Disputed Ways', 34).

from the Franciscans who had been killed, offering a predictable valorisation of the dead and a declaration that the members of his order had not given up on the missions in New Mexico. His greatest fear, that ‘this nursery of the faith and the stepping stones of many missions would be lost’, had been realised; but he was explicit that this dismay did not apply to the slain missionaries. He assured the Viceroy that the Franciscans still in New Mexico remained ‘zealous for the divine goodness’, so that the progress of the Order ‘may be assured in these which the world calls losses, they being really the richest treasure of the church’.³²⁴

Another feature of the Pueblo Revolt offered Ayeta a chance to more strongly associate the Franciscan Order with the providential direction suggested by the uprising. The Governor of New Mexico, Antonio de Otermín, had quickly been trapped at Santa Fe by the overwhelming Pueblo forces. Only one hundred Spanish men capable of fighting could be drawn from the settlement; this contingent faced a besieging army of two thousand Pueblos armed with guns, steel weapons and armour ransacked from Spanish outposts further north. The Spaniards were gradually forced into a narrowing defensive zone across a few government buildings. Otermín himself was struck by two arrows to the face and a bullet to the chest. On the 21st of September he realised the futility of further resistance and retreated south along the Rio Grande to El Paso.³²⁵

But until the Governor managed to relay information of the siege to El Paso, neither Ayeta nor the Spanish colonists knew his fate. When Governor Otermín finally managed to make contact with New Mexican officials anxiously awaiting news of his condition, Ayeta was delighted. He considered Otermín’s successful retreat from Santa Fe ‘a miracle of the Queen of the Angels’. This miraculous intervention had been facilitated by the Franciscans’s

³²⁴ Charles Wilson Hackett, *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermín’s Attempted Reconquest 1680-1682, Vol. I* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1942), 48 & 53 (‘nursery of the faith’, 48; ‘zealous’, ‘richest treasure’ 53).

³²⁵ Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, 135.

completion of the novena, a nine-day program of devotional prayer used to ask divine favour or direct intercession. On the ninth day, after the Mass had been performed, the news of the Governor's survival arrived, relieving the missionaries 'from the utter confusion in which we found ourselves, our whole lives having been a continuous mourning'. More generally, the Spanish reaction to the Revolt appeared to confirm a Franciscan prophetic tradition that foretold the attempted destruction of all vestiges of Christianity across New Mexico. The authors who expressed this fear, however, also predicted that such devastation would be a foundation from which the faith 'would increase to great opulence and exaltation, and with greater riches than all those discovered in New Spain'. These Franciscan seers, who Ayeta did not identify, were revered by their successors for their 'exemplary lives'.³²⁶

Ayeta's initial reaction was therefore to reaffirm themes articulated by Benavides and others in the 1620 and 1630s. Franciscan deaths functioned to sanction the missionaries' activity throughout the pueblos, in turn augmenting the zeal of those who remained alive. The happy news of Otermín's survival was then manipulated to connect institutional practice with providential favour, while validating predecessors' claims how the missions in New Mexico would progress.

However, the chaotic period after the revolt in 1680 ruined this enthusiasm. The following year Juan Domínguez de Mendoza, recognised as the most experienced military commander in the region, was sent north from the Tiwa pueblo of Isleta to determine if a significant number of Pueblos would now be willing to restore peace. Pushing upriver through deserted settlements, his expedition finally met an Indian army at Cochiti, led by Alonso Catití. The warriors did not attack. Instead, they gifted the Spanish their jackets as gifts inviting peace negotiations. Mendoza eagerly accepted, but soon learned that Otermín,

³²⁶ Hackett. *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians*, I, 92 & 128 ('Angels', 'continuous mourning', 92; 'great opulence', 'exemplary lives', 128).

following him from Isleta, had burned La Alameda, Puaray and Sandia, immediately ruining the delicate discussions. When this news reached Cochiti, Catití's warriors took up fortified positions on the arid hills around the settlement, indicating their renewed hostility.³²⁷

Mendoza's abortive effort was not only a practical failure; for Ayeta, the equally disastrous year following the Revolt was, above all, an epistemological shock. Every colonial agent with appreciable knowledge of New Mexico had predicted that the Pueblos would quickly clamour for the return of an institutionalised Spanish presence. Restoring Pueblo sovereignty, these men assumed, would expose the Indians to the Apaches, who had previously only been restrained by fear of Spanish power. The paranoia produced by this existential threat would be supplemented by a tortured consciousness of their apostasy. This 'uneasiness and terrible urgings' would necessitate the return of Franciscans to map how apostate Pueblos could repent and return to the Christian fold.³²⁸ Both convictions derived from an arrogant belief that both colonial and Franciscan authority was now sufficiently enmeshed with the Pueblo world for its absence to intolerably distort the cultural, political and religious landscape of the Rio Grande Valley, and thus require their swift return.

Neither assumption was accurate. The imagined Apache onslaught against the Pueblo world had not materialised. Though the borderland separating both configurations of Indian power remained hostile, the former had not managed any effective attacks against pueblos within it. More worryingly for Ayeta, it was impossible 'to perceive the slightest action, vestige, or sign from which can be inferred anything else except only that they have been and are exceedingly well satisfied to give themselves over to blind idolatry, worshiping the devil

³²⁷ For a detailed biography of Juan Dominguez de Mendoza and his significance to Spanish colonialism in New Mexico, see France V. Scholes, Marc Simmons & José Antonio Esquibel. *Juan Domínguez de Mendoza: Soldier and Frontiersman of the Spanish Southwest, 1627-1693* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012), 1-69. For the abortive expedition to Cochiti, see p. 33-36.

³²⁸ Hackett. *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians, II*, 306-307 ('terrible urgings', 307).

and living according to and in the same manner as when they were heathen'.³²⁹ The first revolt of the Pueblos in 1680 had, therefore, initially offered Ayeta the opportunity to reaffirm Franciscan commitment to New Mexico and connect the peculiarity of Franciscan praxis and prophecy to the conferral of divine favour. But these positive additions to his missiology were soon tempered by the realisation that Christianization would not be as easily revived in the Rio Grande Valley as he had imagined. This stirring pessimism was the foundation for a comprehensive recalibration of Franciscan missiology, a process that burst into life twelve years after Popé's plan had been so effectively actioned.

Diego de Vargas, assigned Governor of New Mexico in 1688 and tasked with reconquering the region for the Spanish empire, made his first expedition into the Pueblo world in 1692. Intended only as a reconnaissance venture, Vargas secured the stated allegiance of twenty-three Pueblo communities. This first foray led Vargas to inscribe a grandiose statement on El Morro, proclaiming himself the conqueror of 'all the New Mexico'. His return to Mexico City was celebrated, and the viceroy pledged financial support for the recruitment of colonists and soldiers to reoccupy the Rio Grande Valley. A contingent of eight hundred people, including one hundred Spanish soldiers alongside Pueblo Indians who had remained loyal to Spain, rushed towards Santa Fe in 1693. Diplomacy and intimidation were, unfortunately for Vargas, unsuccessful this time. Santa Fe was eventually wrested from Tewas and Tanos, who doggedly defended their control of the settlement, but could not withstand the force that Vargas had raised. When the fighting was over, Spaniards executed seventy Indians who had refused to surrender and claimed control of Santa Fe. From this strategic foothold Vargas pushed on, imagining most pueblos to have been subdued by late 1694.³³⁰

³²⁹ Hackett. *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians, II*, 308 ('blind idolatry').

³³⁰ Weber. *Spanish Frontier*, 137-139.

During de Vargas' campaign to restore Spanish colonialism in New Mexico, the peace established with Tewa and Tano included Indians' requests for the return of the friars for religious instruction. Shortly after, eight Franciscans waiting at Santa Fe for the restoration of their missions across the region signed a statement in response. Critically, it gave their reasons for agreeing to return to Tewa and Tano territory. The 'obligations of their consciences' was important; equally so, however, was the promise of 'the credit to our seraphic order, even though we should be in danger of losing a thousand lives, which we would gladly give as well employed for these two highly justifiable aims'. The statement later repeated this consideration but expressed it negatively. Any decision to reject the Indians' invitations 'might bring certain inconveniences that would to the discredit of our seraphic order'.³³¹ In short, the possibility of suffering and murder was no impediment to renewed missionization in New Mexico, but would be accepted primarily as a responsibility to the corporate identity of the Franciscan order rather than a salvific quest. By reappraising the desirability of martyrdom, the missionaries had initiated an institutional conversation that reassessed the key components of the missiology constructed by Benavides and others in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Despite Vargas' message on El Morro, he had not been successful in bringing the Pueblo world back under Spanish control. The Franciscans, many now isolated again in remote missions along the Rio Grande, knew this. A general consensus slowly emerged from Vargas' disappointing reaction to continual requests for guards at each mission, as the friars tried to justify their decision to abandon their pueblos altogether.

The prospect of martyrdom figured prominently in these discussions. Friar José Arbizu was profoundly concerned about the correct course of action he should take. Most of

³³¹ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 86-87 ('their consciences', 'seraphic order', 86; 'certain inconveniences', 87).

the Pueblos at his mission of San Cristóbal had left abruptly. They had transported their supplies of corn and clothing into the mountainous region beyond the pueblo, and built defensive fortifications in the hills. Pinjui, a powerful Pueblo now in open rebellion against the renewed Spanish presence, had enticed them to do so. Even more worryingly, all of the young warriors at San Christóbal supported Pinjui, and were among those who had fortified themselves in the sierra. Arbizu's primary reaction to the rising tension was confusion, in such a context, about the relationship between his own death and the success of missionization. The sudden abandonment of the pueblo by the hostile Indians had to be punished, especially considering their repeated efforts to instigate similar action in other settlements. Yet attempting retaliation could quickly provoke violence, anger that would likely be directed at Arbizu himself. This prospect of death, the friar wrote, was 'what most afflicts me and preys on my limited intellect'. He could not determine if death under such circumstances would constitute 'true martyrdom'. But if he fled, 'would it be cause for them to become more obdurate?' Supplementing this dilemma was the spiritual condition of Don Cristóbal Yope Tete and Pecuchillo, two Pueblos who had initially warned Arbizu about the contingent who had left for the mountains. Even if Arbizu could decide whether death or flight was the most suitable reaction, either would force the friar to 'leave them alone and forsake them'. To escape his intellectual torment Arbizu asked Francisco de Vargas to simply give him orders, which he would dutifully obey.³³²

His fellow missionaries in New Mexico were equally anxious that a missiology reifying martyrdom above all other considerations was inappropriate for the devastated Christian landscape along the Rio Grande. Friar Francisco Corbera assured his superior that he would welcome his death at the mission of San Ildefonso if it could assure the salvation of

³³² *Pueblo Indian Revolt, 171-172* ('limited intellect', 'true martyrdom', 171; 'more obdurate', 'forsake them', 172).

at least some of the Pueblos there. However, he knew this was fanciful. His death would only cause more sacrilege among the Indians. Martyrdom by murder was therefore not an option, but neither was an extended one, referred to by Corbera as ‘a rigorous martyrdom’. This second avenue of sainthood would not be conferred on him either, partly because his efforts had not yet merited it, and partly because ‘it would be rigorously an act of hatred of the faith’. Another missionary, José Díez, suggested a similar interpretation of martyrdom, a fate that would require practical benefit before it could be designated as such. If, as he anticipated, he was forced to flee his post at the pueblo of Tesuque, he was convinced that ‘it would be rashness...to offer oneself to be killed only for the sake of their desire to kill without reaping any fruit for God if they only remain more obstinate’. Friar Miguel de Trizio supplied a third articulation of this idea. Dying a martyrological death was ‘pleasing to our souls’, but welcoming such a fate was not justifiable while rebellion loomed. The Indians’ only consideration in killing Trizio would be ridding themselves of a Franciscan and thereby securing their freedom from further Spanish control.³³³ In short, dying at the hands of potentially rebellious Pueblos, in a context apparently devoid of any other encouraging signs for missionization, could not be sanctioned by the friars themselves. Their deaths would not deserve the title of martyrdom.

Antonio Carbonel was a fourth missionary forced to reassess his commitment to the region after Vargas’ repeated failure to provide a military guard for the missions. He fixated on the dialogic relationship between the Crown and missionization established by Benavides, suggesting that to continue missionization among the Pueblo Indians amounted to a betrayal of the King. The Franciscan had been told that following the imagined reconquest he would enter ‘a conquered and pacified land’ in New Mexico. By now, this had been proven an

³³³ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 182, 219 & 226 (‘rigorous martyrdom’, ‘act of hatred’, 182; ‘reaping any fruit’, 219; ‘pleasing’, 226).

obvious fabrication. Yet Carbonel appeared most concerned about the implications for the relationship between the Franciscan Order and the Spanish Crown. The monarch was providing alms for the Order in New Mexico, apparently under the impression that they could effectively evangelise the Indians in the Rio Grande Valley. His continued contribution of funds supposed 'that much fruit is being harvested, whereas there is none because of the very many thorns and brambles'. Furthermore, Carbonel's status as a mendicant meant that there was nothing with which to repay the Crown; restitution made necessary by the extremely discouraging prospects for evangelical success. Carbonel was compelled to state this concern 'so that at no time may it be said that our sacred religion has deceived its king'.³³⁴ Not only would the killings of friars function as meaningless tragedies among populations implacably opposed to Christianity, but the failure they embodied would represent a violation of the reciprocal relationship between Franciscans and the Crown.

The friars were also tormented by the murky and confusing religious landscape of their missions. Their most significant concern related to performing the Mass. This central liturgical practice could not be performed before apostates, but it was impossible to identify such Indians throughout the pueblos. Arbizu and Diez, based at Tesuque, both expressed this problem. The latter had received intelligence that two of the Pueblos at his mission were repeatedly updating Pecos Indians on the Spaniards dwindling supplies, assuring the rebels that the colonists were 'dropping with hunger', there being only 'twenty brave ones' left; this was enough to be designated an apostate, which meant Diez would not perform Mass. Arbizu expressed a similar pessimism, witnessing that 'when I raise the holy body of Jesus Christ they despise it and say that they do not believe it'. The friar considered the ritual not only worthless in such a tainted atmosphere, but an actively harmful performance that further

³³⁴ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 221 ('pacified land', 'thorns and brambles', 'deceived its king').

hardened attitudes at San Christóbal against Christianization.³³⁵ Neither friar, therefore, could in good conscience conduct the Mass, paralyzing renewed evangelism to secure liturgical purity.

Finally, in searching further for reasons to leave their missions, the friars took refuge in a Scriptural injunction, one which was also wielded to reaffirm their commitment to St. Francis himself. Carbonel and his colleague Francisco de Jesús María Casañas both referred to Christ's order to the Apostles to leave communities that rejected their gospel and find others that would welcome them and their ministry. Both continued to point out that St. Francis had ordered a similar approach. Abandoning missions could not, therefore, be a betrayal of the evangelical imperative. It was instead an affirmation of the friars' own fidelity to the word of Christ himself and to the founder of their Order.³³⁶

Vargas' partially successful campaign to subdue New Mexico to Spanish imperial power again had thus created an uncomfortable situation for the Franciscans tasked with reviving the missions in the Pueblo world. The tentative agreements of truces with certain pueblos obliged the missionaries to return to New Mexico, but his consequent refusal to provide adequate protection for their efforts - even on the violent frontiers where pueblos were threatened by Utes and Apaches – provoked serious thought about the viability of renewed evangelism. Martyrdom had, previously, been a final affirmation of a mission's potential, a fate that confirmed the sustainability of a mission when the institutionalisation of Christianity failed. It was now considered impossible., precluded by the continued and adamant threat to destroy every vestige of Spanish authority along the Rio Grande. Together with betraying the customary relationship with the Crown, and recalling Scriptural and

³³⁵ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 175, 178 & 196 ('dropping', 'brave ones', 175; 'they despise it', 178).

³³⁶ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 222-223 & 229.

institutional injunctions to abandon missions with little prospect of success, Franciscans quickly constructed a new discourse that justified leaving their pueblos.

