

THE MINISTERIAL VISION OF THE EARLY JESUITS AND ITS REALIZATION IN  
NEW FRANCE

by

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Troublemakers, “Christian-Killers,” martyrs, and saints. At varying times in their history, the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits as they would quickly become known, have encountered all these labels. Knowing intimately the controversies and fluctuations within Catholic history across the last five centuries, the Jesuit Order is no stranger to misconceptions, stereotypes, and outright prejudice from its critiques. However, these religious figures are not so easily labelled as some may think and it is therefore necessary to understand the early Order’s vision of their mission and methods before venturing to accurately assess their later work in any given context. Once the spirit of the Order’s early founders, motivations, and context are clarified, the implementation of these methods and goals in the context of later missions will be assessed in the case of the exceptionally difficult Jesuit mission to the Huron Nation in the early 1600s. The early history of the Jesuits shows the general spiritual goals of the Order to be, at their simplest level, to glorify God, to further their love for him, and bring others to love God from their heart, but it is the methods used to express this spirit that makes the Jesuits unique.<sup>1</sup> When this study turns its focus towards assessing the Huron Mission, both the level of the Huron Mission’s adherence to the early Jesuits’ methods and goals and the efficacy of that same vision will be assessed in the context of what is to be considered perhaps the most difficult and dangerous missions the Jesuits have ever undertaken. Some of the final conclusions of this work are that the Jesuits in the Huron Mission faithfully followed many of the ideologies laid out by the founders, but they also became entangled with the colonialist goals of the French government and ineffectually sought to alter Iroquoian

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<sup>1</sup> John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 2.

social and cultural practices as a requirement before any Amerindian would be considered a “true Christian.” This categorical binary was itself one of the main problems for the Jesuits, who, similar to contemporary Puritans in New England, only saw success as the total religious *and* cultural conversion of their targets.<sup>2</sup>

Before venturing into an examination of the ideologies and practices of the earliest Jesuits, it is essential to explain the intense resolve its later members demonstrated in New France. One of the most influential Jesuit leaders, and eventual martyrs, the working among the Amerindians in New France was Jean de Brébeuf and his frequent testimony, along with his peers such as Paul Le Jeune, recorded across the *Relations* speaks the hardships endured by Jesuits who sought to convert the Amerindians. Throughout the *Relations*, these accounts of the Jesuits’ suffering demonstrate both their commitment to the Huron Mission and the importance of assessing the efficacy of the earliest Jesuits ministerial methods.

After the successful founding of Quebec in 1608, the French government sought to form European settlements within the geographically vast area of eastern Canada, especially around the St. Lawrence River. Additionally, the French Crown wished to see the Christianizing of the indigenous population, and the French state sought to establish a lucrative fur trading network with the Huron and they tasked the Jesuits to aid in their goal of cultural assimilation of the Amerindians into French society. As an organization, the Jesuits were affected by their organizational ideologies and practices, the skill and

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<sup>2</sup> Sylvia Brown. “Converting the Lost Sons of Adam: National Identities and the First Publication of the ‘Society for the propagation of the Gospel in New England,’” *Reformation* 4, no. 1 (1999): 170.

zeal of their members, and the geographic and cultural context in which they worked. The ultimate conclusion of this work is that the context in which the Jesuits of New France labored had the greatest influence on the meager number of conversions, schools, and *reducción*-style created by the Jesuits in New France in the first half of the seventeenth-century. However, their commitment to the ministerial methods of the Order, despite endless challenges, demonstrated a tremendous zeal for learning the languages of their target audience and inspirational courage, especially when they endured death with a Christ-like obedience.

While there were only a few dozen Jesuits working among the Huron at any time, from 1642-1649, a total of eight martyrdoms took place at the hands of the Iroquoians as the Huron experienced the results of deadly war and epidemics. All eight Canadian Martyrs of the 1640s are here listed in order of their death: St. René Goupil, St. Isaac Jogues, St. Jean de Lalande, St. Antoine Daniel, St. Jean de Brébuf, St. Gabriel Lalemant, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Noël Chabanel. Demonstrating their resolve to take any risks to succeed in converting the Iroquoians, many Jesuits moved beyond the confines and protection of French trading posts, which, in the estimation of the Jesuits, did not set a positive example of Christian chastity and moral practice. By doing so, Jesuits such as Jean de Brébuf and Gabriel Lalemant—who were both killed in 1649 by the Iroquois after they destroyed the Huron village in which they lived—fully exposed themselves to the dangers of living among groups that became increasingly hostile as deadly epidemics



and the Beaver Wars decimated the Huron population and led them to scapegoat the Jesuits in their midst.<sup>3</sup>

In their last days, Brébuf and Lalemant fully recognized they were going to face torture and death for their relentless perseverance, but they still resolved to stay with the Huron with whom they labored. After months of extreme danger during the last days of the Beaver Wars, the Huron village in which Brébuf and Lalemant dwelt was attacked and destroyed by the Iroquois Confederacy and the two Jesuit missionaries were killed in gruesome fashion. During his torture, Brébuf epitomized the great courage exhibited throughout the Huron Mission and is recorded to have silently suffered through a long night of gruesome and unimaginable tortures by the Iroquois. As the hours passed, Brébuf began to preach to his captors and was accordingly subjected to further tortures to his face and lips to silence him. In his 1649 *Relation*, Father Joseph Marie Chaumont writes that even though Brébuf's body had been grievously disfigured, "his blood spoke much more loudly than his lips had done; and, his heart not being yet torn out, his tongue did not fail to render him service until the last sigh, for blessing God for these torments."<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, the radical commitment shown by Brébuf and his fellow missionaries, even at the risk of certain death, demands for a closer look at efficacy of the foundational

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<sup>3</sup> Neal Salisbury, "Religious Encounters in a Colonial Context: New England and New France in the Seventeenth Century," *American Indian Quarterly* no. 4 (1992): 505.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Marie Chaumont, 1649, in Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed. "Of the Blessedness Deaths of Father Jean de Brébuf, and Father Gabriel Lalemant." *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* [hereafter *The Jesuit Relations*] (Cleveland: Burrows Bros, 1896-1901), 34:141-142.

practices and structures upon which they built their ministry to determine what exactly resulted in the challenging progress seen in the Huron Mission.

Speaking to their lasting importance, the Jesuits have a continuing global presence through schools and missions on the six populated continents that minister to and educate tens of thousands of people. Although their history is long and members of the Order have written an immense body of literature over the centuries, a relatively small selection of the Jesuits' foundational literature and in introduction to several key leaders in the earliest generations of Jesuits are primarily what is required to assess the founding spirit of the group. Indeed, to understand the ideological essence of any organization, it is necessary to first identify the key personalities that influenced both the founding spirit and continuing codes and practices of the group. Ultimately, exploring the actions and writings of three of the most influential Jesuit founders—namely Ignatius of Loyola, Jerome Nadal, and Juan Alfonso de Polanco—along with a general history of the Order from the time of its advent to around the general time of Ignatius' death in 1556, demonstrates the ministerial methods and goals that guided future missions. Careful attention is given to the issue of the Jesuits' primary focuses including preaching, pastoral care, education, global missions, the Apostolic Life, Jesuit spirituality, obedience to the papacy, and the initiation and formation of new members into the Order. To this end, the first section of this study will primarily focus on examining the founding documents of the Order, namely the *Spiritual Exercises*, both the 1540 and the 1550 iterations of the *Formula*, Ignatius' *Autobiography*, and the *Constitutions*. Additionally, the letters of Ignatius, Nadal, and Polanco will be used to understand the guiding ministerial “game plan” for which these three leaders advocated. In this work's second section, the efficacy

of the Jesuits' unique "way of proceeding" in the context of eastern Canada in the early seventeenth century will offer a complex and harsh missional reality to juxtapose to the ideals and methods of the early Jesuits.

It is important to briefly note the body of work that is used to explicate the spirit of the early Jesuits. Regarded as one of the premier scholars of the Society, John O'Malley's works, which are considered ground-breaking in the field of Jesuit scholarship, utilize the research approach of understanding the Jesuits as they understood themselves.<sup>5</sup> Functioning as the guiding research methodology to this work's comparison of the Huron mission to the earliest Jesuits' ideology, leading Jesuit scholar John W. O'Malley's historical methods used in his ground-breaking work *The Early Jesuits*, as well as a variety of his articles, serve as a dominate reference point. Published in 1993, O'Malley's work provides the lens through which subsequent Jesuit scholars raised the standard of Jesuit research above the level of spiritually edifying hagiography to meet the exacting demands of professional historical research. O'Malley asserts that, due to widespread issues of bias within the historiography, there had been no truly comprehensive study of the first generations Jesuits before the publication of his book. He points out that most research on the Jesuits has in large part come from either members of the Society itself or writers with a clear bias against the Jesuits. O'Malley concludes that "[e]ven today this scholarship is not always free of hagiographical vestiges."<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Jesuits' historiography across the decades has often proved to be

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<sup>5</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 3-4

<sup>6</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 2.

problematic at best and unusable at worst. Indeed, several more recent monographs occasionally veer into the hagiographical realm of spiritual edification even though they may also provide valuable information and insight into the Jesuit practices during the Huron mission in New France.

For the purposes of this research, O'Malley's research methods will be applied to understanding the Jesuits' efforts during the Huron Mission. Listing two basic goals that guide his research, O'Malley seeks to "understand the early Jesuits as they understood themselves." He asserts that this is possible via examining "what they said about themselves to each other and to outsiders and especially by looking at how they translated that understanding into action in their many ministries and in the style of life they adopted."<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, this study on the ideologies and tactics of both the early Jesuits and the later Huron mission in New France mirrors this goal, especially in the use of primary sources to develop an understanding of both the earliest Jesuits' ideologies and practices and to develop an assessment of the "consistencies and inconsistencies" of the New France Jesuits' translation of the early Jesuit ideas into their seventeenth century political, social, economic, and geographic context. O'Malley's second research principle is that, considering that "[t]he Jesuits did not think, feel, or act in a vacuum or in the timeless arena of eternal verities," it is essential to "discover the origins of the Jesuits' self-understanding and to take account of the contexts in which they inserted themselves that furthered their process of self-definition."<sup>8</sup> Using O'Malley's approach, to study the

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<sup>7</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 3.

<sup>8</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 3.

Jesuits, one must assess how they developed in their earliest years and subsequently adapted to each context in which they ventured.

### **A Brief Overview of the Impact of Ignatius, Nadal, and Polanco**

At their most essential level, each of these three leaders performed different roles within the fledgling years of the Order. Ignatius served the roles of both visionary and administrator for the nascent Order, Polanco aided Ignatius in both the style and content of many of his letters and the *Constitutions*, and Nadal tirelessly trekked across Europe to insure Ignatius' understanding of the *Constitutions* and vision for the Order was realized in practice.<sup>9</sup> Ignatius, who served as the first superior general of the Order, was the driving force behind the Jesuits' educational, and even cultural, mission of establishing and running schools and saw them as a means of providing direct help and service to communities.<sup>10</sup> Universally, Ignatius is credited as the principle founder of the Order in part due to his great input into the Order's initial vision and tireless work in the areas of fundraising and administration. Undeniably, Ignatius's efforts to first create and then circulate the *Spiritual Exercises* not only helped recruit what would be the Order's first members but also served as the basic book of the Order that aided in unifying members'

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<sup>9</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 9-12.

<sup>10</sup> John W. O'Malley, "How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education," ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 206.

spiritual experiences in what rapidly became an increasingly global mission after Ignatius and six of his companions gathered together to profess vows and enter the ministry.<sup>11</sup>

Ignatius' vision for worldwide missions manifested itself in the first months following his conversion in 1521 and his early wish was to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to preach to unconverted Jews.<sup>12</sup> Throughout *St. Ignatius in His Own Words* and the *Autobiography*, Ignatius uses the term "pilgrim" to describe himself and in doing so demonstrates a framework for understanding one's spiritual calling. Scholar Anne Ng argues that Ignatius' self-perception as a pilgrim was seen through the paradigm of medieval pilgrimages.<sup>13</sup> Essentially, the medieval pilgrimage frequently involved traveling to Jerusalem "to walk in the footsteps of Jesus" and to visit saint's shrines and the burial sites of the earliest Christians such as John, Peter, and Paul.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the medieval pilgrim focused on geographic pilgrimage across spaces, which could also carry a penitential aspect. Although Ignatius and his companions wished to embark on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Ignatius and his companions determined to lay their service before the pope in Rome if they were not able to journey to the Holy Land. However, because "of war between Venice and Turkey," Ignatius and his companions were

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<sup>11</sup> John W. O'Malley, "Ignatius' Special "Way of Proceeding,"" ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 121-122.

<sup>12</sup> Ignacio De Loyola. *The Autobiography*, ed. by George E. Ganss, trans. by Parmananda R. Divarkar , in *The "Spiritual Exercises" and Selected Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 70.

<sup>13</sup> Annie Y J Pan Ng, "The Christ-Centered Anthropology of Ignatius Loyola and His Approach of Spiritual Formation in the Spiritual Exercises," *Sino-Christian Studies* 16 (December 2013): 14.

<sup>14</sup> Ng, "The Christ-Centered Anthropology," 13.

compelled to stay away from the conflict and “return to Rome and offer themselves to the Vicar of Christ so that he could use them wherever he judged it would work for the greater glory of God and the good of souls.”<sup>15</sup> Duly, Ignatius and his companions took their medieval concept of pilgrimage to the Holy Land and instead focused on traveling between European states in their attempts to live out the Apostolic Life as pilgrims.<sup>16</sup> This approach to active ministry across a variety of geographic spaces and distances is indicative of the Jesuits’ global ministry, with examples being the Huron mission in the early-to-mid 1600s and the famous missions to the east Indies.

As the first Superior General of the Jesuit Order, Ignatius acted upon this ideological commitment to missions by personally sending many missionaries into the field. Perhaps the greatest example of this missional commitment is Ignatius’ well-known commission of Francis Xavier to the East Indies, giving Xavier the famous directive “‘this is your task’ (esta es vuestra empresa).”<sup>17</sup> Permeating every aspect of the Order’s principle goals, Ignatius’ emphasis on missions and evangelism, along with his commitment to adaptive ministry and authorship of *The Spiritual Exercises*, has defined the Jesuits’ entire history. His unique approach to ministry greatly furthered the spread the Christianity across the world and created a highly-regarded legacy which resulted in his canonization by Pope Gregory XV in 1622.

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<sup>15</sup> Ng, “The Christ-Centered Anthropology,” 17.

<sup>16</sup> Ng, “The Christ-Centered Anthropology,” 17.

<sup>17</sup> José García de Castro Valdés, “Juan Alfonso de Polanco: Memory, Identity and Mission,” *The Way* 56, no. 3, (July 2017): 44.

While he himself demonstrated his tremendous gifts through his authorship of the *Exercises* and the *Constitutions*, part of Ignatius' genius as a founder was his ability to attract and place highly-talented persons to serve in high-impact leadership positions. Prior to the Order's adoption of the *Constitutions* in 1553 and official approval by the General Congregation in 1558, Ignatius heavily leaned upon Polanco to administrate communication within the Order. Polanco's impact in the creation of the *Constitutions*—which were not completed for a dozen years after the *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* of 1539 offered papal approval for the Society of Jesus—allowed Ignatius to more or less fully complete the document by 1551.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, Ignatius heavily relied upon Nadal to travel across Europe to communicate the vision and principles of the Order and instruct Jesuits on how to apply that “way of proceeding” to specific circumstances and people. Exceeding Ignatius in the “gifts of eloquence and imagination,” Nadal promulgated the vision of a traveling apostolic ministry to members of the Order. He would, again and again, insist that Jesuits were not to consider themselves to be sedentary monks, but to go out into the world and practice their ministry with direct service to people.<sup>19</sup>

Both Polanco and Nadal went far beyond the level of voiceless subordinates by adding their humanistic thinking to the literature and actual practice of the earliest Jesuits. Compared to Ignatius, Polanco had achieved a far greater level of education since, unlike Ignatius who received his Master of Arts degree from the University of Paris at the

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<sup>18</sup> William V. Bangert and Thomas M. McCoog, *Jerome Nadal, S.J., 1507-1580: Tracking the First Generation of Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992), 83.