The missionaries request for protection was prescient. Although agents of Spanish colonial power were awkwardly tolerated following Vargas' expeditions, in 1696 groups of Pueblos again found their presence too insidious. The Franciscans' fear was realised in June. In the evening, on the 4th, Arbizu and Carbonel were killed at San Christóbal. At the same time, at San Ildefonso, Pueblo and Apache Indians surrounded the settlement. Not wanting to risk a violent conflict with the Spanish inside, they set fire to every building. Corbera and Antonio Moreno both suffocated from smoke inhalation in a small, barricaded room. Casañas was the fifth and final victim; at eleven o'clock the next day he was called outside by Indians at San Diego de los Jémez to give confession to one lying ill. As soon as he emerged from the convent he was grabbed by a small group, dragged next to a cross that had been erected in the cemetery, and killed. Casañas himself had first raised the cross in the hope that hostile Indians would one day crucify him, but the Pueblos denied him this consolation. His corpse was left at the foot of the cross, a morbid reminder of the Indians' categorical rejection of Christianization.³³⁷

A semblance of Spanish colonial authority was eventually restored in the region. But the damage to Franciscan hopes had already been done. In late-November the custodian of the Holy Custody of New Mexico, friar Francisco de Vargas, responded to the Governor's request for twelve Franciscans to stay in the region as agents stabilising his apparent success. De Vargas agreed to obey the order, which had also been approved at higher institutional levels in New Spain. But his assent was not an optimistic one. The history of Franciscan hardship among the Pueblos had not conferred an appropriate reward. Rather, 'these

³³⁷ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 249-250.

miserable Indians' were 'still very averse to the law of our beloved Christ, for they little accept the Divine Word and Christian doctrine', the teaching of which produced only hatred. The only effective measure therefore became coercion through 'the rigor and punishment of governors and judges'. The friar recognised his seventeen years in New Mexico as a catalogue of suffering with little effect, concluding that Pueblos indicating their desires for peace were not at all interested in evangelisation. They simply desired the commercial benefits that would accrue from a restored relationship with Spanish agents.³³⁸

The Christianization of the Pueblo world stood at a pivotal point. The pastor at Santa Fe, friar Juan Muñoz de Castro, summarised this feeling in a reply to Francisco de Vargas' request for information. The interval between the revolt in 1680 and Vargas' reconquest had revived the 'natural rebelliousness' of the Pueblos, who would now consider missionization suppressive. This suggested the need for a change in strategy. The Franciscan tactic of openly and defiantly challenging expressions of Pueblo religion was no longer viable; 'insulting them with opprobriums as apostates, rebels, and witches' was likely to end in violent confrontation. De Castro did not suggest a different approach, but it had become clear that religious combat threatened the already highly precarious Franciscan position.³³⁹

By contrast, the Commissary General to the missionaries in New Mexico, Manuel de Monzabál, encouraged the Franciscans to remain at their missions. He warned that 'the crown is not won unless it is fought for to the finish, nor is it achieved if having placed the hand to the plow, it is turned back'. He also referred to the complementary examples of Christ and St. Francis, reminding them that the example of the former and the stated goal of the latter both obligated the Franciscans to evangelize, even under hopeless conditions. For, he continued, the deaths of the five in June, combined with those who had been slain in 1680, would

³³⁸ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 290 ('miserable Indians', 'very averse', governors and judges').

³³⁹ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 145 ('natural rebelliousness', 'opprobriums').

inevitably extend Christendom across New Mexico. His final statement was a reminder that ‘if it should happen that in your work you should lose you corporal life, you would be assuring the eternal life of your soul’.³⁴⁰ Monzabál provided this encouragement from the Franciscan convent at Querétaro, a town in central Mexico far removed from the painful reality of the missiological frontier along the Rio Grande.

This comparison between a pained articulation of the dreadful situation in the pueblos by the Franciscans there, and a pointed reminder from a distant superior that a violent death still promised to function as a traditional martyrdom, was evidence of a swift provincialization of Franciscan thought in New Mexico. Just as early America had been positively provincialized as a unique evangelical space, so a small contingent of Franciscans quickly crafted a new missiology that could justify temporarily abandoning their missions in the pueblos.

The comprehensive Pueblo assaults on Spanish colonialism in the late seventeenth century, deliberately planned to totally destroy every vestige of the invaders’ presence, therefore catalysed a similarly radical change in Franciscans’ missiology in New Mexico. Ayeta had first reacted to the uprising by welcoming the martyrdoms and reaffirming his Order’s commitment to the region. He was then further emboldened by his association between Franciscan activity and thought, and Otermín’s miraculous survival and the potential for quick revitalization of evangelism in New Mexico. But this optimism quickly dissipated after Mendoza’s ordeal at Cochiti. The assumptions guiding Ayeta’s confidence were proven fanciful. The anxiety that this produced reached a crescendo after de Vargas’ assumed reconquering of the pueblos that dotted the Rio Grande Valley. Pueblo recalcitrance endured, eventually spilling over into renewed violence. In this context Franciscans began to question

³⁴⁰ *Pueblo Indian Revolt*, 242-243 (‘hand to the plow’, 242; ‘corporal life’, 242-243).

almost every paradigm that had contributed to the missiology constructed in the first half of the seventeenth century. The requirements for martyrdom were clarified, narrowing the definition and thereby discouraging missionaries from inviting it without practical benefit; missionaries' obligation to royal authority was invoked to invalidate, rather than promote, evangelism; proper performance of the liturgy became illicit within arenas newly filled with Pueblo apostates; and, in perhaps the most poignant reversal, St. Francis himself was used to justify abandoning the New Mexico missions for sites offering greater potential elsewhere. This desperate manipulation of the concepts articulated most clearly by Benavides finally effected a comprehensive provincialization of Franciscan thought, marking the zenith of the creation of an early American Franciscan missiology.

Simultaneously with King Philip's War and the Pueblo Revolts, Jesuits in New France were forced to contend with accelerating imperial competition in early America. As New France extended into the Missouri and Mississippi River Valleys, so the English colonies to its southeast expanded into their western hinterlands. The Jesuits' experience of incorporation into the tension and conflict that these expansions provoked presented novel challenges. Furthermore, while Eliot and the Mathers grappled with defining the significance of missionization, Jesuits were contending with a different problem. The understanding that declension was a component of missiology, and vice versa, was derived from the devastating effect of Philip's war against English intruders. Jesuits, on the other hand, encountered similarly serious problems as a consequence of their successful expansion into Iroquoia and the western interior. While Jesuits adapted to the concentrated zone of colonial competition, their expansion across the continent created even more strictures on their activity. Their huge geographic reach, enveloping a constantly shifting demographic terrain of Indian refugees, prisoners, warriors, traders and ambassadors, finally revealed the limits of the logics

sustaining Jesuit missionization. Together, these factors forced a third epochal transformation of early American Jesuit missiology.

The Contradictions of Expansion

The European empires' policy toward territories they claimed in north-eastern North America was shifting in the second half of the seventeenth century. Iroquois warriors had exposed the relative weakness of New France. Its distinguishing feature – a small, homogenous population devoted to cultivating trading and diplomatic relationships with as many Indian nations as possible – could not effectively withstand attack. Louis XVI imposed royal control over New France and reformed its government. Then in the 1680s, this imposition of royal control was mirrored in the English colonies. New England and New York were forced into a new political unit called the Dominion of New England. Authorities in both colonies resented this incorporation. When King James was deposed by William of Orange in the Glorious Revolution, they were emboldened to rebel against the arrangement. Yet the Dominion proved only a prelude to the encroaching authority of the English Crown over New England and New York, as William and Mary followed Louis XIV by imposing royal control over both. The expansion that both developments catalysed intensified the competition between French and English colonial interests in early America; as the rivalry worsened missionaries were forced to meet new obligations as colonial agents.³⁴¹

³⁴¹ For this expansion of royal authority in early American colonies, see W.J. Eccles. *Canada Under Louis XIV, 1663-1701* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 6-39; William E. Nelson. *The Common Law in Colonial America: Volume III: The Chesapeake and New England, 1660-1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) 83-96; Francis J. Bremer. *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society from Bradford to Edwards, Revised Edition* (London: University Press of New England, 1995), 209-225; Taylor, *American Colonies*, 276-289 & 365-376.

Even after Louis XVI imposed royal control over his colony in early America, Jesuits and rival colonial agents from English colonies retained a cordial, sometimes openly admiring relationship. In 1668 some Mohawks, at the Jesuit Jean Pierron's instigation, sent a petition to the Governor at Manhattan urging him to regulate the liquor trade at Albany. The Mohawks considered 'the intoxicating liquor' sold by the traders 'a foreign Demon, more to be feared than those that they worshipped in their dreams'. Pierron attached his own letter to the petition, which was answered quickly. Governor Francis Lovelace agreed to impose penalties on any excessive trade with the Indians. He ended his response by attributing their request to Pierron's 'pious teachings – you who, being well versed in a strict discipline, have shown them the path of mortification, not only by your precepts, but by your practice'.³⁴²

But such relationships were unsustainable as influence over the Five Nations increased in importance. Missionization quickly became a critical feature of the diplomacy between New France, the Five Nations, and the English colonies. First, Jesuit activity became key to claims of control over Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga and Seneca communities. The Iroquois policy of neutrality had cooled tension between themselves and the settler societies threatening to intrude on their territory, inviting their incorporation into the alliance systems of the colonies most advantageous to them. Within this context, features of the Jesuit mission now began to be weaponised by French colonial agents in early America. In the mid-1680s, in an atmosphere made especially febrile by Sieur de La Salle's founding of Fort St. Louis on the Illinois River, the diplomatic world centred on the Five Nations burst into life. Jesuits were a significant part.

In March 1684 a band of two hundred Seneca and Cayuga warriors encountered seven canoes on the Illinois, manned by French traders and laden with merchandize intended for the

³⁴² *JR* LII: 139-141 ('liquor', 'foreign Demon', 139; 'path of mortification', 141).

Sioux. The Iroquois seized the goods and took the traders as prisoners. After nine days they finally released the French ‘with thousands of taunts and insults’. Emboldened, they afterward headed to Fort St. Louis and assaulted the settlement. The desperate French defence managed to counter three attacks before the two hundred withdrew on the 29th March.³⁴³ Joseph-Antoine le Febvre de La Barre, Frontenac’s successor as Governor, had warned his counterpart in New York, Governor Dongan, that the French would take revenge for this attack. But Dongan had replied by questioning the claim of the French to the land itself, and thus de la Barre’s right to lead reprisals against Senecas and Cayugas. The French governor refused to recognise the issue as a territorial one, but reminded Dongan that Jesuit missions had dotted the landscape in question for over twenty-five years ‘without the English having ever known, or spoken of, that country’. Dongan quickly replied that ‘how charitable soever’ the Jesuit missions may be, they gave ‘no right or title’ to the territory in question.³⁴⁴ Jesuits across New France had previously been valued as agents recasting the moral landscape of the Indian worlds in which they missionized, civilizing Indian allies by making them more predictable and encouraging enemies to participate in a shared religious identity. Now their endeavour could also be wielded to secure territorial claims in the increasingly agitated competition over early American geography.

In the interval between further correspondence between both Governor, Jacques - René de Brisay de Denonville took over from de La Barre. Replying directly to Governor Dongan’s accusation that Jesuit presence conferred no authority over any territory, he cited the eighty years that Jesuits had worked for the conversion of the Indians, and was ‘astonished that you are ignorant of the number of martyrs who have spilt their blood and sacrificed their lives for the faith of Jesus Christ’. Jogues and Bressani’s lives, also, took on

³⁴³ *NYCD*, III: 451 (‘thousands of taunts’).

³⁴⁴ *NYCD*, III: 452 (‘that country’, ‘how charitable’, ‘no right’).

another meaning; Denonville reminded Dongan that before New York had been seized by the English Jesuits ‘persecuted and martyred, found there an asylum and protection’.³⁴⁵ Utilising the history of the Jesuits in this way was calculating; Denonville had stated elsewhere that evangelism was not a sufficient reason to keep missionaries among the Iroquois nations, only that Jesuits functioned as those ‘most capable of controlling the spirit of all the Indian tribes’, and consequently promoting French power through stability and trade.³⁴⁶

Dongan was not as cynical. Albany remained the key node in the critical trade relations between the colony of New York and the Iroquois. In 1686, the Commissioners appointed to oversee the town and the inhabitants themselves both wrote to Dongan bemoaning the migration of Christian Iroquois toward Canada following instruction from the Jesuit priests. The volume of trade was consequently diminished. The solution, claimed both groups of petitioners, was to endeavour to replace the Jesuits insinuated in ‘the Indian Castles’ with English missionaries, thereby preventing further migration away from the Anglo-Indian commercial world and sustaining the economic relationships that maintained the diplomatic peace. Their terminology was important. Neither petition distinguished the Jesuits as Catholic missionaries, or the proposed English priests as Anglican, or even Protestant. Both were referred to simply as ministers of ‘the Christian Religion’.³⁴⁷ The following year Dongan sent a terse letter to Denonville warning him that these English priests were expected imminently, and that either of two Jesuit brothers working in Onondaga territory, Jean and Jacques de Lamberville, should ‘meddle only with the affairs belonging to his function’. The Catholic Indians should, furthermore, be content with ‘being alone without

³⁴⁵ NYCD, III: 470-471 (‘spilt their blood’, ‘persecuted’, 470).

³⁴⁶ NYCD, IX: 440 (‘controlling the spirit’).

³⁴⁷ Barbara Graymont, ed. *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607-1789, Vol. VIII: New York and New Jersey Treaties, 1683-1713* (Washington, D.C.: University Publications of America, 1994), 85 & 87 (‘Indian Castles’, 85; ‘Christian Religion’, 87).

endeavouring to debauch others after them'. He promised severe punishment for the latter if they continued to try.³⁴⁸

Denonville's competing appeal to a shared Christianity was, of course, not novel. Druillettes and the cast of religious and governing characters that he encountered across New England had most embodied that attitude in the late-1640s. But the context had now changed. Iroquois power remained the fulcrum around which much diplomatic activity between New France and its English colonial rivals revolved, but the Five Nations did not now pose an overwhelming existential threat. Agents of colonialism, Jesuits among them, had steadily acquired increased influence within Iroquois nations, a concomitant of the latter's own calculated efforts to retain their hold on the balance of continental power. It was within this context that Denonville betrayed the faulty logic foundational to the intercolonial agreement that Jesuits were essential to future relations with the Five Nations. Amid the tense disagreement with Dongan, he wrote 'the natural treachery of a people without faith and without religion, require us to be so far distrustful of them that you ought not to blame me for using precaution against their restlessness and caprice'.³⁴⁹ It was the Iroquois' lack of religion that therefore made them 'treacherous', but it was this erratic character that had often created spaces for the French to quietly advance their colonial interests, sometimes to the detriment of New York's. However, the accord that Christianization must be allowed to proceed independent of colonial tension would, if assumptions proved accurate and Iroquois diplomacy was made stable and predictable, close off these avenues for subtly promoting French power.

³⁴⁸, Barbara Graymont, ed. *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607-1789, Vol. VIII*, 111 ('his function', 'debauch others').

³⁴⁹ *NYCD*, III: 459 ('natural treachery').

Such a logical failure in French strategy was likewise mirrored in their diplomacy with Indian agents in early America. The deliberate approach of the architects of French colonial policy to maintain peaceful relations with as many Indian nations as possible, subsuming their respective conflicts with each other under the pacifying authority of Onontio at Quebec, now began to falter. Abenakis had begun to attack English villages surrounding Boston in the 1720s, forcing authorities in New England to declare war. The Iroquois, despite their measured policy of neutrality, were nevertheless persuaded by the Governor of New York, William Burnet, and presents from Boston to join the conflict against the Abenakis. Onontio's obligation was to Abenakis, but they would now be fighting Iroquois, over whom the French also presumed a degree of control. The problem for French colonialists, therefore, was not only an accelerating demographic and commercial disadvantage. Their two strategies - of encouraging Indian allies into assaults intended to weaken English colonial interests, and reorganising the entire Indian world of the northeast into a coherent entity governed from Quebec – were incompatible.³⁵⁰

Jesuits and Protestant ministers continued to increase in importance into the eighteenth century. In 1692 an appeal to the French King for more forces to counter the English and Iroquois assaults described the Crown's greatest obligation as to the empire of Catholic neophytes now stretching 'more than seven hundred leagues from Quebec'. The narrative of Christianization in early America was presented as martyrological, asking if the example of 'so many holy Priests, so many Friars and Nuns, so many Missionaries who have laid down their lives and poured out their blood' could be ignored.³⁵¹ Then when the Earl of Bellomont arrived in New York in late-July 1700 he inherited a weakened relationship with the Five Nations. His predecessor as Governor, Benjamin Fletcher, had overseen a growing

³⁵⁰ NYCD V: 703-04.

³⁵¹ NYCD IX: 542 ('seven hundred leagues', 'laid down their lives').

neglect toward the Iroquois, which had ‘mightily alienated them from us’. The Jesuits, Bellomont warned, had gratefully stepped into this vacuum and remained ‘hard at work to inveigle our Indians from us’. To stop the relationship between the Iroquois nations and the government at New York deteriorating any further, and arrest this growing Jesuit influence, Bellomont quickly planned a visit to Albany. He was, however, pessimistic. He had not been authorised to provide them with Protestant ministers for religious instruction - a point that several Iroquois ambassadors had insisted on – and, even if he had been, he could find none both willing to participate in a mission among the Five Nations and competent enough to provide appropriate and orthodox preaching. Bellomont was therefore keenly aware that evangelism was a powerful component of any future alliance with at least some of the Iroquois nations; a frustrating insight when the skill and inclination of Protestant ministers was compared unfavourably with those of the Jesuits.³⁵²

This seizure on missionization as a tool of imperial competition left little room for the agency of Jesuits themselves. But where such agency was most obvious – in the vast geographic reach of their missions – similarly contradictory features were exposed. Though previously considered a sign of providential favour, the chaotic demographics of settlements in the Iroquois shatter zone further complicated missionization, by making the meaning of expressions of piety highly elastic. At the mission of St. Ignace at Michilimackinac, the missionary Henri Nouvel was asked by the Kiskakon, a clan of the Odawas, to plant a cross to which they could direct their devotion. This request sparked controversy when a captain ambivalent toward Christianity asked the utility of the symbol. The question was not, it seemed, posed in a hostile or mocking manner, so when the cross was erected another Odawa ‘cleverly made a lance and sponge, the better to represent the mystery of the death of Jesus Christ’. This pedagogic intention, however, caused further confusion and fear. Indians at St.

³⁵² NYCD IV: 688 & 690 (‘mightily alienated’, ‘hard at work’, 688).

Ignace had never seen another cross embellished with a lance or sponge, even in the French settlements along the St. Lawrence. One concluded from this novel display that the former was a portent of imminent Iroquois attacks; its connection with the cross meant that this assault was sanctioned by Christ himself. This association of violence with the spiritual power latent in the symbol of the cross was further affirmed by a horrifying rumour that Sioux raiding parties crucified any Odawa captives they seized.³⁵³ Stabilizing the meanings of Christian symbology was critical to successful missionization, but became increasingly difficult as deliberate Jesuit expansionism pulled a greater variety of Indian intellectual traditions into contact with their message.

Étienne De Carheil, another Jesuit labouring in the mission on the Straits of Mackinac, was now faced with the unfortunate consequences of the Jesuit demand for an increased martial presence in New France. Initially intended to effectively subdue Iroquois power in the Laurentian region, the military presence in the colony expanded quickly to protect vital avenues of commerce throughout the Great Lakes. The Straits were one such avenue; narrow waterways connecting Lakes Huron and Michigan, they were the critical route linking French fur traders with their Indian counterparts to the west. De Carheil, however, was dismayed by the soldiers' presence in the region. The garrison and the voyageurs worked together to promote trade of alcohol with the Indians who lived at the Jesuit missions. With the missionaries powerless to prevent it, this alliance had left Indian villages 'only Taverns, as regards drunkenness; and sodoms, as regards immorality'. Soldiers were, furthermore, keenly aware that the Jesuits considered them enemies of evangelisation. If their actions undermined the traders' interests in the Straits, they deliberately requested and attended as many meetings with Jesuits as they could arrange, under the guise of asking their advice; when the traders became conscious of the harm the soldiers' actions would do to

³⁵³ *JR* LXI: 133-137 ('lance and sponge', 135).

them, the members of the garrison portrayed these meetings as conspiratorial gatherings requested by the Jesuits to discuss degrading voyageur influence in their missions.³⁵⁴

This was not a problem unique to de Carheil's region. In October 1718 Joseph-François Lafitau made a similar complaint on behalf of the Christian Iroquois at Kahnawake, this time about the calamitous effects of cynical traders. Bruyas had warned him that over one hundred Iroquois had deliberately migrated to the mission to escape the shocking features of the brandy trade, centred to the south at Albany. This trade, Lafitau argued, was disastrous for Indians, missionaries and merchants alike. The frenzy with which many Iroquois traded for alcohol was unsustainable; very soon, they were hopelessly indebted. The merchants, therefore, would never receive compensation for the instability this provoked across the fur trade. A second, perhaps even greater worry was a geopolitical component; Iroquois unable to satisfy the debts they thereby accrued had little option but to flee the sphere of French influence south of Montreal to attach themselves to English settlements in New York's hinterland.³⁵⁵

Four years later, in May 1722, a written memorial from the Christian Iroquois at Kahnawake reached the French Governor at Quebec. Aside from asking for the return of de Lauzon, the Jesuit who had labored in the mission before, the Christians pleaded that the military garrison withdrawn from the mission three years before be permanently disbanded. The Iroquois mirrored de Carheil and Lafitau's rhetoric, warning both that 'our wives and our daughters, are not safe with the French soldiers' and the 'Young men, who are very numerous, follow but too willingly the bad examples before their eyes'. The moral decay that followed from the martial force stationed at the mission had introduced 'a thousand vices that

³⁵⁴ *JR* LXV: 191-205 ('only Taverns', 195).

³⁵⁵ *JR* LXVII: 41 & 43.

were formerly unknown among us'. This was particularly devastating given that the Christians' 'only reason that made us leave our country and our families was religion'.³⁵⁶

In turn, the mobility that Lafitau complained of produced yet another obstacle. The thickening entanglement of Calvinist and Catholic missions in early America undermined certain evangelical methods that had proved highly effective in previous decades. The predictability of solar and lunar eclipses had previously been seized by Jesuits as a powerful missiological tool. Le Jeune and Bressani both utilised this method. Their successful forecasts - proclaimed boldly and publicly to unconverted Indians – both conferred an authoritative new role on the Jesuits as oracles with intimate knowledge, or even directors of, future events such as harvests or conflict, and encouraged a strong association between the truth of their predictions and the veracity of the faith they preached.³⁵⁷ But this extremely powerful expression of supernatural power relied entirely on an epistemological gulf that separated only Jesuits and evangelized Indians. When one of the former attempted to frighten Mohawks with a prediction of a solar eclipse the Indians, terrified, relayed this warning to Dutch traders. They countered the missionary's strategy by claiming that 'this was no more than every Child among them could foretell', stealing any potential authority the Jesuit could have claimed by denying such knowledge was esoteric. To further undermine his efforts the traders mockingly recommended that the Mohawks request the eclipse on a different day; only then could the Jesuit claim a degree of arcane power. The Mohawks recognised the joke and became 'irreconcilably prejudiced' against the missionary and, by extension, other French colonial agents.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶ JR LXVII: 73-75 ('our wives', 'Young men', 73; 'leave our country', 75).

³⁵⁷ JR XV: 139; JR XVII: 119-121; JR XXXIX: 145.

³⁵⁸ Cotton Mather. *The Triumphs of the Reformed Religion in America* (Boston: Benjamin Harris & John Allen, 1691), 129 ('every Child', 'prejudiced').

A final threat came from the colonial leadership itself. Louis de Buade, Count Frontenac, was appointed Governor of New France in 1672. His arrival at Quebec was an acutely dangerous moment for the Jesuits. The King had directly instructed the Count to treat the Jesuits with respect but maintain strict boundaries to their authority. The Crown distrusted the missionaries, and ordered Frontenac to protect the Recollects and Sulpicians who had recently gained institutional power in New France. These two missionary orders could counterbalance Jesuit power, which the King feared would invade on his own. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Louis XVI's closest advisor and most influential figure in the reorganisation of New France under royal control, likewise requested the new Governor gently advise against Jesuit requests to continue expanding their missions 'in the far countries'. French power in North America was now to be consolidated along the St. Lawrence river, not expanded beyond its shores.³⁵⁹

Beginning in the late-seventeenth century, the widening sphere of Jesuit activity in early America, so prized by the missionaries, therefore entangled missionaries with an increasingly less manageable variety of Indian nations, French soldiers and traders often actively conspiring against Jesuit interests, and rival colonial agents who could demystify their demonstrations of power. Missionaries aggressively promoting their evangelical interests had also annoyed the French Crown, whose officials in New France were now ordered to limit further expressions of their authority.

To counter this formidable array of restrictive or openly hostile relationships, Jesuits reaffirmed older missiological themes while manipulating others. Bigot, like his predecessors following the utter devastation of the Huron missions and the killings of the six martyrs, found comfort in providentialism. He wrote multiple letters in the early 1680s complaining

³⁵⁹ NYCD, IX: 88 & 115 ('far countries', 115).

that there was simply too much evangelism to attend to; the steady stream of Abenaki migration into Sillery had been supplemented by Indians from Gaspé, Sokokis and Algonquins. This flood, composed largely of bands of refugees, concentrated missiological responsibility around Sillery. The eager expansionism that had carried Jesuits into Iroquoia, and into missions at the western reaches of the Great Lakes and along the Mississippi River, had placed too great an obligation on individual Jesuits. Bigot reacted by reversing the Jesuit obsession with geographic range. He was concerned particularly with the swell of Sokokis travelling to his mission; Sillery was ‘not yet sufficiently established in christian piety’ to admit them, who were ‘much inclined to drunkenness’. His instinct had therefore been to establish an itinerant mission among them, hoping thereby to discourage their apparent vices as a condition for entering the settlement. But because Sillery bustled with too many Indians, Bigot could not leave. His only recourse was to a resigned providentialism, wondering ‘perhaps the time will come for the conversion of those people, as it has come for the Conversion of the Abnaquis’.³⁶⁰ The swift demographic changes at Sillery had necessitated Bigot reimagining his missiological role in early America. He had wanted to establish itinerant missions beyond the borders of his own, thus fulfilling his role as an intrepid agent of Christianization, but had been forced into adopting a more stable role, reacting to migrations catalysed by providence and fulfilling their evangelical purpose.

De Carheil could only conceive one strategy for neutralizing the terrible effect of the garrison on Jesuit efforts. First, and most simply, the soldiers should be sent away. They served no practical purpose, their only contribution being to the rapid disintegration of the Christian moral landscape. Second, a military force must be raised to finally destroy all five Iroquois nations. Recent Iroquois raids had conclusively demonstrated that they could not be trusted, a conviction that need only remember the constant diplomatic cycle of treaties and

³⁶⁰ *JR* LIII: 71 (‘inclined to drunkenness’, ‘the time will come’).

conflicts that had characterised the seventeenth century. Indian fur traders could, were such a plan successful, then navigate the route to Montreal without the paralyzing fear of Iroquois attack. In turn, this would allow voyageurs to stay in the settlements along the St. Lawrence, thus expanding and enriching the colony rather than abandoning its settlements to trade at western posts. Therefore, of the three power blocs that struggled to coexist in the villages on the Straits only the Jesuits would remain, and they could rebuild the missions as Catholic oases once more. Concluding, de Carheil warned that the current situation was untenable; if leading officials in the colony refused to consider his proposal, the Jesuits would be forced to abandon their missions in the region, since there was no potential for progress under such conditions.³⁶¹

This was a clear expression that the inviting prospect of a long and difficult, or a violent and short martyrdom was not sufficient for a Jesuit when the utter futility of a mission was guaranteed. Just as the Franciscans had done, de Carheil refused to find the necessary purpose for evangelism solely in a persecutory and highly pessimistic atmosphere; his missiology required at least the potential for such suffering to revive the Christian Indian communities besieged by the immorality of soldiers and traders. Now, martyrdom was not by itself an adequate prize for missiological endeavour. In addition, the Iroquois were now finally considered a barren prospect. The evolution of Jesuit thought toward the Five Nations was exceptionally dynamic: Brebeuf first seized on their reputation as a useful feature in evangelizing the Hurons; their killings of the six Jesuits in the late 1640s were eventually crafted into key paradigms for missionaries sent to New France; and their continued belligerence throughout the second half of seventeenth century acquired an evangelical dimension as Jesuits converted the captives they brought back from raids on myriad Indian nations. In each instance, Jesuits had been able to assimilate Iroquois into their missiological

³⁶¹ *JR* LXV: 223.

program. De Carheil, by contrast, could not; their renewed hostility toward New France and its Indian allies had conclusively demonstrated the futility of Jesuit activity among them. Consequently, they were now only obstacles that required the continued maintenance of garrisons at key commercial and diplomatic posts, which de Carheil was desperately trying to subdue.

In the tense zone of imperial competition, Jesuits consciously tried to transcend the divisive tension. The Lambervilles, firmly established among the Onondagas by 1680, obtained an agreement from the captain of their settlement that all captives returned to the village would be escorted to the chapel before their torture and execution. Either Jesuit could then baptise them, thus at least swelling the ranks of the church triumphant and assigning an evangelical function to the Iroquois custom of captivity and ritual torture. François Vaillant, their contemporary in Mohawk territory, had a similar arrangement. He, however, baptised sixteen Indians from an unidentified nation near ‘baston’; they had clearly already been taught ‘the principal articles of our faith by some Englishmen’, who had fortunately not yet discussed any ‘Controverted points’. These Indians were most likely inhabitants of one of the praying towns, probably instructed by Eliot himself. English evangelists like Eliot, therefore, were not criticised by the Jesuits for preaching a heretical Calvinism to their Indian neophytes; rather, the level of instruction remained solely Christian, having not yet addressed the thorniest issues that divided Catholic and Calvinist orthodoxies.³⁶²

This appeal to a Christianizing imperative that ignored the Catholic-Protestant divide was not a cynical diplomatic tool. When the Jesuit Pierre Millet was captured at Fort Frontenac by Iroquois raiders in June 1689, one of the Lambervilles managed to get a letter delivered to him. Lamberville repeated the assurance that Jesuits evangelising in early

³⁶² *JR* LXII: 241-243 (‘baston’, ‘principal articles’, ‘Controverted’, 243).

America had never aspired to anything other than ‘the salvation of souls’ and peace between English, French and Indians. But the boiling intercolonial tension provoked and then sustained by the outbreak of hostilities between French and Iroquois was negating these efforts. Lamberville yearned for a resumption of trust between the rival colonial powers, which would allow missionization to proceed uninterrupted again. To confirm this conviction Lamberville praised Godfridius Dellius, a pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church active around Albany. Dellius was known by the Jesuits for his missionary activity among the Mohawks. He personified the transcendent attitude that Lamberville expressed; for the Jesuit, ‘although there may be war between the French and those English who are opposed to the King of England, nevertheless we always entertain the same friendly dispositions towards Dominie Dellius, inasmuch as we both desire peace, not war’.³⁶³

Some Jesuits were therefore determined that imperial power games in early America would not jeopardise the endeavour to convert and thoroughly Christianize as many Indians as possible. Others, however, began to define themselves against the English ‘heretics’. At his mission among the Miamis, Allouez encountered Shawnees fleeing conflict with the Iroquois. His preaching to them had such an effect ‘that they said aloud that the The Father was very different from the Europeans in their land’. Thierry Beschefer, another Jesuit working alongside him, was convinced that they referred to the English on the eastern seaboard, who gave them ‘no tokens of friendship’ and refused to minister to them. Even worse, this negligence was sustained by their conviction that the Indians resembled only ‘beasts’; a population to which Paradise was simply unattainable. Allouez seized on this mistreatment to further emphasise the difference between Jesuits and Englishmen, assuring

³⁶³ NYCD III: 715 (‘salvation of souls’, ‘Dellius’).

the Shawnees that they could, through Catholic expressions of devotion and piety, achieve ‘the same happiness as the Europeans’.³⁶⁴

Bigot, de Carheil, the Lambervilles, Vaillant, Allouez and Beschefer therefore continued to respond creatively to the peculiar opportunities and challenges offered by different evangelical spaces. According to the Lambervilles and Vaillant, converting captives dragged back to Iroquoian missions was eased by their previous education in the praying towns along the New England frontier. Though conferred by Calvinists, this education was celebrated as providing foundational knowledge of Christian doctrine, thus easing more elaborate instruction in Catholic thought and practice. Elsewhere, Allouez and Beschefer found it expedient to emphasise the wide gulf between English attitudes toward missionization and their own. Yet though these were further innovations to Jesuit missiology, the contextual forces that shaped them were gradually strengthening. Three further challenges emerged in the early eighteenth century. First, an Onondaga sachem made clear how damaging the competition for evangelists in Iroquoia was; then a Jesuit attending to Abenaki communities embodied his Order’s incorporation into French imperial strategy, along with its disastrous effect; finally, another labouring among the Illinois found their relentless criticism a foundation for new conceptualisation of Jesuit agency in early America.