<sup>19</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 5.



relatively advanced age of forty-three, Polanco began his studies in the humanities when he was thirteen. Likewise, Nadal entered a university at a young age, nineteen, and spent “five or six years” as he mastered the languages of “Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.”<sup>20</sup> With the intellectual background of “influence of Polanco, and other early Jesuits such as Jerónimo Nadal, that Renaissance Humanism” became a central element in Jesuit thought and practice. With Renaissance Humanism’s “concern for language and style as well as its openness to classical and patristic authors,” the first generation of Jesuits implemented an intellectual style that affected major aspects of the Order’s approach to ministry. The *Constitutions* mirror the concerns of Renaissance Humanists in that they task members of the Order to avoid preaching in “the scholastic manner” and instead preach so as to arouse the emotions and affections of the listener to God and for living a godly life. Frequently writing on examples of how to preach, Ignatius encouraged his companions to look to classical orators like Cicero for matters of style and delivery. Likewise, Nadal argued that—unlike the early days of Christianity in which an “artless style” was need to direct the listeners’ focus away from the preacher and accentuate the power of the Gospel message itself— “every human art” must be used to convey God’s message. Essentially, the orator was to reflect an adaptive approach to ministry by being ready to change his method of delivery to whatever circumstance or audience with which he was presented.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Bangert and McCoog, *Jerome Nadal*, 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> John W. O’Malley, “The Religious Culture of the First Jesuits,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 190-91.

In addition to the works of Cicero, the influence of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas are evident in Ignatius, Polanco, and Nadal's approach to ministry. Throughout Ignatius and Polanco's collaboration on the *Constitutions*, Aristotelian virtue is reflected in the outline of qualities to be possessed by members of the Order. From the Superior General on down, all were expected to exhibit the Aristotelian qualities of magnanimity and to recognize the necessity of virtue to live a satisfying life.<sup>22</sup> As for Aquinas, the early Jesuits mirrored his tradition of "incorporating truth from thinkers outside of Christianity" which was foundational to the humanistic movement and influential in articulating the Jesuits' distinctive mandate to be adaptive in their ministry.<sup>23</sup> In sum, the humanistic leanings of all three major leaders in the Society greatly shaped future ministerial and organizational characteristics of the Order.

Like Ignatius, Polanco and Nadal also share the credit for being tireless leaders who used the force of their intellects and personalities to unify the work among Jesuits spread worldwide. Moreover, Nadal's constant work in the field and Polanco's effective administration from the Jesuits' central offices in Rome leave historians, theologians, and clergymen with numerous letters that delineate the spirit of the early Jesuit. Working as Ignatius' secretary, Juan Polanco helped write a massive number of letters to Jesuits and religious and secular leaders to keep the Jesuits' both ideologically unified in their practices and also financially and politically supported in their mission to spread

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<sup>22</sup> Kevin Spinale, "The Intellectual Pedigree of the Virtue of Magnanimity in the Jesuit Constitutions," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 2, no. 3 (2015): 453.

<sup>23</sup> Spinale, "The Intellectual Pedigree," 464.

Christianity across Europe and the globe. At nearly thirty years of age, Polanco ascended to the post of secretary for the six-year old Jesuit Order, which for various reasons already had five short-lived secretaries— Peter Favre, Francis Xavier, Pietro Codazzo, Jerónimo Domenech, Bartolomeo Ferrão—by the time Polanco received his appointment.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout the first decade of Order’s development, the need for greater organization among the Jesuits was clear. An early series of attacks on the nascent Order by various clerical and secular sources only increased the need for widespread understanding of the Jesuits’ spirit to provide both guidance for members of the Order and transparency to the Church and secular authorities. During the Order’s thirteen years before the adoption of the *Constitutions*, the Jesuits continued to operate and grow without a document that outlined the basic rules and practices of the Order. While the Order did have the *Formula* with which to supply members with some basics, the first version of the *Formula*, which was published in 1540 and merely a few pages, was only a brief outline of how the Jesuits should function.<sup>25</sup> When writing the *Constitutions*, Polanco’s input was essential to both the style and content of the document. As he closely collaborated with Ignatius, who still served as “the principal inspiration” and had final say on the *Constitutions*, Polanco made “suggestions, raised questions, undertook research to help answer them, and drafted responses” during the long process of

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<sup>24</sup> Castro Valdés, “Juan Alfonso de Polanco,” 44.

<sup>25</sup> Castro Valdés, “Juan Alfonso de Polanco,” 49.

codifying Jesuit ministerial guidelines and practices.<sup>26</sup> Adding to Ignatius' own leanings toward Renaissance Humanism, Polanco's collaboration resulted in an even stronger humanistic foundation for the Order's organization and practices.<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, Polanco's efforts to help clarify, structure, and edit Ignatius' *Jesuit Constitutions* provided the Order with a central document to unify the practices and ideology of the first and then future generations of the Jesuits.

Perhaps what is Polanco's most impactful contribution to the administrative style of the Order is how he ardently sought to increase the frequency and volume of letters between Jesuits spread across the world. Accordingly, Polanco's first major steps as Ignatius' secretary were to constantly increase the letters coming out of the Jesuit headquarters in Rome every year.<sup>28</sup> According to scholar José Garcá de Castro, "[l]etters were the means by which Jesuits constructed their quite particular union of minds and hearts" and the emphasis on communication greatly facilitated their spread across the globe.<sup>29</sup> Further illuminating the early Jesuits' spiritual, ministerial, and organizational development, numerous letters from both Polanco and Nadal articulated the Jesuits' unique "way of proceeding."<sup>30</sup> Polanco's *Chronicon Societatis Iesu*, considered monumental by scholars in its historical record of the first generation of Jesuits, served to further preserve the original vision of the Jesuits for future generations of the Order.

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<sup>26</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Spinale, "The Intellectual Pedigree," 456.

<sup>28</sup> Bangert and McCoog, *Jerome Nadal*, 47.

<sup>29</sup> Bangert and McCoog, *Jerome Nadal*, 48.

<sup>30</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 9.

Indeed, the *Chronicon* stands as such a useful history that foundational Jesuit scholar John O'Malley has primarily relied upon this work in much of his research. According to José García de Castro, O'Malley's seminal work on the subject, *The First Jesuits*, rests primarily on both Polanco's *Chronicon* and his other writings and on Nadal's letters and other writings.<sup>31</sup>

Instilling an *esprit de corps* in the first generations of Jesuits, Jerome Nadal worked with tireless zeal as he travelled throughout Europe to motivate and personally instruct Jesuits working in various provinces, cities, and schools. Undeniably, it is Nadal's work as the "man in the field" that helped ensure Jesuit ideology became actual practice as he constantly affirmed a set of attitudes, goals, and ideologies that aligned with Ignatius' vision. Writing in 1553, Polanco offered his assessment of Nadal's role in and value to the Order with the statement "[h]e knows our father, Master Ignatius, well because he has had many dealings with him, and he seems to have understood his spirit and comprehended our Institute as well as anyone I know in the Society."<sup>32</sup> Likewise strong in his support, Ignatius himself asserted that "[Nadal] altogether knows my mind and enjoys the same authority as myself" in teaching the Order the spirit of the *Constitutions*.<sup>33</sup> As to the key elements of Nadal's contribution to the style and presentation of Ignatius' teachings, he generally gave a more complete articulation of the organizational and ministerial practices of the Jesuits. Likely his most important doctrine,

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<sup>31</sup> Castro Valdés, "Juan Alfonso de Polanco," 53-54.

<sup>32</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 12.

<sup>33</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 12.

Nadal consistently preached the concept of “apostolic mobility”—which could simply be defined as getting out of the monasteries and directly dwelling and serving within communities across the world—as an essential element of the Order’s religious life.<sup>34</sup>

However, it is important to note that not every episode in Nadal’s career as the “man in the field” resulted in positive results. In the wake of the largely unsuccessful Alcalá Conferences of 1554, during which Nadal was unable to insure the adherence of Jesuits in the Spanish province to Jesuit ideology practice, Nadal’s relationship with Ignatius was tested and his budding reputation as a leader was damaged. Essentially, these conferences were Nadal’s opportunity to create common set of practices and rules for Jesuits to follow in regards to organization, prayer, theology, and ministry practices, but the final outcome saw many Jesuits in the Spanish province still not accepting the common practices advocated by the Jesuit leadership in Rome.<sup>35</sup> Regardless, Nadal’s early failures did not deter him from fully realizing the potential of his role as he rapidly travelled across Europe in the span of few years providing a fuller version of Ignatius’ teachings.<sup>36</sup> In effect, Nadal’s ability to serve as Ignatius’ representative to the Order spread across Europe allowed for an accurate dissemination of Ignatius vision, told the

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<sup>34</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Jerónimo Nadal and the Jesuit Vocation,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*, 152.

<sup>35</sup> Bangert and McCoog, *Jerome Nadal*, 133-134.

<sup>36</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Jerónimo Nadal and the Jesuit Vocation,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*, 151.

Jesuits who they are, and created a more unified set of practices between various provinces and missions.

The ideologies outlined by these three founders, Ignatius, Polanco, and Nadal, were influential in cultivating the spirit of the earliest Jesuits, which was carried out in numerous ways in the Huron Mission. Their ministerial ideologies and methods are preserved and codified through a large collection of writings—including a large number of letters, the *Autobiography*, *Spiritual Exercises*, *Constitutions*, and the multiple iterations of the *Formula*—which will be examined in the next two chapters.

## II. IGNATIUS AND THE *SPIRITUAL EXERCISES*

For the purpose of tracing the growth of the early Jesuits' methodology and practices, it is almost impossible to overstate the importance of the *Spiritual Exercises* as the founding document that articulates the Order's spirit and primary purpose of pastoral care. Serving as the main writing and, indeed, spiritual experience that drew Ignatius and his first six companions together, Ignatius "completed his last substantial revisions... in Rome between 1539 and 1541."<sup>37</sup> According to scholar Mark Rotsaert, "the *Spiritual Exercises* have been part of the spiritual patrimony of the whole Church" since their approval by Pope Paul III in 1548.<sup>38</sup> Throughout the many directions within this program for spiritual reflection, growth, and guidance, the pragmatism and flexibility that has characterized the Jesuit approach over the centuries are clearly seen. Found within the *Exercises* are many of the later models for communication within the Order, the overriding emphasis on "helping others," the adaptive nature of Jesuit ministry, and the innovative idea of a life lived with both an introspective gaze and outward, service-oriented focus.

However, to first tell the origin story of one of Christian literature's great mystical works, it is necessary to recount Ignatius's own spiritual journey which led him to craft the exercises. A brief outline of Ignatius' biography tells the story of a man who started with little but selfish ambition regarding his future career and life's purpose. Born in

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<sup>37</sup> George E. Ganss, introduction to *The Spiritual Exercises*, ed. by George E. Ganss, trans. by George E. Ganss. *The "Spiritual Exercises" and Selected Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991): 117.

<sup>38</sup> Mark Rotsaert. "Ignatian Spirituality: Some Changes in Vision and Practice," *The Way* 55, no. 4 (October 2016): 118.



about 1491 as a minor nobleman in “the castle of Loyola in The Basque a territory of Northern Spain,” Ignatius “had the sparse and chivalric education of his class”<sup>3940</sup> Far from the stuff of sainthood, Ignatius lived a life replete with illicit relationships with various women and the kind of political and social maneuvering required to rise through the ranks at the Spanish Court. Rising to the rank of courtier to Juan Velásquez de Cuellar, who himself was “chief treasurer of Castile and one of Spain’s most distinguished nobleman,” Ignatius spent his time consumed with dreams of “idealized romance or daring deeds of knightly valor”<sup>41</sup> However, his career as a courtier was cut short after Ignatius severely discredited himself among his peers by instigating a nighttime brawl during a Mardi Gras celebration in his hometown of Azpeitia in 1515. Serving as the final blow to Ignatius’ dreams of advancing at court, Ignatius’ patron, Juan Velasquez, fell out of grace with Spain’s reigning King Charles V due to a disagreement regarding the monarch’s policies.<sup>42</sup> Ignatius himself describes this period of his early life in harsh and honest terms in *The Autobiography*. “Up to the age of twenty-six he was a man given to the vanities of the world; and what he enjoyed most was warlike sport, with a great and foolish desire to win fame.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*, 121.

<sup>40</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 23.

<sup>41</sup> John Patrick Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits*. (New York: Longman, 2004), 5-7.

<sup>42</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *The Autobiography*, ed. by George E. Ganss, trans. by Parmananda R. Divarkar, in *The "Spiritual Exercises" and Selected Works*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 68.

However, Ignatius' life radically changed following his involvement in a battle against the French in a battle outside the Spanish city of Pamplona in 1521. Having served in 1520 and 1521 as gentlemen volunteer, Ignatius sought to use military service to achieve the noble glory that was now unavailable through political climbing. Severely outnumbered by the French, Ignatius, in his obsession with fame and chivalric glory, convinced his commanding officer to continue the ill-advised defense of the fort.<sup>44</sup> As to why Ignatius—who later in life demonstrated himself to be immensely practical in his administration of the Order—was so reckless at the battle of Pamplona, Donnelly argues that Ignatius' rationale was that if he “died defending Pamplona, he would die gloriously.”<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, this desire for a heroic death resulted in a catastrophically failed military engagement left Ignatius critically wounded after a cannonball shattered his right leg and severely wounded his left. Seeing Ignatius' gallantry, the French forces were impressed and provided him with medical care for his wounds.<sup>46</sup> Following this sudden turn of fortune, Ignatius spent several long months undergoing multiple operations to repair his mangled right leg, including a particularly painful procedure in which a protruding bone was cut off so that his looks would not be affected.<sup>47</sup> Desiring to combat his boredom during his long convalescence, Ignatius sought to read his favorite medieval romance novels that told stories of chivalrous knights performing heroic feats in

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<sup>44</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 69.

<sup>45</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 9.

<sup>46</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 9.

<sup>47</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 11.

attempts to woo unattainable noblewomen.<sup>48</sup> Eventually though, Ignatius came to dwell upon more spiritual matters since the only works available to him were works on piety the life of Christ. These works—Ludolf of Saxony’s *Life of Christ* and Jacopo da Voragine’s “lives of the saints entitled the *Golden Legend*—prompted deep soul-searching on Ignatius’ part.<sup>49</sup> Initially, Ignatius’ self-focused tendencies rendered his reading of saint’s lives to be little more than fodder for his vainglorious hopes and fantasies.<sup>50</sup>

Ruminating on the lives of the saints, Ignatius began to become impressed with the intensely ascetic accounts of figures like Saint Humphrey, who lived for seventy years alone in the Egyptian desert.<sup>51</sup> Due to his prior reading of medieval romances, Ignatius readily appreciated the somewhat similar themes of sacrificing all to God found in the lives of the saints. Gradually, Ignatius determined that thinking of the actions of famous Christians such as Saint Francis and Saint Dominic brought him lasting satisfaction compared to the vainglorious thoughts of “worldly ones,” after which “he found himself dry and dissatisfied.”<sup>52</sup> According to his autobiography, Ignatius’ hagiographical readings led him to challenge his way of living as he reasoned “[w]hat if I

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<sup>48</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 11

<sup>49</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*, 121.

<sup>50</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 12.

<sup>51</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 13.

<sup>52</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 70-71.

should do what St. Francis did, and what St. Dominic did?”<sup>53</sup> The desire to imitate the lives of the saints left Ignatius with a longing to travel “to Jerusalem barefoot, to eat of nothing but plain vegetables and to practice all the other rigors that he saw in the saints.”<sup>54</sup> Indeed, it is theorized that during the year of mortification and prayer spent at Manresa, 1522 to 1523, Ignatius’ intense spiritual contemplation served as the starting point for his organized program for spiritual discernment, or understanding God’s will.<sup>55</sup>

As Ignatius read these works, along with Thomas à Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ* and Garcia de Cisneros’ *Compendio*, they would later influence both the content and style of the *Spiritual Exercises*.<sup>56</sup> Turning from his prior visions of worldly grandeur, Ignatius began to reject his dreams of glory as visions from the devil and accordingly understood his desire to imitate the sacrifice of saints as coming from God.<sup>57</sup> With this new mindset, Ignatius gave himself to confession and intense personal reflection and was consequently filled with insistent regret for his past sins. Directly laying the foundation for both the *Spiritual Exercises* and his later *Rules for Discernment of Spirits*, Ignatius learned to differentiate between “good” and “bad” thoughts during his convalescence. In contrast the emptiness of “world desires,” Ignatius found that “not only was he consoled when he

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<sup>53</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 70-71.