The Failure of Jesuit Missiology

The Grand Settlement of 1701, a combination of the Great Treaty of Montreal and the Albany Agreements, was the most formal expression of Iroquois neutrality in relation to the French and English empires in early America. It was a triumph of Iroquois strategy,

³⁶⁴ *JR* LXII: 209-211 (‘heretics’, ‘very different’, ‘tokens’, ‘beasts’, 209).

successfully ratifying peace agreements with New France and New York. But the lofty rhetoric heard at both Montreal, Albany, and Iroquois communities contained an explicit rejection of competition between Jesuits and Protestant ministers.

At Albany in June, Dekanissore stated clearly the predicament that this missiological combat was putting Indians in. He was an Onondaga sachem who had been central to the incessant diplomacy between his nation and French and English colonial agents vying desperately for their favour. The main target of his address was Peter Schuyler, one of the most important government officials in New York and a man with almost singular experience of Indian affairs. Dekanissore spoke bluntly. He was, by now, exasperated by the competing offers of Jesuits and Protestant ministers. Even worse, his community had been divided by the choice, warning that ‘some will have a priest on the one side of the Castle and a Minister on the other side’. Schuyler responded predictably, ordering him to simply expel the Jesuits. For Dekanissore, however, the memory of the recent disastrous conflict with the French in the late-17th century disallowed this option. Indeed, the Grand Settlement had been encouraged partly by French victories over Iroquois warriors. Expelling the Jesuits could invite another explosion of hostility, a risk the sachem was unwilling to take. Schuyler tried reasoning with the Indian, claiming that having accepted a Protestant minister for instruction, ‘would you now take a Popish priest, that would make you ridiculous’. But Dekanissore’s memory again mitigated the effect of Schuyler’s argument; he remembered the betrayal of an alliance his nation had enjoyed with the English, when the latter refused to assist after French soldiers attacked Onondagas and Mohawks. As if to help Schuyler better understand his position, Dekanissore gestured to two wampum belts that represented each nation’s promise

of a missionary.³⁶⁵ Each imposed an obligation, but Dekanissore was threatening to meet neither. Schuyler had dismissed his concerns, forcing him into a decision.

Three months later, in September, the sachem announced his judgment. At a meeting involving Dekanissore, Schuyler and French agents in Onondaga, he expressed his frustration. ‘You both tell us to be Christians’, he began, warning that ‘you both make us madd, wee know not what side to choose but I will speake no more praying or Christianity’. The only solution, he suggested, was in trade. He would accept the belt of ‘the cheapest pennyworth’. Of the English and French, those who traded at the most favourable prices would have their offer accepted. The others would have no religious presence in Dekanissore’s community. Furthermore, while colonial merchants competed for business in Onondaga, the Indians would no longer accept any Jesuit or Protestant missionary. Dekanissore concluded by blaming the incessant efforts of evangelists to convert Onondagas. Their ‘noise of praying’ had affected the Indians so seriously that ‘wee must first come to our selves again’.³⁶⁶

Dekanissore had articulated the effect of the colonial obsession with installing missionaries in Indian communities. Though he had skilfully directed colonial paranoia into demands for more favourable trade, the Indian also made clear the real anguish that these competing religious forces invoked. So, while colonial leaders were deploying Jesuit activity as an emblem of territorial control, they were unwittingly discouraging any further evangelical success. For missionization in Iroquoia, this was disastrous. One Jesuit among the Abenaki, however, enthusiastically embraced his role as an agent of French imperialism.

³⁶⁵ NYCD IV: 891-893 (‘will have a priest’, ‘Popish priest’, 893).

³⁶⁶ NYCD IV: 920 (‘tell us’, ‘make us madd’, ‘cheapest pennyworth’, ‘noise of praying’, ‘wee must first’).

While Dekanissore was expressing his exasperation with Christianization, across the Atlantic Europe remained engulfed in the early stages of the War of the Spanish Succession. The death of the Habsburg monarch Charles II, who had fathered no heirs, left the control of the Spanish Empire an extremely contentious question. Philip of Anjou, of the French Bourbons, was made king of Charles' empire in 1700. This union of the French and Spanish crowns - forging a monstrously powerful entity - was intolerable for other European powers terrified of this concentration of imperial, military, and economic authority. The War erupted. The conflict was fought to an effective stalemate by 1713, when the colossal expenditure and dim prospects for any decisive victory encouraged peace negotiations. One of the treaties signed was the Treaty of Utrecht. France ceded peninsular Acadia and Newfoundland to Britain and sanctioned further extension of British trade with Indian configurations of power across the early American interior.³⁶⁷ The strokes of the pen ratifying the peace therefore fundamentally altered French colonial policy in early America, a transformation that the Jesuits were quickly caught up in.

Abenaki territory became a critical zone of imperial competition after the Treaty of Utrecht. Nestled uncomfortably between New England and New France, with three villages in Acadian territory still under French control, Abenakis wielded formidable influence. Like the Iroquois, their location between the competing colonies afforded them considerable leverage over both. Unlike their enemies to the west and south-west, however, they did not pursue a calculated policy of neutrality. By the beginning of the eighteenth century Abenaki settlements were demonstrating consistent loyalty toward New France, with the Jesuits a crucial component of this strong relationship. Druillettes' early presence among the Abenaki had been used as a platform to secure an alliance between New France and New England

³⁶⁷ Dale Miquelon. 'Ambiguous Concession: What Diplomatic Archives Reveal about Article 15 of the Treaty of Utrecht and France's North American Policy', *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (July, 2010), pp. 459-486, 459-461.

against Mohawk attacks. But the Jesuit had also conformed to Abenaki expectations of a shaman, who subsequently encouraged conversion as the means of reviving communal power shattered by disease. This association became even stronger during King Philip's War; English settlers' racialised paranoia extended north, forcing many Abenakis along the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers into exile or defensive conflict. The association of Catholicism with renewal thus linked with open hostility toward English settlers to firmly incline Abenakis toward a diplomatic relationship with New France.³⁶⁸

In the sporadic hostilities English settlers were regularly seized as prisoners. However, for some their captivities, rather than functioning as terrifying ordeals encouraging greater disdain for their Abenaki hosts, gradually exposed them to a devout Christian Abenaki religiosity that confirmed the relative lack of piety in New England. When a diplomatic agreement allowed for the release of the prisoners back to New England, many of them refused to go. Their initial reaction to Bigot had been hostile; 'greatly prejudiced' against the Jesuit efforts among the Abenakis, they resented his presence. But the religiosity displayed by the Christian Abenakis was so intense that the English eventually came to favourably compare the piety they demonstrated with that of their fellow settlers in the English colonies. For Bigot, this was further confirmation of the basically heretical character of his rival ministers across New England, and thus further degraded the Jesuits' inclusive missiology into a bitter confessional divide.³⁶⁹

The most important Jesuit in the region, however, was Sebastian Rale. Rale had, by 1721, been at the Abenaki village of Norridgewock for over two decades. His strategic

³⁶⁸ For detailed narratives of the gradual process by which the Abenaki-French alliance was encouraged, established and then strengthened, see Kenneth M. Morrison. *The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euramerican Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 72-102; Matthew R. Bahar. *Storm of the Sea: Indians and Empires in the Atlantic's Age of Sail* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 67-98.

³⁶⁹ JR LXV: 89-93 ('greatly prejudiced', 93).

insights on how to best combat the English encroaching on Abenaki territory along the Kennebec, Penobscot and St. John Rivers were critical to New France's continued alliance with the Indians there, a relationship made even more critical by the territorial cessions at Utrecht. But his isolation from Quebec was problematic, making strategic discourse between the Jesuit, New France Intendant Michel Begon and Governor Phillippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil extremely difficult. In June 1721, however, Begon found a solution. The previous month the Intendant had received a letter from Rale asking to know the policy of the French Crown toward the simmering hostility between Abenakis and English agents – did the King support open war, or were the French to carefully supply the Indians with weapons and ammunition while refraining from active conflict? This question was especially urgent since the St. Lawrence Abenakis had sent deputies to their Acadian neighbours for a general conference to agree on a message to the increasingly troublesome English. Someone had to escort them and confer with Rale on the colonial approach to this issue. The two obvious candidates were Charles Legardeur de Croisil, a French Lieutenant, or the Jesuit Pierre de la Chasse. The missionary was chosen deliberately to circumvent the agreement made at Utrecht. The treaty simply did not address missiological activity; by contrast, sending a military officer could panic the English into thinking that the Abenaki were being encouraged toward conflict.³⁷⁰ Utrecht had further accelerated the reconceptualization of Jesuits by governmental officials, who recognised their critical ability to link the nodes of French colonial power despite the shifting diplomatic terrain in early America; by 1721, Jesuits themselves were eagerly accepting this new role.

Rale was also the most conspicuous figure in a radicalisation of confessional conflict. The English understood, as well as the Jesuit, that Catholicism was fundamental to the strong alliance between Abenakis and New France. In 1717 the minister Joseph Baxter had been

³⁷⁰ *JR* LXVII: 55-57.

sent to Arrowsic, a small Indian settlement near the mouth of the Kennebec River, to found a school for the religious instruction of Abenaki children. Rale was aware of the threat that Baxter posed; he recognised the preacher as ‘the most able man among the Ministers of Boston’, and knew that his salary would increase in proportion to the number of his pupils. For Baxter, however, two months passed with no success. He then turned his pedagogic skill to disputing the converted Indians. To Rale’s horror, he ‘turned into derision all the Sacraments, Purgatory, the invocation of the Saints, the beads, the crosses, the images, the lights of our Churches, and all the pious customs that are so sacredly observed in the catholic Religion’.³⁷¹

Rale could not allow these disputations to go unanswered. He wrote directly to Baxter assuring him that though the neophytes knew to believe Catholic instruction, they did not how to discuss them. He accompanied the letter with a long and complicated ‘Memoir’, in which he proved ‘by scripture, by tradition, and by theological arguments’ the truths that Baxter had so viciously attacked in conversation with the Abenakis. Two days later, Baxter left for Boston. He sent Rale a short response and complained that the Jesuit’s attack was unnecessary, since only ‘zeal for the salvation of souls had led him to teach the Savages the way to Heaven’. Rale responded by rejecting this appeal to a shared Christianity. Baxter took a further two years to reply, and simply accused Rale of ‘a peevish and fault-finding spirit which was the sign of a temperament inclined to anger’.³⁷²

Rale now embodied the integration of missionization with colonial competition between New France and New England. His predecessors in early America had praised, or at least tolerated, English Protestant ministers’ own evangelism, as part of a broad Christian campaign against intolerable ‘pagan’ attitudes and worship among the Indians they

³⁷¹ *JR* LXVII: 97 (‘Ministers of Boston’, ‘pious customs’).

³⁷² *JR* LXVII: 99-101 (‘Memoir’, ‘theological arguments’, ‘way to Heaven’, 99; ‘inclined to anger’, 101).

encountered. This approach was, however, no longer possible. Even when Baxter suggested a similar ecumenicism in his efforts to merely save Abenakis' souls, Rale categorically rejected it. Missiology and colonial interests were inextricable, and evangelism in the continental northeast had been decisively pulled into an imperial orbit.

English agents at Boston were fully aware of Rale's formidable authority among the Christian Abenakis. Their frustration had grown each time Abenaki neophytes refused to renounce Catholicism or reject their alliance with Quebec. By 1720 they had begun a campaign to either capture the Jesuit or persuade his Indian hosts to send him back to Quebec.

In January 1722 a contingent of two hundred English sailed into the Kennebec, toward Norridgewock. Most of the resident Abenakis were hunting, and therefore absent. The English knew this, reasoning that Rale would therefore be accompanied only by 'old men and feeble folk'. Unfortunately for them, two young hunters prowling the Atlantic shores somehow learned that the English had entered the river; they hurried immediately to its shores, eventually spotting the party roughly ten leagues from Norridgewock. The two Abenakis dashed back to Rale and warned him of the impending attack. They were just in time. In a panic, the Jesuit consumed the bread used for the Mass, cast the vessels into a small box, and rushed into the woods. The two hundred Englishmen arrived that evening. Peeking through the trees, Rale and the few old Abenakis briefly watched them search the settlement before they retreated further into the woods. In his hurry to flee, however, Rale had forgotten his snowshoes. Coupled with a lingering weakness from when he had broken his leg, he made slow progress. The English, on the other hand, had struck out from Norridgewock and were tracing the paths that had been worn by Abenakis gathering wood and other supplies. The Jesuit, knowing he could not possibly outpace his pursuers, stopped and hid behind a tree perilously close to the Indian trails. While he cowered, several of the English came 'within

eight steps' of his shelter, but suddenly abandoned the chase and returned to Norridgewock. They destroyed the church and Rale's house, and then left.³⁷³

Rale's fortunate escape, however, only further inflamed the violent tensions between New France, New England and the Abenakis. Before Westbrook's soldiers burned the Jesuit's house they found a strongbox containing a secret compartment. Hidden within were a series of letters implicating Rale as a mediator between the government at Quebec and the Abenaki leadership. The Jesuit, in direct contradiction of his promise to Shute at Arrowsic, was obviously a critical factor in a conspiracy to promise Abenaki warriors enough guns and ammunition to destroy the English settlements recently founded along the Kennebec, Penobscot and St. John. While English suspicions were therefore confirmed, Abenakis returning to Norridgewock from the hunt were incensed. They retaliated with raids on English villages in June and July. Micmac and Maliseet warriors, other members of the Wabanaki confederacy, besieged Port Royal. Shute formally declared war on July 25th.³⁷⁴

Two years later, on the 23rd August 1724, while Dummer's War still raged, an army of 1100 English and Indian soldiers marched for Norridgewock. The same dense forest that had hidden Rale now concealed this approaching force. Furthermore, the settlement, despite the incessant violence of the previous two years, had not been palisaded. Its inhabitants only became aware of the attackers' presence when the first volley of musket fire ripped through the cabins. Only fifty Abenaki warriors were present. They nevertheless seized their weapons and met the assault to give the women and children enough time to escape across the Kennebec. This time, Rale did not leave. Like several of the first martyrs had done when faced with Iroquois raiders, he left his rebuilt cabin and faced the English forces. He probably

³⁷³ JR LXVII: 113-115 ('feeble folk', 113; 'eight steps', 115).

³⁷⁴ For the origins of Dummer's War, see John Grenier. *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 47-48; Thomas S. Kidd. *The Protestant Interest: New England After Puritanism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 99-102.

hoped, at least, to draw their attention onto him, thereby saving his neophytes. The attackers' reaction was immediate; 'a general shout was raised which was followed by a storm of musket-shots that was poured upon him'. The rest of the Abenakis fled. Most escaped across the river despite being briefly pursued. The English and their Indian allies would not cross the river to continue the chase, so returned to Norridgewock and burned the church for a second time.³⁷⁵

The Abenakis returned to the smouldering ruin of their village the next day. Rale's corpse lay where he had died. Reflecting the visceral hatred that the aggressors felt for his formidable influence among his hosts, the Abenakis found it 'pierced by hundreds of bullets, the scalp torn off, the skull broken by blows from a hatchet, the mouth and the eyes filled with mud, the bones of the legs broken, and all the members mutilated'. He was buried in the same spot that the altar of the church had occupied only the day before.³⁷⁶ The Jesuit's mutilated body was a bloody emblem of the waning Jesuit presence in early America, and a symbol of their new position in the chaotic world of colonial competition between New France and its English rivals. In yet another evolution, Jesuits had gradually reconsidered a soft pan-Christian approach to continental missionization, defining themselves increasingly against their Protestant counterparts and the colonial power they represented. Rale represented the apotheosis of this progression.

Finally, the third indication that the adaptation of Jesuit missiology had reached potentially insurmountable obstacles came from the Illinois Indians. The Jesuits' attitude toward the Iroquois nations, as uniquely incapable of comprehending or valuing the Christian message, was transplanted to the Illinois by Jacques Gravier, another Jesuit who had begun working in Kaskaskia in the 1690s. He submitted his first detailed report on the mission to

³⁷⁵ *JR* LXVII: 233-235 ('general shout', 233).

³⁷⁶ *JR* LXVII: 235-237 ('hundreds of bullets', 235).