<sup>54</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 71.

<sup>55</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*, 121.

<sup>56</sup> Karel S. San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today: Lessons from the Rule of St. Benedict and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius,” *Landas* 27, no. 2 (2013), 147.

<sup>57</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 12-13.

had these thoughts, but even after putting them aside he remained satisfied and joyful.” Utilizing his emotional states to understand the warring spiritual influences upon him, Ignatius asserted that “[l]ittle by little he came to recognize the difference between the spirits that were stirring, one from the devil, the other from God.”<sup>58</sup> Scholar Terrence O’Reilly summarizes that “the resolution of his crisis was effected partly by a growth in his understanding of how to discern between good and evil spirits, and partly by a series of visions, and other experiences of a mystical kind, in which he felt God teaching him as a master instructs a child.”<sup>59</sup> Ultimately, the *Spiritual Exercises* are best understood as an attempt to lead others through the same turmoil that Ignatius experienced and into the teachings he learned through his mystical experience.

Responding to what he felt was the calling to live a holy life, Ignatius gave up all worldly practices and lived a life of extreme asceticism that involved not cutting his hair or nails, never bathing himself, wearing coarse clothing, living only on alms, sleeping on the floor, self-flagellation, and eating and drinking very little while fasting six days a week. As to prayer and religious services, Ignatius recited “vocal prayers on his knees... seven times a day” and “he attended sung Mass, Vespers and Compline; once a week he went to confession and communion.”<sup>60</sup> Additionally, Ignatius also denied himself a reasonable amount of sleep while he spent his days in prayer and meditation.<sup>61</sup> At this

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<sup>58</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 71.

<sup>59</sup> Terrence O’Reilly, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith: The Crisis of Saint Ignatius at Manresa,” *Japan Mission Journal* 66, no. 3 (September 2012): 198.

<sup>60</sup> O’Reilly, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith,” 198.

<sup>61</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 78.

time, Ignatius trusted in the power of his own works to save himself, believing that the greater extent to which one practiced a penitential life indicates one's holiness.<sup>62</sup> However, as he admits in his *Autobiography*, Ignatius' sense of scruples were so severe as to render him crippled with guilt and doubts. Indeed, at one point, Ignatius, consumed with doubts regarding the sincerity of his spiritual conversion, contemplated suicide, but stopped when he realized "that it was a sin to kill oneself." After a year's time, Ignatius came to realize that these practices were unsustainable and detrimental to his health.<sup>63</sup> Throughout his lifetime, the damage done to his health at Manresa would remain a constant issue and was eventually linked to the cause of his death in 1556,<sup>64</sup> which is in part why Ignatius so frequently encouraged the Society to stay away from the physical dangers of extreme asceticism.<sup>65</sup>

Ignatius' spiritual experience at Manresa in 1522 served as inspiration for Ignatian spirituality and prompted Ignatius to begin composing the *Spiritual Exercises*. Reflecting the truths learned in his own tumultuous journey, Ignatius wrote the *Exercises* to function as a reflection on the nature of Christ to realign one's heart to God's before making a life-altering decision. As he matured in his own faith, Ignatius came to develop a process of "discernment" which offered "several rules and guidelines in making decisions in the light of one's maturing faith and commitment to God" that were culled

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<sup>62</sup> O'Reilly, "The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith," 198.

<sup>63</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 79-80.

<sup>64</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 171.

<sup>65</sup> John W. O'Malley, "Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy," ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 136.

from reflections on his own experiences at Manresa.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the *Exercises* also sought to teach people how to interpret what desires come from “an evil spirit or one’s own natural inclinations” rather than from God.<sup>67</sup> The discernment element of Ignatian spirituality is evidenced throughout the *Exercises* and reflects Ignatius’ own primary life-goal, which was to “find the will of God and live according to it.”<sup>68</sup> Ultimately, Ignatius’ *Exercises* served as the foundation for more than just the Order, affecting countless individuals since their formation in the early 1520s.

Designed as a series of reflections on the life of Christ and one’s own life, inclinations, and life’s purpose, the program was meant to be administered by a spiritual director over the course of twenty-eight to thirty days. Ignatius states the primary purpose of his work to be “[t]o overcome oneself, and to order one’s life, without reaching a decision through some disordered affection.”<sup>69</sup> Essentially, these *Exercises* are designed to provide clarity on one’s life purpose and in doing so understand the path one ought to take. The flexibility of the *Exercises*, which could be administered in a variety of lengths and manners, is indicative of the adaptive nature of the early Jesuits’ ministerial

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<sup>66</sup> San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today,” 151, 149.

<sup>67</sup> W.W. Meissner. “Ignatius and Screwtape on Discernment: A Psychoanalytic Reading,” *Archiv Für Religionspsychologie/Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 26 (2004): 75.

<sup>68</sup> William A. Barry, “A Note on Leadership, Ignatian Style.” *Human Development* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 45.

<sup>69</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 129.

ideology.<sup>70</sup> Directly encapsulating “the essence of Ignatius’s own spiritual turnaround,” *Spiritual Exercises* were created to guide other spiritual seekers, or exercitants as they are called within the text, to similar “changes of vision and motivation.”<sup>71</sup>

Writing on the specific structure of the Exercises, Jesuit scholar Karel S. San Juan asserts that “[t]he Spiritual Exercises is like a modern-day manual written for those who are to guide or direct people (the ‘exercitants’) in the ways and methods of what is now called the ‘retreat.’”<sup>72</sup> As to this retreat itself, it is divided into four separate “Weeks, or groups, which may be understood as corresponding to the three ways of the spiritual life. The First Week parallels “the purgative way, where the soul is purified and freed as it advances toward God.” Building upon this foundation of repentance, “[t]he Second Week contains exercises proper to the illuminative way, in terms of more intimate knowledge, love, and following of Christ,” thus guiding the exercitant in seeking to manifest the behaviors and inclinations of Christ. As for the spiritual meaning of the Third and Fourth Weeks, they both “facilitate the unitive way through contemplation on the sufferings and joy of Christ through His passion and resurrection, and through a deeper love for God who labors in creation.”<sup>73</sup> Ignatius’ “unitive way” consistently calls the exercitant to reflect on God’s salvific work on humanity all across the globe to foster a greater love for mankind and ready oneself to answer the call for whatever role is required within God’s

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<sup>70</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491-1556),” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 106.

<sup>71</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 4.

<sup>72</sup> San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today,” 148.

<sup>73</sup> San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today,” 148.



work. For example, in the first day of the second week, Ignatius instructs exercitants to “consider the Three Divine Persons, seated, so to speak, on the royal throne of heir Divine Majesty. They are gazing on the whole face and circuit of the earth; and they see all the peoples in such great blindness, and how they are dying and going down to hell.”<sup>74</sup> Expressed in this and other similar passages in *Constitutions*, are the two essential Jesuit doctrines of “helping souls” and global missions. This interpretation of the Apostolic Life bears no mind to geography or ethnicity and has continued to influence practitioners and theologians today with its bare-bones pragmatism.<sup>75</sup>

As the exercitant reflects upon his actions and desires, the director of the *Exercises* leads him through a series of “weeks”, with each week centered on a specific spiritual theme. The progression through the different topics of reflection is used to create a mutual conversation between the director and the exercitant. Developing organically, this conversation frequently challenges both parties to grow both in their understanding of God and their understanding of themselves. According to Jesuit scholar William A. Barry, the shared leadership evident between exercitant and director are indicative of the Ignatian style of leadership. Ultimately, the *Exercises* established a framework of

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<sup>74</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 148-49.

<sup>75</sup> Catherine M. Mooney “Ignatian Spirituality, a Spirituality for Mission,” *Mission Studies* 26, no. 2 (2009): 209-10.

spiritual growth that sought to create “union with God”, termed “election” by Ignatius, which would then cultivate “discernment,” or the ability to understand God’s will.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to the *Exercises* revealing this concept of mutuality, the *Constitutions* frequently demonstrate the same mutuality between God and man.<sup>77</sup> Addressing how the Jesuit Order can be “preserved and developed in its well-being”, the *Constitutions* regard that “[t]he Society was not instituted by human means; and neither is it through them that it can be preserved and developed, but through the omnipotent hand of Christ, God and our Lord.”<sup>78</sup>

Moreover, the *Exercises* set forth a framework for communication and collaboration, as well as an essential general guideline for the Order’s understanding of organizational and spiritual hierarchy. Through their primary purpose of creating spiritual clarity within the exercitant’s heart, thus aligning their desires and plans with God, the *Exercises’* emphasis on mutuality between director and exercitant elaborates on the non-hierarchal style of Ignatian-style leadership. This aligns well with the Jesuit principle of flexibility in ministry, since ministry plans could easily be altered as Jesuits seek to spiritually learn from one another of God’s will. Likewise, just as the *Exercises* were

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<sup>76</sup> Javier Melloni, *The Exercises of St Ignatius in the Western Tradition*. (Leominster: Gracewing, 2000), 50.

<sup>77</sup> Barry, “A Note on Leadership, Ignatian Style,” 46.

<sup>78</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *Selections from the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, ed. by George E. Ganss, trans. by George E. Ganss. *The "Spiritual Exercises" and Selected Works*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 317.

administered a wide variety of spiritual seekers, so too did this imply that Jesuits were to be open to insight from persons inside or outside of the Order.<sup>79</sup> According to Jesuit scholar William A. Berry, the focus of Ignatius' *Exercises* was on guiding others to understand God and it therefore assumed that God can speak his will to anyone. Indeed, “[t]he leader is not the only pipeline to God” and thus Jesuits of any station ought to go into conversations with a spirit of openness and reverence since God could be leading them in any direction through any member.<sup>80</sup>

However, the ability to be flexible and adaptive in ministerial goals and tactics is best implemented by someone who both knows the fundamental goals of the Society and possesses the creativity and skill required to create and even recreate at any moment any ministry or mission. While obedience in members of the Order mattered greatly to Ignatius and he would frequently provide detailed instructions in his letters regarding how a mission was to be carried out, he also stressed the skill of acting independently as ministry adapted to the unique concerns of various cultures. Furthermore, since communication during the early years of the Order was poor, Ignatius consistently looked to place individuals of high ingenuity, such as with Francis Xavier in East Asia, that could operate without the need for consistent direction.<sup>81</sup> Through the universal use of the *Exercises* as foundational reading for all Jesuits, Ignatius created a common set of

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<sup>79</sup> Barry, “A Note on Leadership, Ignatian Style,” 47.

<sup>80</sup> Barry, “A Note on Leadership, Ignatian Style,” 47.

<sup>81</sup> Barry, “A Note on Leadership, Ignatian Style,” 47-48.

leadership practices that informed the Jesuits “on the most profound level what they were and what they were supposed to be.”<sup>82</sup>

Throughout the Order’s history, especially during the early years and even before their official founding, the *Exercises* were influential in attracting financial supporters, new members to the Order, and generally “helping people to commit to God-centered living.”<sup>83</sup> Moreover, the numerous important individuals that have undergone the *Exercises* have furthered the stability and impact of the Order. Many powerful individuals—such as Cardinal Gasparo Contarini who was a key force in convincing the pope to approve the emerging Jesuit Order’s ministry—were guided through the *Exercises* by Ignatius himself.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, the administration of the *Exercises* has led to a unique and highly successful ministry, in the form of the spiritual retreat, that is still today offered to people of all faiths.<sup>85</sup>

Therefore, it is important to note that these *Exercises* were never meant to be exclusively for the Jesuits. The *Exercises* can be given to people of any religious background and the original Jesuits did not limit this ministry to their own members, with Polanco perceiving the *Exercises* “as a ‘compendium’ (*epilogus*) of all the means the Jesuits had for helping souls in spiritual growth.”<sup>86</sup> The fundamental Jesuit command to

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<sup>82</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 4.

<sup>83</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 35.

<sup>84</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 35.

<sup>85</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 129-130.

<sup>86</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 128-129.

“help souls” has found great fulfillment in the form of spiritual retreats throughout the nearly four centuries of Order’s existence. Serving as a model of the Jesuit retreat, in January of 2019, the Jesuit Retreat Center of Cleveland, Ohio was able to claim that it “serves more than 7,000 people each year, including more than 1,000 youth and young adults” with services being “open to people of all faiths, generations and backgrounds.” Furthering this goal, the Jesuit Retreat Center offers “[p]rograms and retreats [that] range from a morning or evening to a full week” and even offers “[s]ilent retreats for deeper reflection [that] can be anywhere from eight to 30 days.”<sup>87</sup> Further demonstrating their long-running influence, the *Exercises* have also been used to prepare men for priesthood. The *Exercises* seek to cultivate the necessary skills in a variety of forms of prayer, self-reflection, and trust in God’s love and involvement in humanity. Furthermore, the *Exercises* develop the usual spiritual disciplines of “humility, spiritual poverty, generosity and compassion.”<sup>88</sup> Ultimately, the administration of the *Exercises* has gone beyond helping the general public, with the administration of the *Exercises* to supporters of the Order and the lasting influence of the *Exercises* on Christian formation for both clerics and secular persons.

Turning to the issue Ignatius’ prevalent mysticism and how it impacted the Order’s practices, it is essential to revisit Ignatius’ *Autobiography* to understand how his own spiritual experiences served as the foundation for what became Ignatian Spirituality.

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<sup>87</sup> Mark Scott, “Time to Slow down: Jesuit Retreat Center Offers a Chance to Reflect on Life’s Blessings and Challenges,” *Smart Business Cleveland* 30, no. 5 (January 2019), 24.

<sup>88</sup> Edward McCormack. “The Role of the Spiritual Exercises in Priestly Formation.” *Seminary Journal* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 29.

Considered as one of his “most important visionary experiences,” Ignatius’ reveals the certainty of his calling in his account of receiving his spiritual confirmation before journeying to Rome to present his freshly committed group to the papacy for approval.<sup>89</sup> As recounted in the *Autobiography*, Ignatius “decided to spend a year without saying Mass after he became a priest, preparing himself and praying Our Lady to deign to place him with her Son. One day, a few miles before reaching Rome, he was at prayer in a church and experienced such a change in his soul and saw it so clearly that God the Father placed him with his Son.”<sup>90</sup> This mystical experience centered upon a calling to ministry and the affirmation that God had chosen Ignatius to fulfill the ministerial vision which he sought to manifest before the pope. Considering that this was perhaps the most crucial test for the early Jesuits—one that could decide if Ignatius and his small Society could enact their unique vision for ministry—Ignatius’ belief that God speaks to and is concerned with individuals’ needs.

Often termed “a ‘mysticism of service,’” Ignatian spirituality is grounded in the practicalities of a needy world.<sup>91</sup> Ignatius longed to see the Jesuits embrace what he considered to be the theology of the early church fathers—which he termed “[a] mystical theology’ that would ‘rouse the affections so that we are moved to love and serve God our Lord in all things.’”<sup>92</sup> Again, Ignatius’ first impulse once converted was to seek to preach and minister in faraway Jerusalem, and this underscores his commitment to active

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<sup>89</sup> Rotsaert, “Ignatian Spirituality,” 125.

<sup>90</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 109.

<sup>91</sup> Loyola, *The Autobiography*, 126.

<sup>92</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 369.

ministry in the world (*Autobiography*, 70). Accordingly, Rotsaert asserts that Ignatian-style mysticism “is not an experience far away from the concrete world” but rather “a bringing of God and creation together,” with service to humankind being the natural outcome from such a union.<sup>93</sup> One can even understand the *Exercises* in terms of a service to the world since the Jesuits have used the administration of the *Exercises* as one of the most distinctive service ministries.