Bruyas in 1694. The familiar suspicion that baptism was a powerful spiritual poison was rife at the mission. Some women had brought their children to Gravier for the ceremony, but many avoided him altogether or stopped visiting after the first child baptised died. Gravier was pessimistic about producing any significant change in the minds of the adults and Indian leadership. Perhaps worst of all, even those already baptised were demonstrably lax about their commitment to following their new professed faith, an indifference nourished by a general 'corruption among all these southern tribes'. Again comparing his mission field to Xavier's, Gravier concluded that 'there is more to fear for the *Illinois* than St. Francis Xavier had to dread in the case of the Indinas of the East'.³⁷⁷

More importantly, however, Gravier also expressed a new conception of the tension between missionization and providence. The *Illinois* were 'indolent, traitorous, fickle, and inconstant'. A general 'love of pleasure' exacerbated these qualities and militated against widespread conversion to Christianity. But this aversion, Gravier claimed, should further inspire the Jesuits. Any conversion, should it follow, would therefore be attributable 'neither to the sound arguments of the Missionary, nor to his eloquence, nor to his other talents', but 'only to him who knows how to make from the very stones, when it pleases him, children of Abraham'.³⁷⁸

Respectively, Gravier, Rale and Dekanissore therefore embodied a growing frustration at Jesuits' persistent inability to persuade Indian converts to fully embrace the commands and restrictions of their new faith; the transformation of missionaries into threatened intermediaries utilising Indian communities and nations as powerful supporting elements in the incessant imperial struggle for control in early America; and the limits of Indian tolerance of aggressive evangelical competition. Collectively, they represented an

³⁷⁷ *JR* LXIV: 191-193 ('southern tribes', 'Francis Xavier', 193).

³⁷⁸ *JR* LVI: 223 ('indolent', 'love of pleasure', 'other talents', 'children of Abraham').

imposing blend of forces. Though these developments were not intensely violent like King Philip's War and the Pueblo Revolt, they were a similarly threatening challenge to Jesuits' early American missiology. They, likewise, had to be addressed.

By the 1720s, then, the careful manipulation of the logics, concepts and themes guiding Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan missionization had produced three distinctly American missiologies. They had been adapted to the peculiar demands of New Mexico, the sprawling territory claimed as New France, and New England. All three had been skilfully defined by missionaries in response to Indian violence and encroaching imperial power. Over the next half-century, the steady decline of the potential of missionization, initiated by these two forces, then profoundly shaped the remaining evangelists in early America; this diverse cast further transformed their respective missiologies using remarkably similar themes and paradigms, finally forging a distinct and encompassing early American missiology. All continued to express attitudes unique to each missiological tradition, but from them derived a shared understanding of the most important elements of early American evangelism.

The Formulation of an Early American Missiology

Two Jesuits, Jean-Pierre Aulneau and Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix, arrived in New France in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Charlevoix had arrived at Quebec while Rale was still eluding English colonists' efforts to capture him, in September 1720, while Aulneau was one of a small group of Jesuits that reached the capital of New France in August 1734. Their attempt to rationalise their evangelical efforts marked a new, final stage in the evolution of Jesuit thought. They radically reoriented the significance of missiological efforts toward the Jesuits themselves, contributing the first component of a continental missiology.

When Aulneau arrived at Quebec, early in the morning on the 12th of August 1735, one of his first acts was to write to his mother to report his successful voyage. His journey across the ocean had been rough, threatened most seriously by the treacherous passages linking the mouth of the St. Lawrence with the Atlantic. His first encounter with the Indians had been with two Micmacs. Soon he had interacted with ‘a few of almost all the tribes, and there is no more repulsive sight’. It was perhaps this disdain for the Indians he saw at Quebec that moulded his most important request. He asked that his mother pray, on his behalf, that Aulneau could both devote his life to God ‘and that I may bring the poor Indians also to serve and love Him’. Like his Jesuit predecessors in New France he clearly distinguished the salvific and missiological aspects of his task, delineating each as separate imperatives. In addition, he recognised the spiritual power latent in the collective experience of Jesuits on the continent, asking for ‘the grace to draw profit from the grand examples of virtue’ that populated the College at Quebec.³⁷⁹

This tripartite definition of his hopes for the mission - that he could satisfy the devotional standards demanded by his status as a Jesuit, that he could convert more Indians to the Christian faith, and that he could draw from a deep well of virtue excavated by his fellow missionaries to achieve both – had been a fundamental feature of Jesuit missiology in early America since its beginning. Furthermore, the peculiar adaptability of Jesuits missionizing across New France and beyond was manifest in their ability to manipulate the relative importance of these three themes to suit variously optimistic, disastrous, ambivalent and frustrating contexts. Aulneau, however, came to embody a further evolution. His brief and bitterly disappointing evangelism led to an understanding that the three strands of missionization that he recognised were, to an extent, contradictory. The impossibility of

³⁷⁹ Arthur E. Jones, ed. *The Aulneau Collection, 1734-1745* (Montreal: Archives of St. Mary's College, 1893), 1 ('repulsive sight', 'love Him', 'grand examples of virtue').

reconciling one with the others was a conclusion that Charlevoix later fully expressed in his magnum opus. Together, both missionaries articulated the culmination of Jesuit missiology in early America.

By now, the numbers involved in the Jesuit missions were dwindling. This was critical to Aulneau's earliest experience of New France. Before he had even landed at Quebec, an illness broke out on the ship carrying the Jesuits. Nearly all were infected while twenty sailors died. For his part, Aulneau diligently helped the sick onboard, 'performing for them the most menial and loathsome services'. When the ship reached Quebec and the patients transferred to the hospital in the town, he continued his visits. But the Superior of the mission realised Aulneau's efforts threatened his potential evangelism. Concerned that Aulneau would contract the potentially deadly disease himself, he was quickly forbidden from returning to the hospital.³⁸⁰ De Noue had reluctantly been allowed to evangelise despite his failing health, and Garnier had managed to reconcile his personal salvation with his obligation to stay with his threatened neophytes, but Aulneau would not be afforded such leniency. His value to a declining Jesuit presence in early America was too great.

Despite the Superior's caution, he had acted too late. Aulneau did eventually fall ill; within a week his Jesuit companion on the ocean voyage, Francis Nau, feared his death was imminent. Frantic prayers offered for his recovery appeared to work before he was struck by a relapse a few days later. Nevertheless, his condition eventually improved to the extent that 'you could not tell now, even, that he had been sick'. Aulneau's illness and relatively quick recovery were instrumental factors in the choice of mission he was later assigned to. Nau contrasted Aulneau's obvious unusual strength with his own. 'As my virtue is not so robust', Nau wrote, 'I am assigned to the easiest of all the missions', while Aulneau, 'of sterner stuff,

³⁸⁰ Jones. *The Aulneau Collection*, 31 ('loathsome services').

will not, to all appearances, fare as well'.³⁸¹ This sentiment, that Aulneau was the most appropriate figure for the most distant and diplomatically sensitive Jesuit mission in the western interior, catalysed his recalibration of Jesuit missiology in early America.

The same agreement that had conferred a critical imperial role on Aulneau also invited a new westward pivot for the French empire in North America. Utrecht had banned British and French ships from Pacific waters claimed by the Spanish, a stipulation that required reviving the obsession with a route to China across the continent. British agents based at Hudson Bay, however, had established trading networks that stretched into the western interior through Crees and Assiniboines. Governor Beauharnois knew this British influence must be challenged, and sent Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye to construct a chain of trading posts that could impose French influence throughout the western fur markets. La Vérendrye worked hard to win the loyalty of the Cree, whose territory was the gateway to the far west. But, in doing so, he was embroiling the French in the violent tension between Crees and Sioux; this would prove a fatal mistake.³⁸²

For the Jesuits, however, Beauharnois' plan opened the western interior as a new zone for evangelism. Only one was chosen to join the expedition: Jean-Pierre Aulneau. His reaction to his selection, and his subsequent journey from Quebec, through Montreal, to Fort St. Charles on the shores of the Lake of the Woods, demonstrated how significantly the Jesuit attitude to the early American mission had changed.

On April 25th 1735, Aulneau was preparing to leave Quebec. He wrote a letter to a fellow Jesuit articulating his hopes for his mission to the 'ouad chipouanes', or 'those who dwell in holes', later recognised as the Mandans. His words were loaded with anxiety. His

³⁸¹ Jones. *The Aulneau Collection*, 31 ('had been sick', 'not so robust', 'easiest', 'of sterner stuff').

³⁸² Pekka Hämäläinen. *Lakota America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), pp. 67-68.

greatest fear was of his own inadequacy ; ‘a degree of virtue far higher’ than his was necessary, not least because would be ‘three or four years without the least spiritual succor, and removed several hundred leagues from any other priest’. With a slight sense of shame, he confessed that this ‘severest trial’ provoked ‘fear and trembling for my eternity’. To allay such fears he had tried to secure another missionary to accompany him, but the painful shortage of Jesuits prevented the Superior from authorizing a second. His only consolation was a feature of the early American mission that had been a consistent thread running through the Jesuit experience; the singular suffering that suggested the potential for most authentically emulating the example of Christ. This distinguishing feature was confirmed by the example of the generations of Jesuits who preceded him. Aulneau had personally met some of them, and their ‘zeal, recollectedness, self-denial, and interior union with God’ triggered a desire to imitate them.³⁸³

The most obvious change that Aulneau embodied was the fear of isolation. Others had bemoaned their looming segregation in remote missions, but they had been utterly convinced that this offered them a context in which to secure their own salvation. By contrast, Aulneau suggested that his virtue would not be strengthened by such seclusion, but potentially jeopardized. This suggestion implied that he desired another missionary not only for practical purposes, but to maintain his own piety across such an uninviting landscape. This explains his particular admiration for his predecessors’ ‘interior union’ with God. Their example confirmed that, despite his pessimism about the potential success of the mission, Jesuits could nevertheless develop their own piety through their efforts in early America.

³⁸³ *JR* LXVIII: 235-241 (‘chipouanes’, ‘dwell in holes’, ‘virtue far higher’, ‘three or four years’, ‘trial’, 239; ‘my eternity’, ‘interior union’, 241). A second letter that Aulneau wrote four days later reaffirmed his fears. See *JR* LXVIII: 247-253.

Aulneau arrived at Fort St. Charles on October 23rd. He had stopped at Kahnawake and the mission at Missilimackinac, then traced the northern edge of Lake Superior before turning inland toward the Fort. Though the Cree were not Aulneau's targets, he could not help describing them. He was blunt. The Cree were 'morally degraded to a degree beyond conception', a barbarism largely attributable to English and French brandy traders. The Cree's dependence on alcohol was such that 'brandy is their only topic of conversation, the sole object of their petitions, nor can they ever be counted upon unless they receive enough to get drunk on'.³⁸⁴

The attitudes of the Assibinoines did not invite such pessimism, but they shared a nomadic lifestyle with their Cree neighbours. Aulneau suggested that 'five or six' Jesuits, however, could see success in the region. With himself as the sole evangelist, 'Scarcely have we fairly entered upon the question of religion with some one of the natives, and commenced to entertain some faint hope of his conversion, than, confronted with the necessity of supplying the wants of life, he has to betake himself to a wandering life in the Woods'. To combat this, multiple missionaries could be stationed at strategic points to intercept the neophytes, ensuring more stable instruction.³⁸⁵

His suggestion would never be actioned. In June 1736, just over a year after he had left Quebec, Aulneau was part of a French contingent ambushed on a small island isolated in Lake of the Woods. They were on their way to get supplies from a fort on the shores of Lake Superior, but Lakota and Dakota warriors killed them all in the attack.³⁸⁶ Like Rale, Aulneau embodied the mortal dangers to Jesuits from incorporation into French imperial designs in early America. Unlike his predecessors, however, Aulneau had consciously rejected the

³⁸⁴ JR LXVIII: 293 ('morally degraded', 'only topic of conversation').

³⁸⁵ JR LXVIII: 301 ('five or six', 'a wandering life').

³⁸⁶ Pekka Hämäläinen. *Lakota America*, 67.

various reasons that Jesuits had created to justify and glorify in missionization. He had first recognised their possibility, but his short experience in early America eventually left him emphasising only one. His initial excitement to 'draw profit' from the virtuous examples of his colleagues and his hope to bring at least some Indians to Christianity were both dashed by his isolation and the nomadism and corruption of Assiniboinés and Crees. His only comfort was the possibility of emulating Christ.

Eight years after Aulneau's killing, Charlevoix published a history of New France. He gave full expression to Aulneau's sentiment that the salient features of Jesuit missiology in early America were narrowing. Charlevoix was deliberately offering a new interpretation of Jesuit activity. The chaos unleashed by the destruction of the Huron missions demanded this. Charlevoix considered it particularly damaging because it distorted the overall narrative of missionization in New France. His lengthy descriptions of fervent piety among Christian Indians therefore had an important purpose; to provide a 'just' picture of the Indian church that Jesuits had worked to build, in contrast to later chroniclers who 'saw it only in its decline' and gave correspondingly negative descriptions.³⁸⁷

But his main focus was on the missionaries themselves. Charlevoix recognised the salvific potential of the mission in New France. He summarised the 1630s as a barren decade. In doing so, however, he concluded that Iroquois attacks, rampant disease, and general suspicion of Jesuits functioned to confirm for the missionaries themselves that their efforts were important. The experience of the first fitful years of the missions in Huronia had convinced Charlevoix that 'nothing was more apostolical than the life' which the Jesuits led in New France. This exemplary paradigm, however, had very little to do with successful missionization. Rather, the Jesuits were archetypal precisely because their early efforts were

³⁸⁷ *HNF II*, 242 ('just', 'decline').

largely unsuccessful. The act of evangelism, successful or not, was enough to secure salvation for the Jesuits themselves, a concern that had animated them for over a century: ‘they knew, moreover, that they were accomplishing the promise of the Saviour of the world, by preaching his gospel to every creature’ and ‘that the increase depended on God alone, and does not affect the reward promised to the laborers whom the Father of the family sends into his vineyard’.³⁸⁸ Missiological efforts therefore satisfied their obligation to Christ, and were consequently salvific acts. This schema proposed a dialogic relationship between Jesuits and God. Whether Huron, Algonquian, Iroquois, or Illinois Indians enthusiastically embraced a Christian identity as a result of Jesuit efforts was of tangential importance.

One missionary exemplified this conclusion. De Carheil had been an important figure in promoting an increase presence as a new component of Jesuit missiology; Charlevoix now manipulated his example to demonstrate his own interpretation. The Jesuit, ‘in hopes of a fate like that of many of his brethren, who had bedewed Canada with their blood’, was eventually sent to a mission among the Cayugas, in which ‘obscurity sheltered him from all ambition, and offered him only crosses’. Charlevoix offered him fulsome praise - noting his exceptional linguistic ability and intelligence - but pointed out that he oversaw few conversions. But for both de Carheil and Charlevoix, this disappointing reality was wonderful. The Jesuit historian wrote that ‘this humiliation served to sanctify him more and more’, and the missionary himself ‘protested to me that he adored the designs of Providence in this regard, convinced that he would have imperilled his salvation by the success which he might have claimed on a more distinguished stage, and that this thought consoled him without price for the barrenness of his long and toilsome apostolate’.³⁸⁹ Here the gulf between evangelical accomplishment and the salvation of the missionary himself became most stark. De Carheil assumed, and

³⁸⁸ *HNF II*, 95 & 113 (‘every creature’, ‘Father of the family’, 95; ‘more apostolical’, 113).

³⁸⁹ *HNF III*, 118 (‘bedewed Canada’, ‘only crosses’, ‘sanctify him’, ‘designs of Providence’).

Charlevoix later agreed, that successfully converting Indians in New France and establishing a recognisable community of Christian neophytes could actively jeopardise one's own salvation.

Indeed, the incessant disappointment of most missions was a key feature inviting the evolution of a Jesuit into an 'apostolical life'. The destruction of the Huron mission, the frequent conflict that followed, and the overwhelming hostility of the Mohawks provoked fear among the Jesuits for the survival of the Indian church. Yet they were also comforted by a steady, if occasionally underwhelming, number of Indians eager for baptism, as well as promising displays of fidelity and virtue by those already converted. This turmoil was most significant for the missionaries themselves. Simultaneously consoling themselves with the shaky survival of Christian Indian communities while recognising the intense and growing persecution that confronted continued missionization kept the Jesuits 'in constant alternations of fear and hope, quickening in them the two virtues most necessary in the work of apostleship, distrust in themselves and confidence in Him whose ministers they were'.³⁹⁰

Together, Charlevoix and Aulneau consciously rejected further additions to their missiology. Rather, they lessened the metrics by which Jesuit activity would be judged, deliberately narrowing the responsibility of a missionary to preaching the Gospel. Whether this was adopted by the Indians was not critical. Indeed, success in this endeavour could actively imperil one's salvation by removing the fear and humiliation necessary for an 'apostleship'.