### **Jesuit Spirituality**

To measure the impact of the *Exercises* on the Jesuits’ spirituality, it is essential to explain how Ignatius’ *Rules for Discernment* laid the groundwork for an organized understanding of the dangers of the spiritual life. Remembering his own spiritual doubts and trials at Manresa, Ignatius argued in his *Rules for Discernment* that one must recognize the difference between spiritual “consolation” and spiritual “desolation.” As is indicative of medieval spirituality, Ignatius understood the world in terms of good spiritual beings and evil spiritual beings that were intimately involved in human affairs and personal decision-making. Ignatius argues that one can navigate this spiritual battle and draw closer to God, just as he did at Manresa, by bearing in mind several spiritual principles. However, Ignatius explicitly stated that simply following these rules would not be enough to find true spiritual fulfillment, salvation, and stable spiritual growth. In two 1536 letters to Teresa Rejadell, a Benedictine nun who exchanged letters with Ignatius for the last three decades of her life, Ignatius offered what is now considered a

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<sup>93</sup> Rotsaert, “Ignatian Spirituality,” 126.

commentary on his *Rules for Spiritual Discernment*.<sup>94</sup> Ignatius asserts that “I am not going to save myself by the good works of the good angels, and I am not going to be condemned because of the evil thoughts and weaknesses which the bad angels, the flesh, and the world bring before my mind. God asks only one thing of me, that my soul seek to be conformed with His Divine Majesty.”<sup>95</sup> As evidenced in this letter to Rejadell, Ignatius grounded his analysis of humankind’s agency in the sovereignty of God to direct humankind.

Ignatius outlines multiple times in the *Exercises* what he regards as “consolation,” which could vary by specific situations in its manifestations by bringing the rewards of knowing God, feeling joy and peace, but could also bring great sorrow and internal turmoil. Offering a precise definition of the term in his first set of *Rules for Discernment* attached to the *Exercises*, Ignatius states:

By consolation I mean that which occurs when some interior motion is caused within the soul through which it comes to be inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord. As a result it can love no created thing on the face of the earth in itself, but only in the Creator of them all. Similarly, this consolation is experience when the soul sheds tears which move it to love for its Lord—whether they are tears of grief for its own sins, or about the Passion of Christ our Lord, or about other matters directly ordered to his service and praise Finally, under the word consolation I include every increase in hope, faith, and charity, and every interior joy which calls and attracts one toward heavenly things and to the salvation of one’s soul, by bringing it tranquility and peace in its Creator and Lord.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ignatius of Loyola. *Selected Letters*, ed. by George E. Ganss, trans. by Martin E. Palmer. *The "Spiritual Exercises" and Selected Works*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 332.

<sup>95</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola: Selected and Translated by William J. Young*. trans. William J. Young, (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 25.

<sup>96</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 202.



Simply defining “desolation” as “every which is the contrary of [consolation]”, Ignatius provides clear demarcation between each spiritual state as the exercitant and director seek to understand God’s will.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, this stated commitment to understanding the spiritual life from an interior perspective made the *Exercises* unique among other leading religious practices of the day, which possessed were “almost arithmetic and highly ritualized” in their form.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, the quest for self-understanding is a significant aspect of the *Exercises* is that they possess as a result, the *Exercises* found a ready audience seeking both spiritual and, as it could be termed, psychological understanding in an emotionally and intellectually powerful manner.

Even today, the Jesuit retreat stands as a unique spiritual and psychological experience for Jesuits and non-Jesuits alike and offers insight into the spiritual. Revealing the essential nature of Ignatian spirituality, the “mystical experience is at the heart of the Spiritual Exercises” since “it was the experience of Ignatius himself.”<sup>99</sup> Demonstrating this principle of mysticism, the end of Ignatius’ Fifteenth Annotation—which served as a set of guidelines to generally guide the whole retreat—explains the role of the director in leading the exercitant. The Fifteenth Annotation outlines that:

During these Spiritual Exercises when a person is seeking God’s will, it is more appropriate and far better that the Creator and Lord himself should communicate himself to the devout soul, embracing it in love and praise, and disposing it for the way which will enable the soul to serve him better in the future. Accordingly, the one giving the Exercises ought not to lean or incline in

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<sup>97</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 202.

<sup>98</sup> John W. O’Malley, “How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 203.

<sup>99</sup> Rotsaert, “Ignatian Spirituality,” 125.

either direction but rather, while standing by like the pointer of a scale in equilibrium, to allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord.<sup>100</sup>

Accordingly, the essential role of director is to engage the exercitant in mutual communication with God. In doing so, the director will best facilitate the exercitant's discernment of spiritual "consolations" and "desolations" within themselves and come into union with God. This fundamental tenant of the *Exercises* reflects a foundational characteristic of the Order's organizational communication and considerations to those in lesser authority within the hierarchy.

Now that the structure and overall impact of the *Exercises* has been briefly outlined, a close reading of the text itself is required to determine the purpose of this work and how it impacted the Jesuits' spirituality and practices. The primary purpose of this work is found within the *Spiritual Exercises*' first paragraph. In the author's words, the goal of this program is "preparing and disposing our soul to rid itself of all its disordered affections and then, after their removal, of seeking and finding God's will in the ordering of our life for the salvation of the soul."<sup>101</sup> Therefore, the stated vision for *The Exercises* implies that the ultimate goal is to provide the exercitant first with the tools to put away all distractions before seeking "God's will" for one's life. Taking them as a whole, it is evident that Ignatius intended for the *Exercises* to be undertaken by people who were wrestling with a big life decision, for example marriage, careers, or changing the way one lives one's life. On this issue of using Ignatius' program to aid in major decision-making, O'Malley asserts that "[t]he *Exercises* were designed to enable

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<sup>100</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 125.

<sup>101</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 121.

one to make that choice with objectivity and freedom of spirit and under the most immediate inspiration of God.”<sup>102</sup> Serving as perhaps the most important spiritual characteristic that the *Exercises* seek to cultivate in the exercitant, the nature of humility is explored throughout Ignatius’ text. In San Juan’s work, three elements of the formation of humility are identified. According to San Juan, humility involves the integration of one’s life to knowing and glorifying God, performing “self-transcendent” actions in response to this knowledge of God, and imitating Christ by living out the Apostolic Life and evangelizing across the world.<sup>103</sup> Taking into consideration Ignatius’ commitment to the formation of humility, the *Exercises* were at their most basic level indicative of the central Jesuit goal of “helping others.”

While a key characteristic of the *Exercises* is that they were meant to be adaptable and not prescriptive to the exercitant, it is essential to note that in some ways the text offers a specific vision of spirituality and Christian living. This text contains passages that reveal the spirit and practices of the early Jesuits by addressing the three traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience along with the “fourth vow” of obedience to the pope regarding missionary work. According to O’Malley, “at many points the *Exercises* explicitly propose that a life of poverty is in some objective way the better course, for it more closely conforms to how Ignatius imagined that Jesus lived.”<sup>104</sup> On the fourth day of the second week in the *Exercises*, Ignatius follows a reflection on the nature of worldly

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<sup>102</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 38.

<sup>103</sup> San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today,” 151.

<sup>104</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 44.

attachments with a strongly positive discussion on the merits of poverty. Outlining his views on poverty, Ignatius writes:

When we feel an inclination or repugnance against actual poverty, or when we are not indifferent to poverty or riches, a great help toward overcoming this disordered inclination is to beg the Lord in the colloquies to choose oneself to serve him in actual poverty (even though it is contrary to our lower nature); and further that one desires it, begs for it, and pleads for it, provided only that it would be for the service and praise of his Divine Goodness.<sup>105</sup>

The emphasis placed on practicing “actual poverty,” not “spiritual poverty” that did not necessarily require physical poverty, as an effective means of overcoming worldly attachments and placing oneself in the service of God cannot be overlooked.<sup>106</sup> The language used to describe the exercitant’s attitudes, such as instructing them to “beg the Lord” for guidance, demonstrates the importance Ignatius placed on this aspect of the Apostolic Life. Supporting the spirit laid forth in the *Exercises*, the Order expected its members to uphold this traditional vow of poverty, along with the other three, “from the moment of their entrance as novices until their dying breath.”<sup>107</sup>

A natural result of undergoing the *Exercises* would have been a desire to practice penance as a means of repenting from one’s sins and directing one’s life towards the path revealed during the *Exercises*. On the practice of penance, Ignatius—no doubt remembering the physically damaging effects of his own extreme penance during his spiritual turmoil at Manresa—cautions against any kind of penance that damages one’s health. Ignatius argues that “[t]he best and safest form of penance seems to be that which

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<sup>105</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 157-58.

<sup>106</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 66.

<sup>107</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 347.

produces physical pain but does not penetrate to the bones, so that it brings pain but not illness.”<sup>108</sup> This caution against physically damaging penance would extend to members of the Order as well, with Ignatius insisting on the good health of the penitent.<sup>109</sup> Repeatedly within the *Exercises*, Ignatius depicted correct penance as starting from an internal remorse and then progressing to the outward deeds of mortification.<sup>110</sup> The pragmatism preached by Ignatius on this issue demonstrates the ardent commitment to pragmatism later found within the *Constitutions* and the Jesuits’ ministerial and organizational practices.

Another element of the *Exercises*, one that mirrors a notable ministry and evangelism approach that has been manifest throughout the Order’s history, is that they are meant to engage both the soul and the intellect. Time and again, Ignatius outlines meditative exercise in which the exercitant uses their five senses and their reason to appreciate the nature of God and reflect on how one’s life should be ordered.<sup>111</sup> Rapidly outlining these principles in the *Exercises’* opening pages, Ignatius instructs “[i]n all the following Spiritual Exercises we use the acts of the intellect in reasoning and of the will in eliciting acts of the affections.”<sup>112</sup> Indeed, Ignatius directly links reason and imagination in the *Exercises* by outlining an exercise in which “[i]maging and

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<sup>108</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 144.

<sup>109</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Characteristics of Jesuits Spirituality in the 16th Century,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 168.

<sup>110</sup> Terence, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith,” 199.

<sup>111</sup> Terence, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith,” 150-51.

<sup>112</sup> Terence, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith,” 122.

considering in what condition I will find myself on judgement day, I will think how at that time I will wish I had decided in regard to the present matter.”<sup>113</sup> Throughout the *Exercises*, Ignatius calls upon the exercitant to reflection through their memory of Christ’s sufferings, Scripture, and their own experiences. Like reasoning, the act of memory requires the use of imagination since one’s subjective memory influences the way in which one perceives one’s personal history and also is essential for grappling with the “objective stories” within Scripture.<sup>114</sup> This reason-based method aligned with the first Jesuits’ high academic training and shows a commitment to logic and reason that would serve the Order well when they began the ministry of schools. Conversely, the *Exercises* also emphasize and require the use of imagination on the part of both the exercitant and the director. Therefore, the *Exercises* were designed and administered to lead the exercitant in a series of reflections, which used the imagination and intellect of the exercitant, on both the character of God and the workings of God in the world, as well as a series of self-reflections on one’s sins and how one can be used in God’s plan.

Mirroring the adaptive nature of the Jesuit approach to ministry, Ignatius requires the director to adapt the *Exercises* to the exercitant’s unique needs for spiritual growth.<sup>115</sup> Ignatius and the early Jesuits did not presume that every individual had the same exact calling in life, and a “basic principle” of the *Exercises* were accordingly designed to be

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<sup>113</sup> Terence, “The Spiritual Exercises and Justification by Faith,” 165.

<sup>114</sup> Ng. “The Christ-Centered Anthropology of Ignatius Loyola,” 34.

<sup>115</sup> Lain Radvan. “Spiritual Direction, Experiential Focusing and the Examen of St Ignatius,” *The Way* 57, no. 1 (January 2018): 101.

adaptive to exercitants of any station or stage of life.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the “introductory explanations” of *Exercises*’ opening pages, Ignatius offers various methods to adapt the *Exercises*, which include suggestions to shorten or lengthen the time spent on each week depending on the needs of the exercitant; to offer “Additional Directives” to ensure each exercise’s mastery; and the changing spiritual circumstances of the exercitant as they progress through each reflection and prayer.<sup>117</sup> This adaptive nature of Jesuit ministry is seen among numerous commands from Ignatius and in Nadal’s famous instructions that “we are not monks” and “the world is our house.”<sup>118</sup> Due to the earliest Jesuits’ foundational ideology that determined they could serve people better by remaining “in the world” instead of cloistered within the walls of monasteries, the earliest Jesuits mirror the adaptive nature of the *Exercises*. Moreover, Nadal—whose “rhetoric on issues [relating to adaptive ministry was] even bolder than Loyola’s”—repeatedly asserted that Jesuits were to break from the monastic tradition and always seek balance between the mystical aspects of prayer and asceticism and the practical necessities of active ministry.<sup>119</sup> Later, in the context of the Jesuit mission to the Huron in eastern Canada, this adaptability was frequently demonstrated and put the ideology to the ultimate test.

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<sup>116</sup> John W. O’Malley, “The Ministry to Outsiders: The Jesuits,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 96.

<sup>117</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 122-123.

<sup>118</sup> Peter-Hans Kolvenbach. “Jerome Nadal Fifth Century of His Birth,” *Review of Ignatian Spirituality* vol. 116 (2005): 9.

<sup>119</sup> John W. O’Malley, “Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 136.

On the importance of imagination in spiritual formation, theology scholar Ivan Platovnjak argues that through imagination one is able to learn “what is hiding behind the virtual world.” By aiding in this discovery and, importantly, further interpretation of spiritual matters, imagination enables people to envision “how to do beautiful and good things” and therefore stands as “the locus of spiritual experience.” Consequently, since one’s level of spiritual formation is both immensely knowledge *and* experience driven, Ignatius prescribed that directors to use their creativity to adapt their prescriptions and instructions to better fit every individual’s needs as they use their creativity to perceive God’s will for their life.<sup>120</sup> As will be assessed in more detail in later sections, Ignatius’ *Rules for Discernment* offer guidelines on not just how to examine one’s own experiences, but also how to navigate the vagaries and complexities of one’s imagination and reason.<sup>121</sup> Once more, the adaptive nature of Jesuit ministry is visible throughout the first generation’s documents and practices.

Finally, evidence of the “Fourth Vow” of the Jesuits, to practice obedience to the pope regarding where to conduct their missionary work, is found in multiple passages of the *Exercises*. It is essential to note that this “Fourth Vow” was not at all “an oath of Counter-Reformation loyalty to the pope but a vow of mobility expressive of their desire to be missionaries in imitation of the evangelizing St. Paul.”<sup>122</sup> Consequently, the “Fourth

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<sup>120</sup> Ivan Platovnjak, “The Importance of Imagination in Ignatian Spirituality,” *Theological Review/Bogoslovska Smotra* 88, no. 4 (December 2018): 1036-37.

<sup>121</sup> Platovnjak, “The Importance of Imagination in Ignatian Spirituality,” 1053-54.

<sup>122</sup> John W. O’Malley, “The Society of Jesus,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 54.



Vow” is closely tied to the concept of the Apostolic Life, which called upon Christians to imitate the first disciples of Christ and practice poverty and travel throughout the world preaching the Gospel.<sup>123</sup> Warning against performing deeds that disobey the edicts and instructions of the Church, Ignatius frequently instructed against defying the power of the pope. In Ignatius view, “it is no small sin to act or cause others to act against these pious exhortations and recommendations.”<sup>124</sup> With this important caution against becoming carried away with religious fervor in such a way as to contradict the papacy, Ignatius repeatedly encourages a global focus for mission work, as is found throughout the second week’s meditation on the incarnation.<sup>125</sup>

Ignatius and his companions began the Jesuit Order during a time of strife and struggle for mere survival within the Catholic Church. The Church was fracturing over issues of theology and doctrine and the Protestant Reformation was becoming a central concern for the papacy. Moreover, complex issues regarding the discovery and colonization of new areas, papal authority, and technological and scientific advances created a rapidly changing and uncertain world. Therefore, it was inevitable that the first Jesuits became directly involved in the so-called “Counter-Reformation” movement.<sup>126</sup> Since their overall level of education in both theology and the humanities was excellent, the Jesuits could be called upon as theologians and teachers to combat the spread of heretical teachings. However, as O’Malley frequently argues, Ignatius understood the

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<sup>123</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 66-67.

<sup>124</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 134.

<sup>125</sup> Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 148-49.

<sup>126</sup> San Juan, “The Formation of Humility Today,” 154-155.

Jesuits fundamentally as a missionary order and not to be primarily concerned with rooting out heresy. While many historians and casual critics alike assert an understanding of the Jesuits as being reformers, the *Spiritual Exercises* demonstrate that the Jesuits were primarily concerned with issues of evangelism, spirituality, and of participating and propagating a movement to serve others.<sup>127</sup>

Through their earliest years before and after receiving their formal approval through the *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* in 1540, Ignatius' spiritual journey and its subsequent expression in the *Spiritual Exercises* guided the Order's search for purpose and self-understanding. There are a wide range of topics commented upon, whether directly or indirectly, within the *Exercises*—such as pastoral care, a global understanding of missions, models for mutually beneficial communication and adaptability in ministry, and the uniquely service-oriented spirituality of the Order. Later on, this expression of the doctrinal and spiritual origins of the Order, along with the numerous letters and teachings of the founders, served as a basis for the different iterations of the *Formula* and the essential set of codified methods that is the *Constitutions*.

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<sup>127</sup>John W. O'Malley. "Was Ignatius Loyola a Church Reformer? How to Look at Early Modern Catholicism," *The Catholic Historical Review* 77, no. 2 (1991): 177-93.

## II. THE *FORMULA* AND THE *CONSTITUTIONS*

Using the foundation of the *Exercises*, the *Formula* and the *Constitutions* were created to provide clarity on how Jesuits should approach their ministry. While the various iterations of the *Formula* were more of a brief and general statement of the purpose and kinds of ministries the Jesuits would undertake, the *Constitutions* outlined a series of ministerial ideologies and methods to be used in a wide variety of contexts. Addressed within the *Constitutions* are issues relating to topics such as education in schools, preaching, organizational government, and the qualities required in those working in each level of the Order. The *Constitutions* were designed to provide guidance on most larger issues encountered by members of the Order, many of these rules were presented more as guidelines to be used when useful and adapted when necessary. Thus, the *Constitutions* reflected the adaptive approach to ministry set forth in the *Exercises* and codified this important ministerial approach.<sup>128</sup>

After the first iteration of the *Formula* was crafted in 1540, which served as the basic statement of the Society's general character following the issuance of the papal bull *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* by Pope Paul III, the Order still required a fuller explanation of their practices. Regardless, the original 1540 *Formula* laid a foundation of "public preaching," administering the *Spiritual Exercises*, committing to "works of charity" and "education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity," and offering

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<sup>128</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 5-15.

consolation “through the hearing of confessions.”<sup>129</sup> Regarded as the “fourth vow” of the Jesuits, the 1540 *Formula* bound members of the Order to a special vow of obedience to the papacy, which as noted before was in part so they could better practice the mobile aspect of the Apostolic Life. An expanded *Formula* was issued in 1550 that underscored the Order’s commitment to the authority of the papacy and expanding the original’s call further “the propagation of the faith for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine” to include the additional term “defense... of the faith.”<sup>130</sup> As to the question of the historical context behind the added commitment to the pope and to the defense of the faith, one must only look to the widening conflict between Catholics and Lutherans, or Protestants as they more widely came to be termed. With Martin Luther’s nailing of his 99 theses or grievances with the Catholic Church on the door of the Wittenberg Castle church, the roots of the Protestant Reformation began to take hold in 1517. In the twenty-three following years, the 1540 *Formula* invariably reflected the escalating conflict between Catholics and Protestants as they came to be called. As a result, both the 1540 and 1550 versions contain language underscoring their commitment to combatting heresy and defending doctrinal purity.<sup>131</sup>

Jesuits were additionally tasked with “lectures, and any other ministries whatsoever of the Word of God” in addition to the preaching outlined in the 1540

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<sup>129</sup> John W. O’Malley, “The Missions of the Society of Jesus,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 51.

<sup>130</sup> John W. O’Malley, “The Missions of the Society of Jesus,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 51.

<sup>131</sup> O’Malley, “The Missions of the Society of Jesus,” 39-40.

version. According to O'Malley, this language was expanded to these two brief documents served as brief outlines for the missions to be undertaken by the Order. To this end, “[t]he *Formula* is to Jesuits what the Rule is to other religious orders,” and, while it was crafted with the consensus of a committee, Ignatius had a strong say in the language and content.<sup>132</sup> However, since both iterations of the *Formula* articulated just general goals and principles, members of the Order, who rapidly spread across Europe and into Asia with Francis Xavier’s arrival to Goa in 1542, were left with inadequate instruction as to what specific tactics and ministerial organization needed to use to achieve these goals. However, the Order went another eighteen years after receiving its papal approval before circulating a constitutional document to govern the Society.<sup>133</sup>

Fully formed by 1558, the *Constitutions* primarily sought to broaden Jesuits’ understanding of what Ignatius inclusively called “our way of proceeding.” With the aid of Polanco, who helped the project to really get underway in an organized and effective fashion after his appointment to secretary in 1547, Ignatius provided explicit answers to the Jesuits’ most common questions—which with the lack of a strong central document that could explicitly guide Jesuit ministries had hitherto been answered through direct instruction through either Ignatius or a close companion such as Nadal or Polanco. Generally structured chronologically so as to offer guidance from the initiation process to active ministry in the field, the *Constitutions* first focus upon the essential characteristics and qualities of an acceptable applicant to the Order and how they would be received into

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<sup>132</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 5.

<sup>133</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 4-6.

the Society. The document then moves on to articulate broad guidelines and principles that practically guide the Jesuit “through his training [and] up to the ministries in which he would engage” before ending with a discussion “concerning the qualities of the superior general and of the body of the Society as a whole.”<sup>134</sup> The underlying understanding of the text is that a Jesuit progresses spiritually and therefore requires different considerations and guidance at different points in his ministry.

While much of the *Exercises* demonstrates the spirit of mutual communication within the early Jesuits, it is clear that Ignatius’ military background added an authoritarian influence within the *Constitutions*. Ignatius uses the images of “corpses” and inanimate staffs to illustrate the manner of obedience he desired within the Order. The following quotation is taken from “the sixth part” of the *Constitutions*, which primarily focuses on the quality of obedience within the Jesuits.

“And let every one persuade himself, that they who live under Obedience should permit themselves to be moved and directed under divine Providence by their Superiors just *as if they were a corpse*, which allows itself to be moved and handled in any way; or as *the staff* of an old man, which serves him wherever and in whatever thing he who holds it in his hand pleases to use it. Thus obedient he should execute anything on which the Superior chooses to employ him in the service of the whole body of the Society, with cheerfulness of mind, and *altogether believe* that he will answer the divine will better that way, than in any other which he can follow in compliance with his *own will and differing judgement*.”<sup>135</sup>

This obedience required members to lay down their intellect and personal priorities as they cheerfully and promptly served their superiors. However, the *Constitutions*’ demand for total obedience must be juxtaposed with the *Exercises* apparent commitment to mutual input in decision-making. Both of these guiding documents taken together

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<sup>134</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 7.

<sup>135</sup> *Constitutiones Societatis Jesu, anno 1558: Romae, in Aedibus Societatis Jesu, 1558, 56.*

demonstrate an authoritarian approach to management that was somewhat mitigated with a strong emphasis on communication among the different levels in the Order. Moreover, it bears notice out that an entire chapter of the *Constitutions* makes it clear that members of the Order are not to follow their superiors' orders when they require one to sin.<sup>136</sup> Therefore, while this passage makes it clear that the *Constitutions* demand total obedience to one's Jesuit superiors, there is still some room for discourse between Jesuits of differing authority and a necessity to demonstrate discretion in following directives.

As for how the *Constitutions* established the Society's government, they effectively provided for a system of government that looked like an elected monarchy. Differing greatly from all other religious orders of the day, the Society's *Constitutions* did not contain the usual system of "convents, priors, [and a] General Chapter" but "[i]nstead provision was made for colleges and houses, rectors and superiors, and, above all, a general possessed of vast powers."<sup>137</sup> While the *Exercises* set the principle for mutuality in decision-making, the *Constitutions*, in their final form which appeared in 1558, placed tremendous power in the hands of the superior general. Normally, the superior general, who was elected for life by the Jesuits' General Congregation, answered only to the pope and had the power to appoint or expel officers within the Society. Although the *Constitutions* supported a powerfully centralized form of government, the General Congregation was given the power to amend the *Constitutions* when they were

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<sup>136</sup> Guenter Lewy. "The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Early Years of the Society of Jesus," *Church History* 29, no. 2 (1960): 143.

<sup>137</sup> Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government," 142.

in session and therefore served as a check on the executive power of the superior general.<sup>138</sup>

While the Order's "centralized organization and strict discipline... played an important role in the Order's successful agitation against Protestantism during the Counterreformation," there were many critiques of the Jesuits' organizational practices both in the Jesuits' earliest years and in subsequent generations.<sup>139</sup> During the Order's first years, critiques were most concerned with the Jesuits' singularly unique decision to "not be bound to chant the Liturgical Hours in choir or even to recite them in common." The *Formula's* explanation for their refusal of this most fundamental aspect of life in other religious orders is that the Society wished to keep its members free to work in their ministries around the clock. While the Jesuits were able to keep this relatively peculiar practice after the Catholic church's official acceptance of their 1540 *Formula*, the Order still occasionally had to defend its daily religious life from attacks.<sup>140</sup>

Serving as an evaluation of how well the Order's original vision for organization had continued, the early modern political philosopher and "Catholic academic theologian" Juan de Mariana offered a blunt assessment of what he deemed to be a

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<sup>138</sup> Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government," 143.

<sup>139</sup> Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government," 141.

<sup>140</sup> John W. O'Malley, "The Cultural Mission of the Society of Jesus," ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 227.



regressive organizational structure.<sup>141</sup> Writing during the Spanish Golden Age, Mariana's 1625, the posthumously published manuscript entitled *Discourse on the Matters in Need of Remedy in the Society of Jesus* generally attacked the current governmental practices of the Jesuits. Admitted in 1561 to the famous Collegio Romano—which was considered to be Ignatius' prized school and possibly the most prominent Jesuit school of the day—Mariana was given a close look into the Society's organizational practices. Already well known for his political theories that argued for checks and balances in government, Mariana's most famous essay, *De rege et regis institutione* argued his "famous thesis on the permissibility of regicide" in certain instances, which provides some context to Mariana's commitment to balanced government.<sup>142</sup>

By the 1620s, Mariana argued, the Order's checks and balances on the power of the Superior General, primarily in the form of the General Congregation's assemblies, had diminished in the six decades following the writing of the *Constitutions*. According to Mariana, the Order's organization had gradually diminished from the cooperative that Ignatius and Polanco had envisioned within the *Constitutions* and into governance by one executive without the oversight. His central argument was that the Jesuits had drifted from the more balanced form of constitutional monarchy—which was to be held in balance by frequent assemblies of the General Congregation—created by Ignatius and the early Jesuits and had instead, in subsequent generations, lessen the power of the General

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<sup>141</sup> John W. O'Malley, "Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491-1556)," ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 51.

<sup>142</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 233-234.

Congregation. This prompted Mariana to declare that a powerfully monarchical government had developed in the absence of routine meeting of the General Congregation and “that it is necessary to moderate this monarchy and to stop its course, for it is evident that 10,000 men cannot be governed like six hundred.”<sup>143</sup> Ultimately, the burden of leadership for such a global organization could not be effectively managed by one man, and this is why Ignatius sought to create a system of advisors, provincial leaders, and rectors in charge of implementing and managing local ministries. It is important to note that Mariana seems to argue that the original government created by Ignatius was more balanced and that the state of affairs in the early seventeenth century demonstrated the extent to which the original “spirit of the Jesuits” had diminished in the Order’s organizational practices.

Similarly harsh in his assessment of the Society’s hierarchy, Mariana denounced the Order for what he deemed was its lack of actual discipline in the higher ranks. Mariana asserts that at the time of his writing in the 1620s, “[a] provincial or rector will transgress, will create confusion everywhere, infringing rules and constitutions, will build up, break down without rhyme or reason, will dissipate the wealth of the Company or even give it to his relatives-the punishment he will receive after many years of wrongdoing will be removal from office, and oftener still, transfer to a better post.” Moving from his indictment of the Society’s perceived lackadaisical approach to

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<sup>143</sup> Juan De Mariana. *Discurso De Las Enfermedades De La Compañia*, (Madrid, 1768), quoted in G. Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Early Years of the Society of Jesus," (*Church History* 29, 1960), 153.

managing its upper-mid-level officials, he asserts that no superior of the Order “has been punished for these transgressions” and thus the General Congregation needed to be called more to regulate the practices of the Order and serve as a check against the monarchical governance of the Superior General.<sup>144</sup> As mirrored in Mariana’s indictment of the Order’s practices, many other contemporary sources argued against the centralized government created through the *Constitutions*. This resulted in series of conflicts over the centuries of the Jesuits’ existence, with many political enemies and critiques of the Jesuits calling for a less “despotic” form of government and more accountability from Jesuit leadership.

Looking to the original vision of the characteristics to be possessed by the Superior General, and indeed Jesuits as a whole, both the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions* articulate the characteristics to be possessed by members of the Order. Beginning with the *Exercises*, Ignatius asserts that “persons who receive the Exercises will benefit greatly by entering upon them with great spirit and generosity toward their Creator and Lord, and by offering all their desires and freedom to him so that his Divine Majesty can make use of their persons and of all they possess in whatsoever way is according to his most holy will.”<sup>145</sup> As to the characteristics of those already in positions of authority in the Order, the *Constitutions* argue that “[m]agnanimity and patience are indispensable to bear with the infirmity of others; that he may neither yield to the importunities of the great, nor submit when he is threatened by the strong; but that he

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<sup>144</sup> Mariana, *Discurso De Las Enfermedades De La Compañia*, 155.

<sup>145</sup> Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, 122.

may prevail in every trial, without elation in prosperity or dejection in adversity, and be prepared to suffer unto death, if the good of the society should require it.”<sup>146</sup> These professed characteristics for members of the Order contrast with Mariana’s assessment of the Society.

### **On Jesuit Education**

By the last few years of Ignatius’ life, schools and education became the most important Jesuit ministry and served as possibly the most obvious foundation of Jesuit culture. According to Paul F. Grendler, each prospective member knew that they would invariably be called upon to teach, whether in a classroom or generally across their ministry duties.<sup>147</sup> Indeed the Jesuit method of professionally staffing and managing schools, colleges, and universities to educate not just clergy but secular boys and young men is what makes this ministry of the earliest Jesuits so “new.” Additionally, the formal decision to make education a true ministry arm of the Order is what earns the Jesuits the title of “the first teaching order within the Catholic church” in spite of the many educational accomplishments of the Benedictines, Dominicans, and Franciscans.<sup>148</sup> However, it bears notice that this ministry emphasis was not a focus for Ignatius and his

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<sup>146</sup> *Constitutiones Societatis Jesu, anno 1558, Romae, in Aedibus Societatis Jesu, 1558, Bull of Pius VII, 55.*

<sup>147</sup> Paul F. Grendler, “The Culture of the Jesuit Teacher 1548-1773.” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 18.

<sup>148</sup> John W. O’Malley, “How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education,” ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 200.

first companions during the writing of the 1540 version of the *Formula*.<sup>149</sup> Ignatius aggressively sought to expand the Society's network of schools throughout locations across Europe but Ignatius made an executive decision to give lay students admittance into a Jesuit school when the tremendous opportunity to educate lay persons in addition to clergy was demonstrated.<sup>150</sup> After the successful creation of the first significant Jesuit school in Messina in 1548, the Order truly began to realize the "brand new" ministry that was open to them.<sup>151</sup>

Chiefly responsible for the decision to focus resources on creating colleges and schools instead of professed houses, Ignatius eagerly embraced many of the initial opportunities presented through the funding and support of cities or rulers. During the early years of expansion into the field of education, decisions to found a given school in a particular area appear to be primarily motivated by concerns of establishing the Jesuits in areas of importance or strategic significance in the ongoing ideological struggle between Catholics and Protestants.<sup>152</sup> According to the *Constitutions*, the Superior General had the final say on where to establish schools and universities, but the Superior General must first listen to the advice of his "Assistants... and others whom he may choose to consult" before rendering his final decision.<sup>153</sup> As is consistent with the Jesuits' critiques, this

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<sup>149</sup> Barton T. Geger, "The First First Companions: The Continuing Impact of the Men Who Left Ignatius." *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 44, no. 2 (Sum 2012): 7.