This attitude was similar to the other Orders rivalling Jesuits in New France. The Recollects that Frontenac was ordered to use to counterbalance Jesuit power were a French branch of the Franciscans. Despite the rivalry between the institutions two Recollects who

³⁹⁰ *HNF II*, 281-282 ('constant alternations', 282).

had arrived in New France in the late-seventeenth century, Chrestien le Clercq and Louis Hennepin, transformed their missiology in a similar manner. In doing so they complemented the provincialized missiology created by their fellow Franciscans in New Mexico.

Le Clercq evangelised the Micmac Indians on the Gaspé peninsula from 1673. By 1686 he had left early America permanently, and devoted himself to analysing missionization in New France. He was especially anxious to combat the positive reputation of the Jesuits. He stated explicitly that the *Relations* were fictions, promulgated by propagandists for the Order. His mission at Gaspé had made obvious how misleading the Jesuit accounts had been. He claimed to have witnessed ‘scarcely any Christianity’ among the Indians, except a pious few whose devotion was unquestioned. Most Indians’ Christian identity was a convenience which would be quickly abandoned in favour of a competing material or spiritual prize. Like the restless generations of Puritan authorities who considered New England a landscape of declension, le Clercq located the zenith of the Christian Indian church in 1625; since then, one would not find ‘a church more real and solid than that found there in that year’. This was the year that saw Recollects leave New France to begin the long estrangement that le Clercq complained so bitterly of, following which the arrogant fabrication of an expanding and authoritative Christian Indian community was crafted by the Jesuits.³⁹¹

While le Clercq incessantly denigrated Jesuit achievement in New France and sought to restore the Recollects to their place as the progenitors of missionization in the colony, he offered new explanations for phenomena that had been critical to the Jesuits’ early American missiology. On the subject of martyrdom, for instance, he offered a radically different understanding than the Jesuits had ever reached. Le Clercq’s imagined rivals had first valorised their ability to suffer exceptional adversity in early America as a new form of

³⁹¹ *First Establishment*, I: 255, 330 & 400 (‘scarcely any’, ‘real and solid’, 255).

martyrdom, and later directly linked the specificity of Jesuit religiosity with their deaths at the hands of the Iroquois. Both connected Jesuit expressions of agency with their status as martyrs. By contrast, le Clercq found that the attitude of the Indians themselves actually precluded martyrdom, invalidating Jesuit claims of such rewards. The Indians' 'profound insensibility and indifference' to religious differences meant 'no one must come here in the hopes of suffering martyrdom, if we take the word in its strict theological sense, for we are not in a country where savages put Christians to death on account of their religion'.³⁹² This was a direct challenge to Jesuit missiology in early America, which to a significant extent had been constructed using an innovative typology of martyrdom; le Clercq was contending that the many expressions of a soft religious relativism by evangelized Indians made martyrdom impossible, since the vicious anti-Christian sentiment that necessarily preceded it could not evolve from such indifference.

Yet because the Recollects had returned to New France and continued to work among Indian populations, this pessimistic narrative required further explanation. Continuing to missionize in a zone singularly hostile to evangelical endeavour required justification. Le Clercq did so by drawing on the same providential comfort that had sustained his fellow missionaries across the continent. Legitimate conversions, he proposed, could not be effected by missiological effort. The vocation of a missionary was to act with 'zeal, labors, and unwearied application'. If the church militant expanded as a result of their activity, then the associated conversion was not at all attributable to the missionary himself. This exchange between individual agency and surrender to providence had a second implication. If Indians who received Christian instruction thereupon refused to consider conversion, the missionary

³⁹² *First Establishment*, I: 221 ('profound insensibility', 'suffering martyrdom').

was not at fault; rather, this was evidence that the Indians were ‘rendered inexcusable and God is justified in his condemnation of these savages.’³⁹³

This conception of mission had been developed during le Clercq’s own pained reaction to the Indians at his mission in Gaspé. After four years he felt a keen disappointment at the superficial Christianity of his neophytes and the hostility of many others. He considered abandoning the mission but recognised the gravity of such a decision. One of the men he consulted was his Superior at Quebec, Father Valentin le Roux. Le Clercq sent le Roux two letters, in April and May, requesting his guidance.³⁹⁴

From his reply, the Superior’s devastation was obvious. Le Clercq’s ‘perpetual sacrifice’ to the rejuvenated Recollect mission in New France was le Roux’s greatest consolation as he languished at Quebec. To encourage le Clercq’s continued participation in Gaspé, le Roux manipulated Christological and apostolic examples. His first reference was to Christ. This ‘first missionary’ was an example because of the permanence of his efforts; ‘when once he had commenced it, he persevered therein all the rest of his life, and he consummated it by the sacrifice of his own blood’. The obligation to imitate Christ was therefore not to convert others, but merely to persevere in one’s preaching, even to a violent end. The Apostles, likewise, ‘made of their work a vow and an inviolable necessity, and they never gave it up whilst they had a breath of life’. Le Roux then continued to reassure le Clercq that the Recollects’ duty was met ‘when we have proclaimed the truth’, not if those listening accepted it. Christ ordered the Apostles to preach to all nations, including those who would never accept their teaching.³⁹⁵

³⁹³ *First Establishment*, I: 379 & 403-404 (‘unwearied application’, 379; ‘rendered excusable’, 403).

³⁹⁴ Chrestien le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia: With the Customs and Religion of the Gaspesian Indians*, translated by William F. Ganong (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1910), 206.

³⁹⁵ Le Clercq, *New Relation*, 208-209 & 211 (‘first missionary’, 208; ‘inviolable necessity’, 209; ‘perpetual sacrifice’, ‘proclaimed the truth’, 211).

With these powerful references to the most exemplary Christian figures, le Roux continued. He reassured le Clercq that conversions would indeed provide pleasure and satisfaction, but a greater prize would be awarded for perseverance; the desolate spiritual landscape of Gaspé allowed le Clercq to ‘look only upon the glory of God, hidden in the shades of our faith’. With a skilful rhetorical flourish, le Roux asked ‘if discouragement were necessarily to follow from a paucity of fruit of our labours, where is the preacher who could ascend a second time into the pulpit even in the most catholic countries?’³⁹⁶

Le Clercq’s attitude changed. He accepted his Superior’s conception of the missiological imperative, which was to diligently preach the Gospel to non-Christian populations regardless of their receptivity. The missionary was required to surrender the practical results of his efforts to providence, a force whose positive effects had clearly not yet reached Gaspé. The Franciscan and his Superior at Quebec could now be added to the litany of Christian missionaries who had, responding to their interaction with early American Indian worlds, articulated and agreed upon a missiology that profoundly reconceptualised their obligations.

Louis Hennepin, le Clercq’s Recollect colleague, came to an identical conclusion. His description of his stirring ambition for missionary work was yet another demonstration of the competing impulses within the Franciscan tradition. He had first been attracted to the Order of St. Francis to satisfy his ‘strong Inclination to retire from the World’. Having entered the institution, he was then supplied with historical accounts of Franciscan missiological activity from its founding. He was inspired. Evangelism as a Franciscan mendicant offered an

³⁹⁶ Le Clercq, *New Relation*, 212 (‘shades of our faith’, ‘paucity of fruit’).

enticing reconciliation between his former eremitic impulse and his conviction that there 'could be nothing greater or more glorious than to instruct the Ignorant and Barbarous'.³⁹⁷

Hennepin also strongly resisted the confessional competition that had always been a feature of colonial rivalry. He was forced to address this issue by fierce criticism of his decision to seek help returning to early America from William 3rd. How could a Franciscan, his detractors demanded, 'sollicit a Protestant Prince to send him to preach the Gospel unto the Ignorant Nations he has discovered?' Hennepin's first reaction was to assure his questioners that William had not, as they feared, ordered that the Indians be converted to a Protestant strain of Christianity, and to remind them that the Spanish monarch himself now enjoyed an alliance with the English Crown. This defence was predictable. His second, more radically, refused to consider Indian conversion to Protestantism a complete tragedy. If by his actions Hennepin contributed to such transformations he wondered 'am I for all that to be blamed'. Elaborating, he bluntly rejected the opinion that 'the ignorant Americans who worship the Devil, or any other Creature, are nearer to the Kingdom of God than Protestants who worship the same god as we, hope in the same Redeemer, and are separated from us only upon some points'.³⁹⁸ Hennepin's hierarchy of religious traditions obviously subordinated pagan worship to Protestantism, promoting the Christian missiological imperative as more critical than confessional disputes.

Finally, he made a distinction between Franciscan activity in New Spain and Recollect activity in and beyond New France. The failure to effect an appreciable number of conversions distinguished North America from South. He also agreed with le Clercq that this was not a reflection on the missionaries themselves - evangelists satisfied their obligations by

³⁹⁷ Hennepin, Louis. *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America*, Vol. I, with an introduction by Reuben Gold Thwaites, (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903), 28 ('retire', 'Ignorant and Barbarous').

³⁹⁸ Hennepin, *A New Discovery*, II: 365 ('Protestant Prince', 'blamed', 'worship the Devil').

preaching the Gospel, with no further requirements. The singularly disappointing results of missionization to Iroquois, Hurons, Illinois, and the other configurations of Indian power that populated the Great Lakes and the prairie and grasslands beyond, produced ‘a kind of Apostleship different from that of other nations’; almost totally unsuccessful practically, yet still offering obedience to the only imperative of a dedicated missionary.³⁹⁹

This manipulation of the obligations conferred on missionaries was a pained attempt to recover some significance from the almost eight decades of Recollect activity in New France. Fuelled by apparent institutional jealousy, obvious in their repeated attacks on the veracity of Jesuit reportage, both le Clercq and Hennepin tried desperately to degrade Indians’ Christianity as a superficial, ignorant, and merely strategic doctrine. But this created a vacuum of meaning that necessitated reimagining the early American mission. Le Clercq had wrestled most powerfully with this problem after his first few years at Gaspé. Together, he and le Roux had agreed on an altered missiology that did more than simply privilege preaching as the most critical function of a Franciscan; it rejected all other priorities, including pursuing meaningful conversion, as exclusively providential and therefore beyond the remit of human activity.

Jesuits and Franciscans in New France had therefore built a common missiology that added to the New Mexico Franciscans’. Both reacted to the novel blend of institutional rivalry, the narrowing scale of mission, and its declining effectiveness by consolidating missiology into a small number of critical features; the most critical was a shared understanding that an evangelists’ obligation was simply to preach without paralyzing regard for the results of their instruction.

³⁹⁹ Hennepin, *A New Discovery*, II: 459, 543-44 & 584 (‘a kind of Apostleship’, 584).

The final component of this continental creation was then provided by Puritans. Their most comprehensive expression was first provided by the pastor of the church at Northampton, Solomon Stoddard. Continuing with the theme of declension that characterised much religious thought in New England in the early-eighteenth century, Stoddard agreed with one ‘learned Writer’ that Christians in early America ‘will Indianize and become that Gog and Magog spoken of’ in Revelation. A potential way of averting this catastrophe would be to renew the evangelisation of Indians in New England, who by their Christian example could ‘make us ashamed, and provoke us to Emulation’. The theme of missionization as obligation, conferred on the inhabitants of New England by God rewarding them the land, remained alive in Stoddard’s thought. But this reference to characters from Revelation and the threat of Indianization of Christians in America suggested a new fear that declension was of possible apocalyptic intensity; and missionization was the solution.⁴⁰⁰

Stoddard also articulated a grudging respect for ‘Papists’ in early America who were shaming Puritans by their relentless zeal for conversion. He cited the extensive efforts in Peru and Mexico, the Portuguese in Brazil and India, and the French in Canada. He, of course, argued that ‘they do them little service to bring them from one error to another; to take them out of the Pit and lead them into a Snare’. But he expressed a grudging respect for their eagerness to ‘run great Ventures, and endure many Hardships’.⁴⁰¹ Remarkably, Stoddard had drifted perilously close to Charlevoix’ conclusion; that missiological activity was to be respected for its own sake, and not judged according to the number of converts or even the doctrine being taught to them. Stoddard did not dismiss Jesuits and Franciscans with the lurid

⁴⁰⁰ Solomon Stoddard. *Question, Whether God is not Angry with the Country for doing so little towards the Conversion of the Indians?* (Boston: B. Green, 1723), 11 (‘learned’, ‘Gog and Magog’, ‘Emulation’).

⁴⁰¹ Stoddard, *Conversion of the Indians*, 10 (‘Papists’, ‘into a Snare’, ‘many Hardships’).

and vitriolic language of diabolism or superstition, instead recognising, and expressing an envious admiration of the power of their 'Conscience to advance their own Religion'.⁴⁰²

Stoddard's celebration of Jesuits' missionization was indicative of the shifting attitude of Puritans toward evangelism. Puritan missions never reached the scale of Eliot's endeavour again. Furthermore, like the Recollects and Sulpicians that now jostled with Jesuits for influence in New France, a powerful competitor was created in the early-eighteenth century called the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The SPG was a vehicle for Anglican missionization, nominally for both Indians in the English colonies and the colonists themselves. The Puritan concern at this new doctrinal rival linked with the intensifying worry about Jesuit activity to the north and north-west. Faced with these challenges, a network of ministers, magistrates and colonial promoters revived interest in Indian evangelization. Increase and Cotton Mather, Samuel Sewall, and commissioners of the New England Company encouraged authorities across New England to renew their attempts to convert neighbouring Indians. The Company also sent Experience Mayhew, the most famous missionary in the English colonies, to tour Indian communities in Rhode Island and Connecticut to determine the viability of evangelical efforts in the region. Almost simultaneously, Mohegan, Mohican, Niantic and Narragansett sachems began inviting English missionaries to live in their territory to teach literacy and religious doctrine, reasoning that such skills would be critical to maintaining Indian autonomy if the frontiers of colonial settlement continued to encroach on their own. By 1740, these complementary forces had revived Puritan missiological efforts.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² Stoddard. *Conversion of the Indians*, 10 ('their own Religion').

⁴⁰³ For the creation of the SPG and its history in early America, see C.F. Pascoe. *Two Hundred Years of the SPG, Vol 1: an historical account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* (London: Society Office, 1901), 1-78; Owanah Anderson. 'Anglican mission among the Mohawk', in *Three Centuries of Mission: The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel 1701-2000*, edited by Daniel O'Connor (New York: Continuum, 2000), pp. 235-249; Andrew Porter. *Religion versus empire? British Protestant missionaries*

One of those selected to spearhead this revival was David Brainerd. Brainerd had not intended to become a missionary to Indians. But his dedication to the revivalism that had swept across Switzerland, Prussia, England and finally New England would not be tolerated by religious authorities increasingly wary of his radically new mode of devotion. One of those aghast at the turmoil unleashed by the chaotic enthusiasm and overt emotionalism of revivalist piety was the rector of Yale, Thomas Clap. Brainerd was one of Clap's students. At the end of a chapel service he questioned the spiritual condition of the tutor Chauncey Whittelsey by caustically accusing the latter of having 'no more grace than this chair'. To make matters worse, he then defied Clap's orders by attending a religious meeting in New Haven. Already furious at the disruptions caused by a growing revivalist strain within the university, and fearing that the disorder would only increase if decisive action was not taken, Clap expelled Brainerd in November 1741.⁴⁰⁴ This forced Brainerd to reconsider his plans. In November 1742 he was approved as a missionary. Brainerd's mission at the forks of the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers was founded on the southeast edge of a concentrated zone of evangelical endeavour, dotted mainly by Moravian missions at Gnadenhütten, Wechquetank and Meniolagomekah.⁴⁰⁵

Brainerd's mission was, like almost all the missionaries who had preceded him in early America, a source of profound confusion and anxiety. In July 1745, shortly after he had begun his most successful ministry at Crossweeksung, Brainerd returned to Easton and found a number of Indian eagerly attentive to his short preaching. But with his attention centred at

and overseas expansion, 1700-1914 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 15-28. For the anxieties about the decline of missionization and the requests by sachems for missionaries, see: Linford D. Fisher. *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37-49.