<sup>150</sup> Geger, "The First First Companions," 7.

<sup>151</sup> Grendler, "The Culture of the Jesuit Teacher 1548-1773," 19.

<sup>152</sup> Grendler, "The Culture of the Jesuit Teacher 1548-1773," 18-19.

<sup>153</sup> *Constitutions*, cxc, Chapter XI, 2.

centralization of power was not always viewed optimistically. Regardless, the Order's creation of schools was gratefully received by many since they provided great utility to families that could not afford the cost of schooling for their young sons. Indeed, the legacy and perception of the effectiveness of this ministry is made strongly apparent when—after the secular rulers of several Catholic kingdoms, chiefly Portugal and Spain, successfully pressured the papacy in 1773 to suppress the Order for political reasons relating to Jesuit opposition to their colonialist practices in South America—the Jesuits were reinstated into the Catholic Church with the Bull of Pius VII in 1814. In this document, the educational ministry of the Jesuits was strongly affirmed so that they would have the power to “freely and lawfully apply to the education of youth in the principles of the Catholic faith” and moreover “obey always with an always increasing zeal the useful advices and salutary counsels which [Ignatius] has left to his children.”<sup>154</sup> As evidenced in Pius' papal bull, the legacy of Ignatius' leadership and design for the schools remained highly positive from the voices of many throughout the centuries. Conversely, the Jesuits' approach to education did not come without its detractors, either from contemporary sources or modern scholars.

In practice, the Jesuit schools were not just limited to being places of learning, but producers of culture as well. Opening at a swift pace across Europe in just a few years, Jesuit schools spread all over the world within a decade of Ignatius' command decision to enter this field. Major educational institutions were established in places as

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<sup>154</sup> *Constitutiones Societatis Jesu, anno 1558, Romae, in Aedibus Societatis Jesu, 1558, Bull of Pius VII, cclxxviii.*

geographically distant as Goa, which in 1556 became a cultural and intellectual hub for India with the Jesuits' introduction of a printing press into their college.<sup>155</sup> Similar in its culture significance, in 1583 the Jesuits established “an ‘academy’ or ‘seminary’ of painters... in order to train locals in the techniques of Western painting as well as in the mechanics of printing and engraving.”<sup>156</sup> It bears notice that some scholars have argued that intellectual creativity and thought in the schools were negatively impacted by the strong control from the upper echelon of authority in the Order. Curriculums were prescribed and scholastic structures were closely implemented which resulted in a consistently high standard of education for students, but lacked the intellectual verve and pluralism of a more free-thinking educational institution.<sup>157</sup> However, the Jesuits did demonstrate flexibility as they changed their original vision to adapt to the needs and resources presented to them. In the case of music, both the 1540 *Formula* and the *Constitutions* possess sections that express disapproval of music, and in many ways the arts as well. Based in Rome, the earliest Jesuits at first did not appear to fully comprehend or appreciate the architectural or artistic accomplishments of Renaissance artists that had so transformed the city in the last century. However, the renowned pragmatism of Ignatius and his early companions quickly bent theory to meet the needs of practical ministry realities and supported the expansion of Jesuit schools and ministries

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<sup>155</sup> John W. O'Malley, "The Cultural Mission of the Society of Jesus," ed. by Robert A. Maryks, in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?: Studies in Jesuit History*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 253.

<sup>156</sup> O'Malley, "The Cultural Mission of the Society of Jesus," 253.

<sup>157</sup> Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Early Years of the Society of Jesus," 141-145.

into the cultural fields of art, music, and even theatre performances.<sup>158</sup> Ultimately, the diversity of learning and cultural activities within the schools made them hubs for local cities and gave the Jesuits an effective conduit through which to both serve people and validate the importance of their presence in a given community.

Throughout the early history of the Jesuits, the efforts of Ignatius of Loyola, Jerome Nadal, and Juan Polanco created the spirit of the Order that is later seen various mission contexts including the Huron Mission in the early seventeenth century. While these three leaders and the *Spiritual Exercises*, the different versions of the *Formula*, and the *Constitutions* are certainly not the only basis for the early Jesuits' ideology and practices, they clearly demonstrate the Jesuits' ministerial ideologies and practices and served to develop a distinctive approach and organization that secured success as a worldwide mission. Developing from the tiny group of Ignatius and his first six companions, the Order reached a membership of 1,000, of which many served in thirty-five Jesuit-founded schools, by the time of Ignatius' death on July 31, 1556.<sup>159</sup> At its essence, the heart of the early Jesuits' ministry is Ignatius' vision to "help others", and that, combined with a heavy commitment to pragmatism, led to the rapid spread of schools and networks of missionaries across both Europe and Asia in the lifetime of Ignatius. The ultimate goal of the *Spiritual Exercises* was to aid and connect souls more deeply to God's presence and will in a dynamic and personalized manner. The pragmatic,

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<sup>158</sup> O'Malley, "The Cultural Mission of the Society of Jesus," 228-230.

<sup>159</sup> Debra Mooney and George Traub. "A Biography of St. Ignatius Loyola: The Founder of the Jesuits. *Xavier University*.



and consequently adaptable, nature of Jesuit ministry cannot be understated, with even the strict obedience required of members of the Order and the “fourth vow” of obedience to the papacy being offset to the elements of mutual communication exemplified in the *Exercises* and the frequently flexible rules laid down in the *Constitutions*. In total, this ministerial vision reflects the ideals of a traveling, service-centered application of the Apostolic Life.

By the early 1600s, the first Jesuits to the New World began the work of establishing a mission to the Huron Nation near the Saint Lawrence river in Eastern Canada. Unlike their initial success in Japan and their very successful *reducciones* in South America, which on rare occasions saw Jesuits take up arms against Portuguese slavers to protect their parishioners, this mission field did not produce the quantities of conversions found elsewhere.<sup>160</sup> Ultimately, the key elements of Jesuit ministry appear throughout the approach of the Jesuits in New France during the early half of the seventeenth century, but, as will be argued in the next section, there were significant obstacles posed by the uniquely challenging political, social, and geographical characteristics of the region. Ultimately, the subordination of the Jesuits’ ministry to the aims of French colonialism compounded the already complicated political and social

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<sup>160</sup> Andrew Redden. "Priestly Violence, Martyrdom, and Jesuits: The Case of Diego de Alfaro (Paraguay, 1639)," In *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness*, ed. Maryks Robert Aleksander, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2016): 81-82, 111-113.

context of the Huron and Iroquois tribes who controlled the region around the Saint Lawrence River.

### **III. JESUIT MINISTERIAL METHODS AND THEIR RESULTS IN NEW FRANCE**

After the founding of Quebec in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain, the French government needed colonists to flock to its sparsely populated and loosely controlled colony. Consequently, the French Crown sent the Jesuits to the New World for the sole purpose of converting and settling Native Americans into the larger network of France's colonialism. With the spread of Catholicism and French culture to the Amerindians, the French government sought to achieve greater cooperation and stronger alliances the Huron Nation and to further their colonialist goals of social, economic, and military control of eastern Canada. The goal of this section is to explore the trials, successes, and failures of the Jesuit mission to the Huron nation in eastern Canada during the first half of the seventeenth century. During this examination of the Huron Mission, the efficacy of the Jesuits' ministerial strategies and tactics will be evaluated. Similarly, this section will explore ministerial and organizational strategies of the founders of the Jesuit Order and the relationship of these strategies to those employed the Jesuit missionaries in New France. The ideologies and methods proposed by the early founders of the Society of Jesus, namely Ignatius Loyola, Juan Polanco, and Jerome Nadal, will be measured against the methods practiced by the Jesuits in New France. The founders' original strategies reveal the order's pragmatic focus on communication, foreign language acquisition, and the adaptation of the message of Christianity to the cultural reality of the indigenous peoples to increase their comprehension of the faith. Further contextualizing the actions Jesuits working to convert the Huron, the methods used in the Huron Mission will be briefly compared to those used by Jesuits in the Pacific Northwest in the

nineteenth-century. Ultimately, the Jesuits of New France followed the ideology and methods of its early founders, but these methods largely failed within the context of evangelizing the Huron nation in eastern Canada due to reasons relating to the specific environmental, political, and social context in which they worked.

The foundation of Jesuit missionary practices in New France rested upon the early writings and practices of the order. The ideologies and missionary tactics employed by the Jesuits to New France were based upon the development of Jesuit practice already explained at detail in this study. The letters of Fathers Pierre Biard, Paul Le Jeune, and Jean de Brébeuf will be compared to determine how closely the Jesuit missionaries in New France maintained the original practices prescribed by early Jesuits. Biard, Le Jeune, and Brébeuf are three of the most powerful and influential figures in the Huron mission from 1611-1649. Their methods formed the basis upon which the Jesuits approached their later mission among the Iroquois. As the writings of the Jesuits in New France indicate, the practices of key figures like Biard, Le Jeune, and Brébeuf demonstrate that the Jesuits in New France were generally following the ideology and methods of the Society's earliest members as they attempted to further the order's global mission. Their letters and communications to the Jesuit authorities in France have been reproduced in massive seventy-three volume collection of *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791*, hereafter referred to as the *Relations*. These communications demonstrate that these missionaries sought to adapt the Society's methods as best they could in a foreign and often very hostile environment. The later success of the Jesuits among the tribes of Northwestern America, where the same principles were applied, was attributable to a

more stable and controlled environment that allowed for the kind of long-term ministry that the Jesuits fought desperately to found in New France.

Furthermore, in this research, the themes of cooperation between indigenous peoples and colonizers and “religious colonization” are explored in New France during the period of 1611-1649. For this discussion, the term “religious colonization” is used to mean the function that the Jesuits performed as missionaries in New France, serving at the support of the French government, to alter the cultural practices and religious beliefs of indigenous peoples via Christianizing them. In the context of New France, “religious colonization” directly served to support the overall goal of the French government to stabilize the movements of the indigenous population, spread French culture, replace the social structures found in Amerindian villages and create allegiance and cooperation between indigenous peoples and the French soldiers, settlers, and traders to maximize economic productivity and political stability. The creation of *reducciones*-style missions to both protect, educate, and socially and religiously indoctrinate Amerindian peoples was a comprehension solution pursued by the Jesuits in New France. In Paraguay, the Jesuits used *reducciones* to great success in part because the Spanish and Portuguese constantly committed large-scale acts of violence against the indigenous peoples, so the protection offered by the Jesuits was too essential for many to ignore.<sup>161</sup> Throughout this research, the writings of the Jesuits, taken from the *Relations*, are essential in understanding all these common colonial themes.

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<sup>161</sup> Allan Greer. *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America*. (Boston, MA: Bedford, 2000), 6, 13.

To compare the organizational and ministerial ideologies of the Jesuits in New France to those of the earliest Jesuits, this chapter uses O'Malley's research template of understanding the Jesuits as they understood themselves through their detailed *Relations* and understanding the context in which they worked and made decisions. Therefore, what must be examined are the complex social and political motivations behind the French colonization of Eastern Canada, the Iroquoian and Algonquian religious, social, and political dynamics, and the Eurocentric influences working within the *Relations*. Moreover, applying this method of study to Jesuits in New France during the seventeenth century necessitates understanding the geographic challenges of New France, assessing the impact of the order's financial situation and dependency on donations from the European public, and understanding the specific challenges that faced Jesuit missionaries working among the Amerindian tribes of eastern Canada. This overview of the topic will create the necessary background that is essential to understand specifics of how and why Jesuits operated in the context of New France and the seventeenth century world and how this compared to the early Jesuit ideologies and practices.

Considering that the *Relations* comprise an enormous seventy-three-volume collection, several key secondary sources prove essential in sifting through this vast information. The works of Allan Greer and Francois Roustang categorize prominent *Relations* by similar themes, such as the Jesuits' specific evangelistic methods and their anthropological perspectives of the Indians. The works of scholars Catherine McShea, John Steckly, Daniel Richter, Karen Anderson, Saliha Belmessous, and Neal Salisbury provide a balanced discourse on the spiritual and colonial intent of the Jesuits in New France and the nature of French colonialism in eastern Canada. In particular, the research

of colonialism scholar Saliha Belmessous especially proves helpful in understanding the wider context and history of France's colonization of eastern Canada. In her work, Belmessous looks at the overall goals by the French government to assimilate the indigenous population and the methods used to accomplish that goal. Likewise, the combined works of Walter Redmond, Peter Goddard, R.C. Daily, and Micah True explore the Jesuits' anthropological assessment of the indigenous peoples of New France and reveal the Jesuits' biased depiction of the Amerindians to their readers.

### **The Jesuit Relations from New France**

Before beginning the following discussion of Jesuits in New France, it is important to note the care required when using the *Relations* as source material for understanding the culture, actions, and behaviors of the Iroquois and Huron peoples. Arguing that the Jesuits' took focused measures to understand the Amerindian cultures in which they labored, Kelly L. Watson states that "[t]he Jesuits were unique among most of the proselytizing groups in the North America as they tended to be more sympathetic toward the suffering experienced by Native peoples after the coming of Europeans, and they were more sensitive toward Indigenous cultural practices."<sup>162</sup> However, this sensitivity did not mean that the Jesuits fully understood every cultural practice. Using the *Relations* to understand the Jesuits' views of Iroquoian and Algonquian societies and then illuminate cultural bias within the *Relations*, R. C. Dailey argues that the letters reveal that the Jesuit missionaries did not fully understand the periodic violence and lack

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<sup>162</sup> Kelly L. Watson, *Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World*, Early American Places. (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 126.

of certain Christian moral practices in Native American tribes. Looking to the Jesuit *Relations*, Dailey concludes that to the Jesuits “alcohol was the main obstacle to the success of their mission.”<sup>163</sup> But while there were indisputably negative consequences from the introduction of alcohol into Native American society, Dailey points out that within the Jesuit *Relations* it is clear that “brawls and murders were not unknown before the introduction of liquor.”<sup>164</sup> Similarly, the practice of premarital or extramarital sex that the Jesuits’ chalked up to drunkenness was within Native American societies long before the introduction of alcohol.<sup>165</sup> In summary, Dailey concludes that Jesuits used drunkenness “as a catch-all category that was to blame for any vices or disorder that occurred. [Native American] shortcomings were rationalized to be the fault of liquor, so that drunkenness was blamed for even the fact that the Indians were hard to Christianize.”<sup>166</sup> Dailey’s ability to read between the lines of the Jesuit *Relations* raises the essential issue of the proper manner of interpreting the communications published by the Jesuits. By critically looking at the Jesuits’ perceptions of Native Americans and comparing these views to other contemporary sources, Dailey’s work provides a well-rounded approach to interpreting the *Relations*. In this section I have tried to employ Dailey’s careful method of interpreting the *Relations* by recognizing that these

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<sup>163</sup> R. C. Dailey, "The Role of Alcohol Among North American Indian Tribes as Reported in the Jesuit *Relations*," 45.

<sup>164</sup> Dailey, “The Role of Alcohol,” 50.

<sup>165</sup> Dailey, “The Role of Alcohol,” 52.

<sup>166</sup> Dailey, “The Role of Alcohol,” 54.



documents represent a general European cultural bias which is manifested throughout the Jesuits' depiction of Amerindians and their culture.

While the *Relations* are a massive boon for any research into New France, there are some inherent limitations within the texts to consider. Initially sent to the Canadian superior of the Jesuit order, the Canadian superior then sent Jesuit correspondence from New France on to the French provincial in Europe. This provincial acted in an administrative capacity as the Jesuit Order sought to regulate, connect, and support its increasingly global network of members. Originating from the early years of the order, the division of the Order's administration into provinces, such as France, Spain, etc., is something seen from the first decade of its existence.<sup>167</sup> Progressing from their first drafting to their publishing in Europe for the public, the letters and reports of Jesuit missionaries in the field were edited by the Jesuit superior in New France and again back in Europe. Written and edited for public rather than private use, these edits aimed to create an effect on their readers of the necessity of Jesuit work in New France and specifically attempted to impress the French Crown and governmental officials by pandering to their taste and interests.<sup>168</sup> While there are not many extant first drafts of Jesuit *Relations* from New France, correspondence between Jesuits in New France and their superiors back in Europe demonstrate the extent to which the *Relations* strayed from the diction and nuance of the original writers. Writing on several errors he noticed in the

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<sup>167</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 52.