⁴⁰⁴ For Brainerd's early life and years at Yale, see: John A. Grigg. *The Lives of David Brainerd: The Making of an Evangelical Icon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 8-25 ('this chair', 22).

⁴⁰⁵ See the map in Jane T. Merritt. *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 133.

Crossweeksung, Brainerd had to return just as these sentiments were being expressed. He promised to return, but was terrified that in his absence such ‘good impressions then apparent upon numbers of them might decline and wear off’. For the missionary, this problem was more than practical; he was struggling to reconcile his trust in providence with the extremely disappointing results of his first year’s efforts, where he ‘had so often seen such encouraging appearances among the Indians in other places prove wholly abortive’. He was also afflicted by a personal concern that such success was almost inconceivable considering his ‘almost fruitless labours and fatigues’. For Brainerd, the juxtaposition between promising reactions at Crossweeksung and Easton and the agonizing frustration of his earlier efforts led him to declare: ‘I never found myself more suspended between hope and fear than on this occasion’.⁴⁰⁶

Brainerd’s journey along the Susquehanna took him first to Shamokin and then on to Juniata, an island in the middle of the river. Arriving in late-September, he found preparations being made for ‘a great sacrifice and dance’. Almost every Indian on the island was busy gathering wood and building a bonfire, or preparing the deer as the sacrifice. As the atmosphere hummed in anticipation of this ceremony, Brainerd tried in vain to gather groups of Indians to hear him preach. On the 20th, in the evening, the Indians finally met together for the rite. As the flames from the bonfire danced higher, the fat from the deer was burnt. Their ‘sacred dance’ supplemented this action; in the early hours of the morning, the meat was finally eaten, and the crowd dispersed. Two days later, Brainerd met another, similar obstacle. At midday on the 22nd, while the missionary continued to try to gather them for instruction, the Indians assembled again. This time, six of their pawwaws began ‘playing their juggling tricks, and acting their frantic distracted postures’ in order to counter the ‘bloody flux’ that had swept their population. They continued for several hours while

⁴⁰⁶ *Journal*, 6 (‘decline and wear off’, ‘wholly abortive’, ‘fruitless labours’, ‘between hope and fear’).

Brainerd sat a short distance away, clutching his Bible ready to respond to any opportunity to ‘prevent their receiving any answers from the infernal world’. There was no such chance, and the Indians once again dispersed.⁴⁰⁷

His description of these rituals was not as lurid or emotional as previous depictions of Indian ceremony, but his reaction was utterly forlorn. Alone in an apparently ambivalent wilderness, isolated from ‘any one that so much as *named the name of Christ*’, Brainerd’s brief experience on Juniata ‘greatly sank my spirits, gave me the most gloomy turn of mind imaginable, almost stripped me of all resolution and hope respecting further attempts for propagating the Gospel and converting the pagans’. His disappointment was such that he ‘had no heart nor power to make any further attempts among them for that purpose’.⁴⁰⁸

On December 26th, Brainerd was visited by an old Indian woman who forced him to evaluate his attitude towards dreams and visions as legitimate religious experiences. The woman who over eighty years old, and Brainerd imagined that her age, either because of weakened faculties or unshakeable dogma, made doctrinal instruction impossible. But he was surprised. When she entered his house she was visibly distressed. Brainerd asked the reason, and she replied simply that ‘she feared she would never find Christ’, a terror that had been provoked by a graphic vision only two days before. That evening, she had been involved in a conversation about Christ. This discourse ‘pierced her heart so that she could not sit up, but fell down on her bed’. As she fell, she entered a trance-like state. In this state, two paths appeared before her. One was broad and crooked, leaning off to the left; the other was straight and narrow, to the right. Taking the latter, she walked along until she encountered a

⁴⁰⁷ *Journal*, 46-49 (‘sacrifice and dance’, 46; ‘sacred dance’, 47; ‘juggling tricks, ‘bloody flux’, 48; ‘infernal world’, 49). For Shamokin, see James H. Merrell. ‘Shamokin, “the very seat of the Prince of darkness”’: Unsettling the Early American Frontier’, in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830*, edited by Andrew R.L. Cayton & Fredrika J. Teute (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), pp. 16-60.

⁴⁰⁸ *Journal*, 49-50 (‘named the name’, ‘gloomy turn’, 49; ‘heart nor power’, 50).

stubborn and mysterious obstacle. In her description to Brainerd she could not identify it, but likened it to a 'block or bar'. This hurdle instantly reminded her of the missionary's previous preaching about 'striving to enter in at the strait gate'. She began to climb over the blockage, but as she did so the vision ended abruptly. The suddenness was extremely distressing; she had interpreted the timing as an indication that she had 'turned back and forsaken Christ, and that there was therefore no hope of mercy for her'.⁴⁰⁹

Brainerd reacted with cautious ambivalence. He knew 'that trances and imaginary views of things are of dangerous tendency' when depended upon, and he was therefore mindful that the woman's vision might have been of Satanic origin, intended to introduce 'visionary scenes, imaginary terrors, and all manner of genuine convictions of sin and the enlightening influences of the blessed Spirit'. He was almost confident enough in this opinion to declare this openly, and warn his neophytes not to pay such experiences any attention. Yet, to determine this beyond doubt, he knew he had to interrogate the woman herself. What he discovered shocked him. Rather than demonstrating 'a mere fright arising only from imaginary terrors', the woman responded to Brainerd's probing questions with detailed knowledge of Christian doctrine. It was fortunate that the missionary that he had not dismissed her experience as a diabolical scheme; she was evidently convinced of both her sin and inescapable misery, and so devout as to pray day and night. Furthermore, Brainerd's forced confrontation with his own conception of dreams and trances necessitated a similar change in his providential thought. The Indian woman's sincere devotion to her own Christian salvation could only be interpreted as an intervention of divine power, which was a direct challenge to Brainerd's previous belief that the absence of 'visionary notions, trances, and imaginations' was a sign of providential favour. He was therefore forced to reconceptualise his own missiology. He had been convinced both that his mission enjoyed

⁴⁰⁹ *Journal*, 89-90 ('never find', 89; 'pierced her heart', 'block', 'strait gate', 'no hope', 90).

providential sanction and that visions were diabolical; the old woman had, however, shattered this paradigm, forcing Brainerd into a realisation that a vision, trance, or dream was a viable mode of religious experience.⁴¹⁰

More generally, Aulneau's apprehension at being the sole evangelist to travel the colossal distance from Quebec to Mandan territory was mirrored by David Brainerd's anxiety at being especially isolated while at his mission among the Delaware Indians. The absence of another missionary with which Brainerd could easily communicate was exacerbated by the peculiar demands of the mission itself, which ministers working in colonial settlements nearby could not understand. The 'great disadvantages' that followed from his isolation provoked an intensely painful feeling of separation from the apostolic succession, in which Christ had deliberately sent 'his disciples two and two, in order to proclaim the sacred mysteries of his kingdom'. The vocational issues that followed from his seclusion were, furthermore, only a portion of the problem. For Brainerd himself, operating alone among 'the tempers and conduct of Pagans' was profoundly depressing; 'I have felt', he lamented, 'as if banished from all the people of God'.⁴¹¹

The final figure in the further evolution of Puritan missiology was John Sergeant, selected for a mission among the Mahicans. Samuel Hopkins, pastor of the church in Springfield in Massachusetts, embodied the wave of evangelical feeling that swept New England in the 1730s and 1740s. He encountered Kunkapot, a Mahican sachem living near the townships established along the Housatonic River in 1720. Kunkapot's interactions with the settlers were cordial, through which he acquired a reputation as a predictable and

⁴¹⁰ *Journal*, 91-93 ('trances', 'visionary scenes' 'mere fright', 91; 'trances, and imaginations', 93).

⁴¹¹ Edwards, Jonathan. *An Account of the Life of the late Reverend Mr David Brainerd, Minister of the Gospel, Missionary to the Indians, from the Honourable Society in Scotland, for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and Pastor of a Church of Christian Indians in New-Jersey* (Edinburgh: John Gray & Gavin Alston, 1765), 463 ('great disadvantages', 'two and two', 'conduct of Pagans', 'banished').

honourable neighbour. He had also given indications that he was receptive to Christian instruction. He remained, however, slightly hesitant; though the doctrine itself seemed desirable, the perennial fears of Indian authorities that Christianization would overwhelm the logics that sustained his power, and the immoral example offered by colonists who claimed to be Christian, gave Kunkapot pause.⁴¹²

Hopkins was undeterred. In March 1734 he met John Stoddard, a son of Solomon Stoddard with extensive experience of the Indian world. Stoddard seemed as optimistic as Hopkins. He compared the potential missionization of the Mahicans favourably with three other missions that had recently been established, where three Protestant ministers were labouring diligently, but with little to show for their efforts.. For Stoddard, the difficulties of these latter missions derived mainly from the disastrous influence of the French. Catholic instruction had preceded Protestant, so the radical differences between the two were often considered evidence that the latter was somehow false. A less significant though still important obstacle was the locations of these missions. By necessity they were attached either to forts or trading posts beyond the frontier of western settlement. Evangelistic efforts were therefore limited to fleeting, hurried instruction provided to Indian visitors whose main priority was trade. By contrast, Kunkapot's Mahican community had never been invaded by Jesuits, and their close proximity and stable settlement would allow regular, more comprehensive teaching.⁴¹³ This appraisal by Stoddard of the practicalities of missionization suggested a shift. Imperialized missiologies, manifest in English and French authorities' heightened focus on missionaries as agents that could promote or protect colonial interests,

⁴¹² Hopkins, Samuel. *Historical Memoirs, Relating to the Housatunnuk Indians: Or, An Account of the Methods used, and Pains taken, for the Propagation of the Gospel among that heathenish Tribe, and the Success thereof, under the Ministry of the late Reverend Mr. John Sergeant: Together, With the Character of that eminently worthy Missionary; and an Address to the People of this Country representing the very great Importance of attaching the Indians to their Interest, not only by treating them justly and kindly but by using proper Endeavours to settle Christianity among them* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1753), 15.

⁴¹³ Hopkins, *Historical Memoir*, 16.

had required an association between evangelism and commercial and diplomatic interests. The three ministers' experiences were proving that this was disastrous, making a proposed Mahican mission even more attractive.

Sergeant was selected for the mission in September that year. His most important contribution to early American missiology, however, came after a further nine years. He wrote a proposal for a radically new program of educating Indian children as a feature of his missionary work. As part of his proposal, Sergeant gave further expression to the heightening importance of Christ's example. He viewed previous missionization in spaces claimed by English colonies with a measured pessimism. When he proposed his new evangelical scheme he decried the 'Disposition and State of the Indians in America'. The methods previously utilised had been utterly ineffective, it being evident that 'Vertue and Piety make but a slow Progress among them'. Sergeant's plan was not, therefore, derived from established missiology. Instead it was a deliberate attempt to move beyond such efforts.⁴¹⁴ But recognising previous missiological endeavour as largely futile suggested another, more awkward question. The disappointing history of the religious encounter in early America might not have been a function of missionaries' inappropriate methodology, but rather an unfortunate, and possibly insurmountable, reminder that Indians' barbarism was practically impervious to Christianization. Sergeant understood why this concern could discourage further investment in evangelism, and he needed a salary for his mission to function. Like many other missionaries across early America who had reassessed the relevance of Christ, Sergeant manipulated the Christological example to promote his plan.

⁴¹⁴ Sergeant, John. *A Letter From the Reverend Mr. Sergeant of Stockbridge, to Dr. Colman of Boston: Containing Mr. Sergeant's Proposal of a more effectual Method for the Education of Indian Children; to raise 'em if possible into a civil and industrious People; by introducing the English Language among them; and thereby instilling into their Minds and Hearts, with a more lasting Impression, the Principles of Virtue and Piety* (Boston: Rogers and Fowle, 1743), 5 ('Disposition', 'Vertue and Piety').

Benefactors who donated the money to sustain Sergeant's project would not 'loose their Reward with God' even if the evangelist met with spectacular failure. Christ's efforts at conversion were often similarly fruitless. Yet his death offered salvation for both converts and sceptics alike; therefore, although the Indians on the Houssitonac were demonstrably a 'base, ungrateful People, insensible of Kindnesses done them' and 'greatly debased', their character should have no effect on the evangelical impulse. Christ's actions as the proto-missionary conferred an obligation on evangelists to 'imitate the Beneficence of his Heavenly Father, who does Good to the Evil and Unthankful'. Had Christ the man been discouraged by hostility, he would never have 'shed his Blood for those, who pursued his Life to Death'.⁴¹⁵

This manipulation of the Christological example was, by now, a familiar strategy across almost all missiological theatres in early America. Sergeant joined a cast of missionaries who were exploiting the failures of missionization to craft a new logic of devotion, anchored in fidelity to the example of Christ himself but independent of practical success or failure. This rhetoric was the expression of a shared, mostly disappointing experience of missionization across early America suffered by Jesuits, Franciscans, and Puritans alike.

The mid-eighteenth century therefore saw the culmination of a process of homogenization across evangelical traditions in response to the experience of missionization on the continent. Missionaries remained open to alterations to their missiology, but the scope of such transformation was narrowing. Brainerd and Aulneau were central figures in the final dramatic evolution of early American missiologies. Isolation from others had been valorised by many, but both rejected this. Practically, it was disastrous; there was simply too many Indians, roaming over too great a territory, for single missionaries to effect appreciable

⁴¹⁵ Sergeant. *A Letter*, 7-8 ('loose their Reward', 'insensible of Kindnesses', 'debased', 'Evil and Unthankful', 7; 'shed his Blood', 8).

change in their religious attitudes. But the anxiety provoked by their isolation was primarily of its effect on their own spiritual condition. Aulneau was stricken by the thought that distance from other Jesuits would threaten his 'interior union' with God, while Brainerd stated explicitly that his seclusion from other Christians almost caused him to abandon his mission altogether. Likewise, those concerned more with analysing the history of their institution's history of missionization in early America crafted almost identical conceptions of the relationship between evangelism and salvation. Experiencing acute or extended suffering, or successfully converting Indians to Christianity, were no longer necessary as vehicles for missionaries' personal salvation. Through astute manipulation of Christological and apostolic paradigms, Charlevoix, le Clercq, Hennepin and Sergeant all proposed that the act of preaching the Gospel was itself sufficient for one's salvation; secondary effects were considered providential, and therefore beyond missionaries' agency.

Finally, an excited report by the Jesuit Eusebio Kino, on his ambitions for his mission in the Pímeria Alta, provided a comparison with which to compare this narrowing missiology. Kino's work in the Pimería Alta, the rugged borderland between the Sonora desert and the western reaches of New Mexico, had created an explicitly continental consciousness that transcended colonial and imperial divisions. By pushing Jesuit activity north and northeast of New Mexico into the plains and prairies, Kino imagined linking with his fellow Jesuits still working assiduously across New France, and 'with the new conquests, conversions, and missions which at present they are making with their glorious and apostolic journeys from east to west'. Connecting with New Spain's colonial rivals to the east would mean 'the triumphal car of our Holy Catholic Faith will travel with the sun from east to west, until by the divine grace, all the world shall be converted'.⁴¹⁶ Early America, through shared

⁴¹⁶ Bolton, Herbert Eugene. *Kino's Historical Memoir of Pimería Alta: A Contemporary Account of the Beginnings of California, Sonora, and Arizona*, by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, S.J., Pioneer Missionary

Jesuit endeavour across the continent, promised to function as the evangelical hinge finally allowing the Catholic dream of a universal faith.

This hope was encouraged by a lengthy comparison Kino drew between early America and missiological theatres across Asia, mostly in China and Japan. His experience in the former had been diametrically opposed to the history of evangelism in the latter. For example, in China Jesuits were forced to make regular and rich gifts to the mandarins; potential Asian neophytes had their own ‘priests’ to obey and a corresponding doctrine to obey and revere; and Japan had formally banned Christian missions. The Pimas and some Indian nations on their borders offered a stark contrast. Their encounters with Kino had suggested not only receptivity to the Christian faith, but enthusiastic invitations. In many instances, frustrated by the paralyzing dearth of Jesuit personnel to instruct them, they asked to pay for their services, bluntly asking how much it would cost. Kino was also convinced that Indians were *tabula rasa*. The risky spiritual sparring that characterised missions in Asia was unnecessary when ministering to a people whose only apparently deity was the Sun. His final, more general point was that the Indians with which he had interacted had shown a broadly welcoming attitude toward prospect of missionization, an attitude that China and Japan had never practically adopted.⁴¹⁷

Kino’s scheme was the fullest and most hopeful articulation of a continental consciousness within the Jesuit order. Rogel abandoning Spanish Florida in the late-sixteenth century had been the first move in an ongoing institutional attempt to both understand early America and locate the significance of Jesuit activity within it. Biard, Brebeuf, le Jeune, Lalement, Rageneau, and le Mercier had all wrestled with the same problem, adapting to the

Explorer, Cartographer, and Ranchman 1683-1711, Vol II: (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1919), 144 & 258-9 (‘triumphal car’, 144; ‘east to west’, 258-259).