<sup>168</sup> Micah True. *Masters and Students: Jesuit Mission Ethnography in Seventeenth-Century New France*. (McGill Queen's University Press, 2015), 13.

printing of several prayers in an Amerindian language, Father Le Jeune complained, “If these two short prayers are printed, I beg the printer to take care with the savage words. Those included in last year’s *Relation* were corrupted and filled with printing errors.”<sup>169</sup> Le Jeune doubted the accuracy of the final form of his writings and desired for the editing process overseen by Jesuits back in France to not alter his writings. Moreover, this reveals another evident problem in that the French printers were, in Le Jeune’s view, incorrectly printing native words with French characters and syllables. Thus, while it is not clear to what extent the editing process shifted the rhetorical aims of the *Relations* to appeal to French readers, it is apparent that these *Relations* changed over time to accommodate their final audience.

In the forty year period during which this correspondence was written, only eight priests signed these letters: Paul Le Jeune, Jean de Brébeuf, Francois-Joseph Le Mercier, Jerome Lalemant, Barthelemy Vimont, Paul Ragueneau, Jean de Quen, and Claude d’Ablon.<sup>170</sup> Roustang asserts that the earliest correspondence written in New France was intended to be simply a report of the missionaries’ activities, experiences, and movements to the provincial superior in France. However, Jesuits began to publish these individual reports, usually organized as a year-long series of reports on the missionary experiences of a group of Jesuits, as a means of raising support. Quickly, private letters between

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<sup>169</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 135.

<sup>170</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 11.

Jesuit colleagues and friends became publicized to spread word in France of the Jesuits' work in New France.<sup>171</sup>

The early Jesuits viewed the correspondence as a tool to achieve a “union of hearts” between members of the Order across the globe. The Society of Jesus realized that the only way to succeed on a continental, much less global, scale was to standardize Jesuit practices by disseminating examples and accounts of success to members of the order engaged in missionary activity. Additionally, the Society intended for its communication to foster a greater level of self-understanding and reflection among its members. In practice, this resulted in required texts like the *Spiritual Exercises* and other texts like the *Constitutions* and the *Formula* being well-read and recommended, but not required, to new members once they became widely available in print. Ignatius himself, along with Polanco, Nadal, and other founders, used letter-writing as a way of spreading their ideology to members across the Order and thus creating a more homogenous set of ministerial strategies and methods. In its earliest years, the principle leaders of the Society sent letters to either individuals or to the Order as a whole. Projecting an “image of the Jesuits,” Polanco, encouraged by several superior generals of the Order, spent twenty-six years crafting a series of documents that served to clarify the Jesuits' function and organization. Throughout Polanco's and others' plethora of missives on the subject,

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<sup>171</sup> François Roustang, ed. *Jesuit Missionaries to North America: Spiritual Writings and Biographical Sketches*. [hereafter *Jesuit Missionaries*], (CA: San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 40-41.

the term “edifying” is repeatedly used to describe the quality Jesuits desired most in their communications.<sup>172</sup>

Letters from New France reflected this quality in that they were designed to elicit support and depict the hardships the missionaries suffered in a strange and foreign land. For example, Le Jeune began one letter by describing the deadly challenges he faced wintering among the Montagnais to prepare newcomers to New France “for the combat” that lies ahead.<sup>173</sup> According to O’Malley, the early Jesuits used letters “to silence enemies, win friends, attract recruits, and fan their own enthusiasm for their vocation.” It was the publication of these letters, especially those compiled into the *Relations*, that allowed the Jesuits to impart their ideological views and offer descriptions of the conditions they faced as they labored in the mission field.<sup>174</sup>

Catherine McShea’s work on the *Relations* reveals many of the subjective viewpoints and biases within the text to demonstrate an evangelistic philosophy that “wished first to ‘Frenchify’ as well as Catholicize” the Huron.<sup>175</sup> This attitude contradicts the general strategy of missional adaptability found in the writings of the founders of the Society of Jesus. Establishing a new perspective on the early Jesuit missions in America,

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<sup>172</sup> Castro Valdés, “Juan Alfonso de Polanco,” 43-55.

<sup>173</sup> Paul Le Jeune to Sebastien Cramoisy, 1634, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 7:33-34.

<sup>174</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 63.

<sup>175</sup> Bronwen Catherine McShea. "Presenting the 'Poor Miserable Savage' to French Urban Elites: Commentary on North American Living Conditions in Early Jesuit Relations," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44, no. 3 (2013), 689.

McShea provides a valuable interpretation of the documents in Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations* and provides a contrast to other, more glowing records of the early stages of the Huron mission. Evidence certainly exists to support McShea's interpretation of Jesuit attitudes toward Native Americans. For example, Le Jeune's letter to Parisian printer Sébastien Cramoisy in 1634 demonstrates minimal regard for the social and cultural development of the Montagnais tribe of eastern Canada:

It was the opinion of Aristotle that the world had made three steps... to arrive at the perfection which it possessed in his time. At first, men were contented with life, seeking ... only those things which were necessary and useful for its preservation. In the second stage, they united the agreeable with the necessary, and politeness with necessity. First they found food, and then the seasoning. In the beginning, they covered themselves against the severity of the weather, and afterward grace and beauty were added to their garments. In the early ages, houses were made simply to be used, and afterward they were made to be seen. In the third stage, men of intellect... gave themselves up to the contemplation of natural objects and to scientific researches; whereby the great republic of men has little by little perfected itself... Now I wish to say that our wandering Montagnais savages are yet only in the first of these three stages. Their only thought is to live, they eat so as not to die; they cover themselves to keep off the cold, and not for the sake of appearance.<sup>176</sup>

Thus, in Le Jeune's estimation, the Montagnais tribe demonstrated a very basic level of cultural sophistication and development. Not only does the Jesuit writer demonstrate his Eurocentric point of view via references to classical literature and thought in his summary of Aristotle's worldview, the harsh assessment of Montagnais people gives no regard to their social, religious, or cultural sophistication. Many other passages of the Jesuits' complain of the cultural and social differences between themselves and Europeans and the Amerindians. Consequently, the writings of its missionaries, and not just the official views of its colonial officers, reflected and perpetuated the preconceived notion of the French people that the American Indians were "savages." While it is worthwhile to note that other leading Jesuits in New France, such as Brébeuf,

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<sup>176</sup> Le Jeune, "On Their Clothes and Ornaments," 1634, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 7: 5-6.

Chaumonot, and Jogues, managed to adapt themselves effectively to the culture and customs of the indigenous people of eastern Canada, Le Jeune did not always face the same challenge with enthusiasm or humility.<sup>177</sup>

Following up this harsh assessment with yet another, Le Jeune writes that “[g]race, politeness, the knowledge of the arts, natural sciences, and much less supernatural truths, have as yet no place in this hemisphere, or at least in these countries. These people do not think there is any other science in the world, except that of eating and drinking; and in this lies all their Philosophy.”<sup>178</sup> However, such a poor view of the means and creativity of the Indians did not stop Le Jeune from pouring himself into the indigenous languages. Writing in 1636, Le Jeune declared, “It is my decisive opinion that for lack of a complete knowledge of the language we have not yet even begun to unfold the grandeurs of our belief” and thus enlighten the Indians to the ideals of Catholicism and seventeenth century French culture.<sup>179</sup> Despite his attitudes of cultural superiority, Le Jeune did believe in at least the malleability of the Indians and their potential for conversion, even if he gave very little regard to their existing society or culture. However, this vocal Eurocentrism and disdain for Native American culture gradually lessens and later efforts among the Iroquois meet with more success as the Jesuits’

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<sup>177</sup> *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 37-38.

<sup>178</sup> Le Jeune, “On Their Clothes and Ornaments,” 1634, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 7: 5-6.

<sup>179</sup> Le Jeune, “On the Hopes of Converting this People,” 1636, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 9: 87-88.

communicated Christianity in an increasingly syncretic manner and steered clear of potentially alienating ethnocentrism like Le Jeune's.<sup>180</sup>

The *Relations* found opportunities to praise the Amerindians for their intrinsic value as souls requiring conversion and their linguistic sophistication. As scholars of languages, the Jesuits targeted learning the languages of the indigenous peoples as their principle ministerial tactic. Unfortunately for them, the Amerindian languages proved to be particularly difficult to master and efforts at conversion accordingly slowed. The Jesuits in New France “argued that Amerindian languages were beautiful and complex” and they came from “divine origin” due to their aesthetics and sophistication.<sup>181</sup> In addition, he claims that the evidence pointed to not “the radical difference of the Amerindian cultures [to European cultures] but rather of a link between Worlds Old and New.”<sup>182</sup>

### **Overview of the Amerindians of Eastern Canada**

When in 1625 they ventured to the banks of the St. Lawrence, the Jesuit founders of the Huron Mission encountered a variety of indigenous people groups with a variety of political, social, and religious systems and practices. Therefore, before venturing to examine the influence of the colonialist policies of the French government on Jesuit

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<sup>180</sup> John Streckley, "The Warrior and the Lineage: Jesuit Use of Iroquoian Images to Communicate Christianity," *Ethnohistory (Print)* no. 4 (1992): 478, 502-504.

<sup>181</sup> Marc Lescarbot, “The Conversion of the Savages who have been baptized in New France during this year, 1610,” 1610, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 1. 61-62.

<sup>182</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 57.

missionary activities and the application of the early Jesuits' ministerial ideologies and tactics by the Jesuits in eastern Canada, it is important to offer more clarity on how the key characteristics of the Amerindian societies in eastern Canada influenced the Jesuits' mission. While numerous different tribes existed, it is essential to note that there were two major linguistic groups in the eastern Canada, which were classified into the Iroquoian and Algonquian people groups. Of these two groups, the Huron and Iroquois form the Iroquoian peoples and the Algonquin and Montagnais comprise the Algonquians. Perhaps the largest difference in these two groups was that the Iroquoian peoples primarily relied more upon crops, such as corn, to steadily supply their dietary needs while the Algonquian peoples relied more upon roving bands to hunt, gather, and fish for food. Consequently, the Iroquoians developed larger and semi-permanent settlements whereas the Algonquians stayed more mobile and widely dispersed across their territory due to their hunter-gatherer lifestyle.<sup>183</sup>

As to the political structures present in the Jesuits' targeted mission field, both the Huron and Iroquois had formed powerful confederacies that created strong military, economic, and social ties between member tribes. Representing the most organized and powerful political organization of Amerindian peoples in the Americas, the Iroquois Confederacy had already existed for centuries before the Jesuits arrived in the early seventeenth century. Demonstrating the complexity of their political and social organization, the longstanding oral constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy, which was grounded in tangible artifacts and "supplemented by the use of wampum belts as

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<sup>183</sup> Greer, *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America*. 7.



mnemonic devices,”<sup>184</sup> was later written down and is the earliest constitution in the area of land now occupied by the United States.<sup>185</sup> As to the description of the legal, social, and cultural foundation of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Iroquois Constitution crafted a system of mutual dependence for protection and general decision-making for the five and later six tribes that had ratified it. The leaders of the Confederation Council were selected not through democratic means, but the document did provide mechanisms to remove bad leaders from power. Likewise, the Constitution allowed for the special appointment of leaders who achieved greatness in battle and therefore perpetuated an aggressive agenda for the Confederation Council. Finally, the Constitution emphasized a set of policies for a guiding philosophy of “defensive imperialism” to protect member tribes of the Confederation, but also allowed for offensive wars to annihilate dangerous enemies.<sup>186</sup> This principle is clearly seen in the manner in which the Iroquois achieved total victory over the Huron Nation in 1648-1649, which consequently signaled the end of the Huron Mission.<sup>187</sup> Ironically, the same set of governing principles laid out in the Iroquois Constitution that resulted in such strength for the Confederation later led to diplomatic entanglements with Great Britain and subsequent military confrontation with the United States, who wished to acquire their lands.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Samuel B. Payne, "The Iroquois League, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution," *WMQ* 53, no. 3 (1996): 608.

<sup>185</sup> Lutz, Donald S. 1998, "The Iroquois Confederation Constitution: An Analysis," *Publius* 28 (2): 100.

<sup>186</sup> Lutz, "The Iroquois Confederation Constitution: An Analysis." 101-02.

<sup>187</sup> *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 33-34.

<sup>188</sup> Lutz, "The Iroquois Confederation Constitution: An Analysis." 102.

Politically, the Iroquoians were mainly divided into two confederacies with one being the Five Nations of the Iroquois League, which was comprised of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca tribes, and the Huron confederacy, of which the Arenderhonons, Attignawantans, Attigneenongnahacs, and Tahontaenrats were members.<sup>189</sup> Defying any expectations that there would be harmony within the Iroquoian people group, the Huron and Iroquois Confederacies were frequent enemies and, just four years after the Jesuits came to the region, began a series of destructive conflicts known as the Beaver Wars that began in 1629 and ended with the total defeat of the Huron by 1649. While epidemics decimated the Huron population, it was also the frequent trade of guns for furs with the Dutch that enabled the Iroquois to defeat the French-allied Huron and Algonquian tribes. While the French allies were required to adopt Christianity before they could trade for firearms, gunpowder, and shot, the Dutch implemented no such restrictive policies in their trade with the Iroquois. Thus, even before the Jesuits began the Huron Mission in 1634, there were clear political and economic delineation between each group in the region.<sup>190</sup>

While the Iroquois were a very formidable and well-organized confederation of tribes in the colonial northeast, it was the Huron who were the primary focus of both the French government, and subsequently the Jesuits, after they were the first Amerindian people to meet French explorers in the sixteenth century. As to Huron society, they lived

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<sup>189</sup> Greer, *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America*. 7.

<sup>190</sup> Saliha Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century French Colonial Policy." *AHR* no. 2 (2005): 337.

in longhouses and used a combination of farming, hunting, and gathering to feed their villages. At their height, the Huron boasted about twenty-five villages scattered near Georgian Bay of Lake Huron and they exerted significant influence over the fur trapping and trading in eastern Canada. Eventually, they were admitted into the Iroquois Confederacy in 1723 after the near destruction of the tribe at the hands of the Iroquois in the late 1640s.<sup>191</sup>

On the whole, Iroquoian culture operated with a high degree of similarity, so by looking at the targets of the Huron Mission one can understand many of the social and cultural norms of Iroquoian people as a whole. Socially, the Huron were divided into eight matrilineal clans that sharply divided the labor and social roles and men and women. According to Karen Anderson, the gender roles were precisely defined and divided.

Women were responsible for supplying virtually all horticultural labor, as well as for providing firewood to heat the long- houses during the winter, a formidable task. Women also performed domestic work such as child care; made household goods, clothing, and pottery; and prepared food for storage and consumption. Huron men were responsible for clearing new land, fishing, hunting, trading, and warfare. Women often accompanied men on fishing and hunting trips to prepare the catch and transport it back to the village.<sup>192</sup>

Therefore, while the roles for men and women differed sharply, the productivity in the village would rapidly diminish if one gender relinquished ownership of their share of the production. Since women controlled agricultural production, the Iroquoian's primary food source, their importance led to social equality and allowed them many freedoms not permitted in Europe. For example, Huron women had equal choice in matters of marriage

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<sup>191</sup> "Huron Indians." *Funk & Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia*, January, 1, 2018.

<sup>192</sup> Karen Anderson. "Commodity Exchange and Subordination: Montagnais-Naskapi and Huron Women, 1600-1650." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 11, no. 1 (Autumn 1985): 51.

and, being in charge of horticulture, and exerted primary control over the village's land usage and development, which greatly differed with the more male-dominated social model followed by the seventeenth-century French peasantry.<sup>193</sup> Ultimately, numerous scholars, such as Greer, have noted the immense benefit that the incredibly-detailed *Relations* offer to anthropologists, ethnographers, and historians alike. Indeed, this study heavily relies upon these letters as primary source evidence, but it is still essential to recognize the inherent biases within these sources before incorporating them into this or any other research.