⁴¹⁷ Kino. *Historical Memoir*, Vol II, 145-146 (‘priests’, 145).

radical dynamism of the Indian world in early America to craft new meanings that sustained Jesuit activity in New France. Now, Kino seized on these efforts to articulate an explicitly continental vision that imagined early America as both a discrete space - defined by exceptionally promising mission fields and inhabited by uniquely malleable targets – and the critical final piece of the universal Catholic puzzle. The locus of Jesuit continentalism had shifted, but its vibrant, and often violent, evolution in New France remained critical.

Kino, rather than his colleagues in New France, was the one now articulating an expansive spatial aspect to his evangelism. He also keenly expressed the apparently singular potential of the Pimas that populated his mission; an act of distinction that followed Brebeuf's, Bruyas' and Garnier's description of the Iroquois and Illinois, but was not shared by any of the other critical figures shaping an early American missiology. His was the exception to this new continental paradigm, the promoters of which narrowed their missiology to focus heavily on the piety and salvation of the missionary himself, in response to a shared experience of declining influence.

A New Convergence

As Brainerd consigned his thoughts to his journal, signs of a much better-known homogenization were beginning to dot the Susquehanna Valley where he worked. He encountered one personally in 1744. At Juniata the missionary also recorded a meeting with 'a devout and zealous reformer, or rather restorer of what he supposed was the ancient religion of the Indians'. This holy man bluntly described his fellow Indians as 'very degenerate and corrupt', and recommended total separation from European influence as the only remedy. The Lenape's anxious demands worried Brainerd, but he was forced to admit

that his proposals evoked an image ‘more like true religion than anything I ever observed amongst other heathens’.⁴¹⁸

This ‘Reformer’, as Brainerd called him, was a prophet in a much larger Indian revitalization movement that was sweeping through Lenape settlements along the Susquehanna. As the borders of settlement in Pennsylvania and New York had been rammed further westward in the eighteenth century, Lenapes were pushed further into the interior along the Susquehanna and Ohio Rivers. Their forced migration led to the formation of new settlements throughout these river systems, which were soon swelled by a confusing array of refugees from encompassing Indian nations, such as Odawas, Christian Iroquois, and Shawnees. Occupying a desolate position between the territory of the Five Nations and the expanding frontier of English settlement, and disoriented by this demographic confusion, a number of Indian religious figures began to urge the total rejection of colonial influence and a corresponding return to a traditional, more authentic mode of Indian devotion. Their polyglot communities fostered the collapse of recognised tribal and national affiliations, which, in turn, encouraged the forging of a pan-Indian consciousness. The Reformer was joined in this effort by, among others, the ‘Otseningo Seer’ in New York in 1737 and Wangomend and Papoonan in the 1750s.⁴¹⁹

But none of them were the most important figure in this evolution. That distinction went to Neolin, the most conspicuous and influential product of an intense three decades where Indian religious figures began to articulate a pan-Indian consciousness as a solution to

⁴¹⁸ Gregory Evans Dowd. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 29 (‘ancient religion’, ‘degenerate and corrupt’, ‘true religion’).

⁴¹⁹ Dowd. *A Spirited Resistance*, 23-47; Alfred A. Cave. *Prophets of the Great Spirit: Native American Revitalization Movements in Eastern North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 11-45; John Howard Smith. *A Dream of the Judgment Day: American Millennialism and Apocalypticism, 1620-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 115-120.

the worsening problems caused by increasingly muscular colonialisms and the chaos of the Seven Years War. The Ohio and Susquehanna river valleys that gave life to the north-eastern interior were fertile grounds for such a proposal; endemic Indian and colonial conflict plunged the region into a muddled mass of shifting Indian demographics, which translated into bustling settlements where refugee populations clustered awkwardly along the river systems. Within such complicated environments, pulsing with linguistic and socio-cultural confusion, a pan-Indian paradigm was a critical feature integrating this new complexity into a coherent movement.

Neolin embodied this campaign to standardize Indian religious practice around a program that could be applied effectively across the Indian worlds surrounding the colonial northeast. Yet it is vital to recognise that such homogenization was mirrored in European missiologies across early America by the mid-eighteenth century. Franciscan, Jesuit, and Puritan missionaries, by 1750, had all concluded that legitimate missionization obliged an evangelist to preach the Gospel without regard for his success or failure in translating this instruction into conversions. Just as early America became the site for increasingly more sophisticated expressions of a pan-Indianism, so it was the site of a general missiology articulated by missionaries in direct competition with each other.

Conclusion

An Early American Missiology

Brainerd's journal contained the final expression of this convergence. The consolidation of Franciscan, Jesuit and Puritan missiology into few common themes brought the story of early American evangelism full circle. Those initiating the articulation and performance of their respective missiologies in early America either uncritically applied fundamental evangelical techniques or imposed generalised attitudes on the religious encounter between missionary and Indian. The Franciscans in the first decades of colonialism in the Spanish borderlands seized every opportunity to promote the sign of the cross, distinguish themselves from soldiers accompanying expeditions, and baptise figures of authority in Indian communities; Jesuits, likewise, applied Loyola's logic in deliberately targeting Felipe and Membertou as the most visible and authoritative individuals in vast regional configurations of Indian power; But in each instance, these missiological logics produced paradoxes that militated against expanding or further strengthening evangelical endeavour. Such experience demanded that missiologies be expanded in order to sustain Jesuit and Franciscan activity on the continent. Though commencing later, the Puritans' experience was of a similar need for constant reappraisal of their own missiology.

The two centuries between de Niza's first sight of Hawikuh and Brainerd's efforts in the northeastern interior thus saw constant and radical transformation of three different missiologies. Just as early America was shaped by missionaries' intrepid efforts, so were the evangelists transformed. Their constant adaptations to the demands of their new continental space created new missiologies, that finally coalesced around a few key themes by the mid-eighteenth century. This wonderfully vibrant intellectualised process conditioned the

religious encounter across early America, in turn shaping the exercise of colonial power. This thesis, by refocusing on missionaries and using an innovative methodology to analyse their adaptations, has recovered the dynamism of evangelists' changing identities and attitudes over more than two centuries of the early American cultural encounter. They thus join Indians and colonial agents as equally complex characters on the stage of early American history.

This complexity, however, is most important as a vehicle for the eventual consolidation and then convergence of three distinct evangelical traditions into a roughly coherent early American missiology. Beginning in the early-eighteenth century, Franciscans, Jesuits and Puritans all began to reorganise their missiologies around a focus on evangelists themselves. This was a reaction to the consistent disappointment that figures from each tradition felt. All had seen carefully constructed visions of sprawling Christian empires falter as Indian and colonial power intruded progressively further into missionaries' plans. In response, many began to reconceptualise their missiologies by explicitly prioritising the actions and attitudes of the missionaries themselves, rather than balancing these with the need for effective conversion. The most fundamental and basic themes of Christian devotion – fidelity to Christ and the apostolic tradition, the imperative of preaching without regard for reception, and the importance of communal piety for one's own spiritual condition – were wholly or in part articulated as the most important features of missionization by Franciscans, Jesuits and Puritans alike.

This return to basic Christian doctrine, simplifying evangelism, is comparable to expressions of key figures in the First Great Awakening. The revivalism embodied by George Whitefield and James Davenport proposed a similar consolidation of competing theologies into a generalised Protestant piety; transcending bitter denominational divides, such preachers demanded that a profound conversion experience and conviction of salvation be considered

the most critical feature of Christian devotion. Though missionaries did not want to collapse divisions between Orders and faiths, their discrete missiologies underwent a similar consolidation around, and a return to, basic Christian themes and paradigms. By extension, early America itself was a space that, by the early-eighteenth century, was encouraging the most militant and aggressive Christian figures to prioritise the fundamentals of their faith over institutional and denominational peculiarities. Therefore, instead of regarding the development and implication of the Great Awakening as a singular American phenomena, particular to colonies on the Eastern seaboard, the entire early American continent must be reconsidered as a space where both Catholic and Protestant evangelists deliberately reorganised their devotion by returning to foundational Christian motifs.

This analysis, furthermore, is the foundation for analysing early American religious history anew. Scholars continue to reevaluate the parameters of early American religion, expanding their histories to incorporate every denomination, sect or creed, within every configuration of colonial power. Though this has created a more accurate picture of the complexity of early American religious history, it has left the field without a clear analytical or interpretive centre.⁴²⁰ This thesis suggests a solution. It includes missionaries from three distinct traditions operating across the entire continent, and then traces the gradual convergence of their respective missiologies into a generalised early American expression of evangelism. It is therefore inclusive of the vast new spatial range and thematic foci of recent scholarship, yet equally sensitive to the emergence of what should be recognised as an early American religious phenomenon encompassing such diversity.

⁴²⁰ For recent summaries of this shift, see Catherine Brekus. 'Contested Words: History, America, Religion', *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (January, 2018), 3-36; Stephen J. Stein. 'American Religious History – Decentered with Many Centers', *Church History*, Vol. 71, Issue 2 (June, 2002), pp. 374-379.

This thesis also suggests adding to the complex factors catalysing and informing early American colonialism itself. The most important feature of this analysis was the exceptional ability of the missionaries themselves to manipulate, add to, or fundamentally transform the intellectual contexts guiding their evangelical endeavour. Furthermore, far from being an inconsequential or abstracted feature of missionization, this deft process was critical for sustaining Jesuit, Franciscan and Puritan evangelism across the continent. The Catholic and Puritan missionaries' deliberate and successful attempts to distinguish early American evangelism as a discrete strategic endeavour was a critical factor in the institutionalization of missions in New France, the Spanish borderlands and New England. These processes were, furthermore, so contingent as to defy easy categorization. When Jesuits were remoulding their missiology to suit the ebb and flow of Iroquois power in the mid-seventeenth century, their further provincialization of early America as a bounded geographic entity was a dynamic process intended to convey the continued viability of their endeavour. By contrast, the disagreement between Franciscans in New Mexico and their authorities in Mexico City saw the former radically diverge from missiological orthodoxy by rejecting the Christological paradigm as the only criteria for evangelism. These differences, though significant, may be incorporated into a generalised analysis that recognises the fundamental importance of this intellectual process to the establishment, maintenance, and eventual decline of missionization in all spaces claimed by colonial powers.

A corollary is that the performance of colonialism across the continent should be reassessed. The missions' institutional functions as engines of trade, diplomacy, or cultural change was subsequent to this foundational process of missiological transformation across the continent. This is likewise true when they were abandoned or destroyed. The expansive constellation of missions in Huronia and the Pueblo world were critical to introducing and maintaining French and Spanish colonialism into in these regions. But when Iroquois power

devastated the evangelical landscape of Huronia, the Jesuits' justified a shift in focus, to the peripheries of an expanding zone encompassing the western Great Lakes, the southern shores of Hudson Bay, the Acadian peninsula and the north-eastern woodlands, through a process of religious transformation. This deprived colonial and commercial agents of the influence and support provided by the missionaries' former presence in the region – a consequence of Jesuits' complicated efforts to manipulate their missiology in response to the chaos of the late-1640s. Similarly, creeping settlement across New Mexico was brutally reversed by two Pueblo revolts, a key ambition of which was the extirpation of Christianity in every settlement along the Rio Grande. The Franciscans' consequent recalibration of the definition of martyrdom and the example of Christ was a purely religious process; but one that precluded a full revival of the mission network, and therefore the quick recovery of Spanish colonialism that relied on them. Therefore, where early American missions are analysed as organs of imperial and colonial power, it is imperative to recognise this complicated navigation through, and transformation of, religious themes such as martyrology, soteriology and Christology as an antecedent and necessary phenomenon.

Finally, chronologies and spatial paradigms structuring the historiography of early American history are challenged. The transformative effect of the most devastating threats to missionization - King Philip's War, the Pueblo Revolt and the Iroquois destruction of Huronia – must be recognised as epochal, but not novel. Missiologies were radically changed as a result of these explosions of Indian agency, but such recalibrations were stages in a much longer and more demanding process of adaptation to early America by Jesuits, Franciscans and Puritans. Tracing the constant dynamism of missionaries' reactions to their respective cultural encounters thus challenges analysis of these events as fulcrums around which missionization was forced to change; they become, instead, particularly dangerous

manifestations of continental forces that forced missionaries into incessant consideration of their missiologies for over two centuries.

In the case of New England, this reconsideration extends to the figures involved in the missionization of the Indian worlds encompassing colonial settlement. As the most active director of the complex of praying towns, the most conspicuous manifestation of Puritan evangelism, John Eliot is rightly judged the central personality in this process. The generations of Mayhews on Martha's Vineyard are likewise considered. Analysing the creation of a Puritan missiology in early America, however, requires reassessing Eliot's centrality. Eliot and the Mayhews were key to the endeavour of missionization, but it was not until after King Philip's War, when the Mathers worked to craft a reciprocal relationship between future evangelism and addressing the problem of declension, that Puritan missiology finally became localised as an early American creation. This paradigm was then the foundation for Brainerd and Sergeant's ministries in the mid-eighteenth century, which were the final components of the continental missiology shared across New France, the Spanish borderlands and the English colonies.

In addition to this reconceptualisation of early American chronologies, the frequent and explicit articulations of an evangelising imperative independent of colonial competition demand a reconceptualization of early American space. Expressions of ecumenicism, transcendent of Catholic-Protestant, denominational and colonial divides, suggested that, for the missionaries, the most important territorial division in early America was between Christian and godless regions. All other forms of categorization were subordinate to this model. Early American missiologies did not, therefore, conform to colonial demarcations, but rather encompassed them. This spatial paradigm must be recognised as both a radically different conceptualisation of the continent and a fundamental component of early American missionization.

This narrative of the energetic creation of early American missiology is also critical to fully appreciating the complexity of Indian agency more generally in early America. Applications of such power to the religio-cultural encounter reached across a vast spectrum, from murderous rejection, through indifference and syncretic adaptations, to such committed conversion that missionaries themselves lost control of the translation of Christianity. Each time that an Indian individual or group expressed their agency in these ways, it forced missionaries into consideration of the paradigms, logics and strategies guiding their activity. Jesuits, Franciscans, and Puritans were sometimes confirmed in such beliefs; but, in most cases, they were forced to reassess particular religious ideas that had either catalysed or sustained their endeavour. Specific Indian reactions to missionization were therefore fundamental to the dynamism of early American missiologies.

In turn, this shrewd ability of missionaries to continually reconcile their practical experience of evangelism with their arsenal of religious concepts conditioned how other Indian groups and communities then experienced subsequent attempts at missionization. Complicating the figure of the early American missionary thus also complicates Indian agency. As an organic entity - stitched together by various alliances, friendships and affiliations, or riven by old and new ethnic, commercial and demographic conflicts – the early American Indian world encountered evangelists guided by constantly shifting missiologies, a variety that Indians themselves catalysed through their reaction to missionization. The missionization that Indians encountered was therefore the product of a dialogic relationship between their own agency and missionaries' construction of early American missiologies.

These conclusions invite the application of the methodology used throughout this thesis to the totality of early modern evangelism. Indeed, early America was but one region in a vast, globalising missiological endeavour from the sixteenth century. In most colonial spaces secular agents and missionaries eagerly built reciprocal relationships. Tracing the

provincialization of Jesuit, Franciscan and Puritan missiology in their respective colonial territories in early America - and demonstrating its foundational role to sustained missionization – invites similar analysis of comparable regions. Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Central and South America would offer the most comprehensive examples for applying this methodology to the Catholic missionary Orders. Evangelism across the British Empire in its second era , from the late-18th to the late-19th centuries, would be most appropriate for their Protestant rivals. In summary, the methodology that has formed the core of this thesis could be extended to other regions and periods, contributing to the global history of missionization by tracing the dynamic changes that the colonial encounter encouraged for various missiologies.

In summary, missionaries' incessant and skilful adaptation to the demands of their early American experience was profoundly important, sustaining missionization across the continent and eventually forging an early American missiology. In turn, early American religious history must be reimagined.

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