### **The Jesuit *Relations* on Iroquoian Society and Cultural Assimilation**

As previous sections have noted, there can be some difficulties in using the *Relations* due to issues of objectivity and the need to write convincing propaganda to their French audience, but the detailed ethnographic descriptions within the *Relations* nevertheless provide us with a large amount of both observational data, Jesuit commentaries on Iroquoian society, and many accounts that demonstrate both the French state's colonialist policies and the Jesuits' implementation of them. Offering one of the most comprehensive overviews of what the French policy was to be, Samuel de Champlain's vision is recorded in Le Jeune's 1635 *Relation*. Considering that the mobility of the Huron posed a threat to their assimilation and control, the French government enacted a policy to stabilize the movements of the Huron and keep them

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<sup>193</sup> Anderson, "Commodity Exchange and Subordination," 54-55, 50.

close to the trading posts so that they would adopt the cultural, economic, and religious practices of the French.

Monsieur de Champlain, our Governor, very affectionately recommended our Fathers, and the French who accompanied them, to these Tribes; he told them, through an interpreter, that if they wished to preserve and strengthen their friendship with the French, they must receive our belief and worship the God that we worshiped; that this would be very profitable to them, for God, being all-powerful, will bless and protect them, and make them victorious over their enemies; that the French will go in goodly numbers to their Country; that they will marry their daughters when they become Christians; that they will teach all their people to make hatchets, knives, and other things which are very necessary to them; and that for this purpose they must next year bring many of their little boys, whom we will lodge comfortably, and will feed, instruct and cherish as if they were our little Brothers.<sup>194</sup>

Thus, it would be through this intermingling of both peoples, Amerindian and French, that the French colonizers would bring increased trade and forge closer military alliances that would protect their holdings in the New World. At its very core, the Jesuit mission sought to “religiously colonize” the Amerindians transforming their cultural, social, and religious practices as they oversaw the union of two people groups as outlined by Champlain.<sup>195</sup>

To achieve this end, the French government adopted the view that simply assimilating the indigenous peoples into French settlements via marriage would be an effective method to accomplish this goal. French colonialism’s method in New France was to use interethnic marriages and cohabitation to strengthen political, economic, and

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<sup>194</sup> Paul Le Jeune to Sebastien Cramoisy, 1635, in Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed. “How It Is a Benefit to Both Old and New France, to Send Colonists Here.” *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* [hereafter *The Jesuit Relations*], (Cleveland: Burrows Bros, 1896-1901), 8:47-48.

<sup>195</sup> Greer, *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America*. 10-11.

military ties between the French and their Amerindian allies.<sup>196</sup> To further this vision of a homogenous society in New France, the French state advocated and even financially supported interethnic marriages between French settlers and indigenous peoples.<sup>197</sup> Serving as the basic doctrine for assimilation, French officials asserted that interethnic cohabitation and especially marriage were essential to fundamentally shift Amerindian culture in New France. To achieve this end, the French government adopted the view that simply assimilating the indigenous peoples into French settlements would allow them to accomplish each major goal of their colonization. French colonialism's method in New France was to use interethnic marriages and cohabitation to strengthen political, economic, and military ties between the French and their Amerindian allies.<sup>198</sup> However, it is important to remember that a desire for economic and political power, not altruism, formed the basis of the French colonialism in New France. Following the French paternalistic views of the time, officials and the general populace strongly discouraged against marrying indigenous men since French society believed that it was only the father who passed along characteristics to the child.<sup>199</sup> While the Jesuits and French government supported this plan of assimilation and making compliant and "docile" allies, it is worth noting that the fur traders themselves, even though they often took Iroquoian wives and learned the native languages, wished to see as many Amerindians as possible out trapping

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<sup>196</sup> Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism," 333.

<sup>197</sup> Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism," 347.

<sup>198</sup> Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism," 333.

<sup>199</sup> Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism," 332-333.

to increase the fur trade, even if that meant leaving the social order of the Amerindians intact.<sup>200</sup>

As they sought to enforce the Christian ideal of chastity among the Iroquoian tribes, the Jesuits repeatedly noted that the sexual and matrimonial practices of the Iroquoians fundamentally differed from those prescribed by the Catholic Church. An example of one of the many complaints on these matters can be found in Jean de Brébuf's 1635 letter to Paul Le Jeune. In this letter, Brébuf lamented the high divorce rate among the Iroquoians with the claim that "the frequent changes the men make of their wives, and the women of their husbands" posed a significant obstacle to their conversion. However, Brébuf also offered praise in his assessment of the matrimonial practices of the Huron and specifically praised the practice of monogamous marriage and lack of incestuous relationships with the statement "I find in their marriage customs two things that greatly please me; the first, that they have only one wife; the second, that they do not marry their relatives in a direct or collateral line, however distant they may be."<sup>201</sup>

Reflecting the Huron Mission's goals of social and religious transformation to align with French and Christian social norms, Le Jeune laments in his 1633 *Relation* that "[t]he women have great power here. A man may promise you something, and, if he does not keep his promise, he thinks he is sufficiently excused when he tells you that his wife did not wish to do it." Further mirroring the colonialist underpinnings of the Jesuits'

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<sup>200</sup> Anderson, "Commodity Exchange and Subordination," 60-61.

<sup>201</sup> Jean de Brébuf to Paul Le Jeune, "Relation of What Occurred Among the Hurons in the Year 1635," 1635, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 8:117-118.

ministerial goal in New France, Le Jeune recounts that he “told him then that he was the master, and that in France women do not rule their husbands.”<sup>202</sup> According to Anderson, the Jesuits were successful in converting many Montagnais-Naskapi men and women and were consequently able to change their social balance to reflect the male-dominated norms within the French peasantry. But on the other hand, the Jesuits were never able to achieve widespread conversion among the Huron—in part due to the reluctance of the Huron women to lay down their equal role in society and accept total subordination to their husbands—and were accordingly never able to significantly alter the gender roles within Huron society.<sup>203</sup>

Predicting success for the Huron Mission due to several religious commonalities, Le Jeune initially assessed that “[i]f there are any superstitions or false religions in some places, they are few. The [Canadian Indians] think only of how to live and to revenge themselves upon their enemies. They are not attached to the worship of any particular divinity.”<sup>204</sup> Similarly, Brébuf initially offered the assertion that “[t]he greatest part of their Religion consists in this point...” that “they believe in the immortality of the soul, which they believe to be corporeal.” However, the *Relations*, the Jesuits frequently describe Iroquoian religious beliefs and practices with disdain, using terms like “superstition,” “witch-doctor,” and “savage” in a pejorative fashion. From Brébuf and Le

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<sup>202</sup> Le Jeune, “Relation of what Occurred in New France in the Year 1633.” 1633. in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 5: 180-181.

<sup>203</sup> Anderson, “Commodity Exchange and Subordination,” 60-61.

<sup>204</sup> Paul Le Jeune, “Brief Relation of the Journey to New France.” 1632. in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 5:35.



Jeune's perspectives, they believed that the Iroquoians would prove ready converts due to some similarities in their view of eschatology and that only some "superstitious" beliefs would need to be turned into "true Religion."<sup>205</sup> Unfortunately, both leaders were frustrated with their results and, before his martyrdom in 1649, Brébuf in particular became disheartened with the lack of converts through the Huron Mission and identified what he considered sinful social practices in Iroquoian culture as one of the primary culprits.<sup>206</sup> In summary, the Jesuits initially expressed optimism, assumed that the cultural and linguistic divide could be bridged, and considered that Iroquoian society would be alterable to meet their ideal of "model Christianity" and support the assimilation efforts of the French state.

Considering all these characteristics as a whole, the *Relations* repeatedly tell the stories of the few Huron converts who fully converted to the Christianity preached by the Jesuits. Accordingly, these stories offer a clear depiction of the specific characteristics which the Amerindians of eastern Canada were to possess once they truly accepted Christianity. Exemplifying these results, Le Jeune's 1638 *Relation* documents the cultural and religious realignment of one man, Chiwatenhwa, who was offered up "model convert" who had "almost nothing of the Savage, except his birth." Le Jeune writes the

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<sup>205</sup> Jean de Brébuf to Paul Le Jeune, "Relation of What Occurred Among the Hurons in the Year 1635," 1635, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 8:117-118.

<sup>206</sup> Cornelius Michael Buckley, foreword to *Jesuit Missionaries*, edited by Francois Roustang, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 13.

following passage, which specifically praises the social, religious, and educational inclinations of Chiwatenhwa.

He is a man of superior mind, not only as compared with his countrymen, but even, in our judgment, he would pass as such in France. As for his memory, we have often wondered at it, for he forgets nothing of what we teach him, and it is a satisfaction to hear him discourse upon our Holy Mysteries. He has been married since his youth, and has never had more than one wife,—contrary to the ordinary practice of the Savages, who are accustomed at that age to change wives at almost every season of the year. He does not gamble, not even knowing how to handle the straws, which are the cards of the country. He does not use Tobacco, which is, as it were, the wine and the intoxication of the country. If he annually makes a small garden near his cabin, it is only for pastime, he says, or to give to his friends, or to buy some little conveniences for his family. He has never made use of a charm to be successful, as they think, in gaming, fishing, etc., which is the sole ambition of these poor Barbarians. And, although his Father left him one at his death,—which, it was said, he had used very successfully for many years,—and although he could have taken it as his own, he gave himself no concern about it, contenting himself with his little fortune. He never indulged in the diabolical feasts. Add to all this a fine disposition, wonderfully docile, and, contrary to the humor of the country, anxious to learn.<sup>207</sup>

Throughout this detailed outline of the “model Christian” that the Jesuits wished to created, it is important to note that religiously Chiwatenhwa rejected the feasts and practices of his tribe and instead diligently and effectively learned the doctrinal and theological teachings preached by the Jesuits. Likewise, he did not have multiple marriages and instead practiced monogamous marriage without divorce, which was always a high social priority for the Jesuits. Likewise, the assessment that this man was “wonderfully docile, and... anxious to learn” reflects the ideal convert that complied with both the French government’s policy of cultural assimilation, the Jesuits’ emphasis on obedience as a key virtue, and the missionaries’ efforts for religious conversion.

The French did not see the Amerindians as racially inferior as much as they perceived them as culturally “savage”, especially regarding their social and gender

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<sup>207</sup> Le Jeune, “The Conversion of Joseph Chiwatenhwa, a Native of This Village of Ossossané,” 1638. 15:77-78.

structures. It was not until the eighteenth-century that the French viewed the Amerindians as having a fundamentally different nature from themselves.<sup>208</sup> The French's distaste for Amerindian culture and society grew when they began to view the Amerindians as biologically different, not just culturally and religious, after French attempts to assimilate largely failed to "frenchify" Amerindians in New France. Only after the assimilation policies of the French largely failed to change Amerindian culture did the French begin to view the indigenous peoples as racially inferior and began to reject the idea of interethnic marriage. Positively viewing the biological differences between Amerindians and French, the French saw the Amerindians as physically more adapted to nature and therefore taller and more physically fit than the French. Therefore, accepting some of the biological differences between Amerindians and themselves as environmental and not racial, the early French colonists in the 1600s sought the ultimate goal of culturally, socially, and religiously changing the native population to something closely resembling French society. While French authorities were never completely unified in their vision of how to systematically accomplish this assimilation, they consistently agreed that the outcome of assimilation policies and methods must benefit French interests above all other considerations. Throughout the French colonization of eastern Canada, it was recognized that the indigenous inhabitants of eastern Canada were necessary to build an economically successful and permanent colony.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Belmessous. "Assimilation and Racialism," 347, 323.

<sup>209</sup> Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racialism," 326.

Attempting to aid the conversion efforts of the Jesuits, the French gave Huron Indians who converted to Christianity “special treatment at French trading posts” and gave them greater opportunities for trade. In the words of scholar Neal Salisbury, the Jesuits “quite deliberately tied Indian salvation to productive labor for French markets and sweetened the reward for such labor with material benefits.”<sup>210</sup> A principle tenant of this doctrine was that the French settlements must always maintain a French majority to culturally dominate the minority Amerindian population within their borders. In fact, the sheer lack of hunters and workers necessary to conduct the fur industry in New France required cooperation between the French and Amerindians. Therefore, the French officials overlooked negative views of the Amerindians’ culture to allow for enthusiasm towards the idea of living side-by-side with native peoples as a means of economic gain. Since their military-diplomatic alliances relied on strong economic, cultural, social, and political ties, the French required the Jesuits’ aid in fundamentally changing the Amerindians’ culture to create a culturally and religiously homogenous New France.

While this doctrine of assimilation proved successful in colonizing smaller amounts of Amerindians, its efficacy began to wane after several decades. One critical problem was that the most powerful of Amerindian peoples in eastern Canada, the Iroquois, largely rejected the idea of interethnic marriages with the French, which added tension to an already dangerous political situation. Further complicating the political situation in New France, the French’s close allies, the Huron and Algonquians, became locked in a series of wars known as the Beaver Wars with the Iroquois over control of the

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<sup>210</sup> Salisbury, "Religious Encounters," 506.

trapping industry. Ultimately, the Amerindians ended up “[appropriating] many material goods and a few military and economic practices” but refused to accept the “French language, customs, and laws” that successful assimilation would require.<sup>211</sup> By the end of the 1630s, wars and epidemics had decreased the Huron population from 21,000 to 10,000, and by 1649 the Huron villages were nearly totally destroyed and their few surviving inhabitants absorbed into either the Iroquois Nation or French settlements.<sup>212</sup> Before their destruction, the Huron interpreted the death among their people as a sign to become more socially harmonious. Consequently, the conversion efforts of Jesuits only prompted more strife within Huron villages. Moreover, the Huron “feared witchcraft” and quickly targeted Jesuits as practitioners of evil magic as they saw their villages decimated with foreign disease. This, along with the violent raiding by Iroquois into Huron territory, led to the death of many Jesuits living among the Huron during the 1640s.<sup>213</sup>

Considering the social practices of French colonists and fur traders living in the settlements as being a sinful deterrent to the conversion of Amerindians to Christianity, the Jesuits eventually became disillusioned with the primary vehicle of assimilation chosen by the French. Instead of settlers, missionaries, and Amerindians all cohabitating together in trading settlements, the Jesuits successfully lobbied French authorities and Huron leaders to allow them into the Huron villages to dwell with their intended

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<sup>211</sup> Belmessous, “Assimilation and Racialism,” 337.

<sup>212</sup> Salisbury, “Religious Encounters,” 505-506.

<sup>213</sup> Salisbury, “Religious Encounters,” 505.

converts. After the French regained control of Canada following the English occupation from 1629-1632, “the French insisted, as the price of reviving the alliance, that the Hurons accept Jesuits in their villages in place of the traders who had formerly resided there.” Even though the Huron were not happy to agree to these terms, the necessity for protection against the Iroquois led to their consent.<sup>214</sup> Indeed, these Christianized Indians “were separated from non-Christian Indians, accorded more honorable treatment, sold European goods at lower prices, and allowed to buy guns.” These “Christianized Hurons” were considered true converts since they would have openly professed Christianity, received baptism, given up any “heathen” religious or cultural practices in their villages, generally adhered to Christian matrimonial norms, and would have remained in regular contact with the Jesuits in the trading posts whenever they came to trade.<sup>215</sup> Essentially, the Iroquois’ social and religious conversion was the currency necessary to buy the French’s protection. Regardless of this “protection,” with the general destruction of the Huron Nation in 1649 and the failure of the Jesuits’ mission within that people, the Jesuits’ perception of New France changed from viewing it as a potential spiritual conquest to a “land of martyrdom” that witnessed the death of numerous missionaries. Learning from their early overconfidence experienced before the failure of the Huron mission, the Jesuits began to see “Canada as a testing place more than a theatre of spiritual conquest.”<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Salisbury, “Religious Encounters,” 504.

<sup>215</sup> Salisbury, “Religious Encounters,” 505.

<sup>216</sup> Peter A. Goddard, "The Devil in New France: Jesuit Demonology, 1611-50." *Canadian Historical Review* no. 1 (1997): 50.

## **The Early Jesuit Mission to New France**

When the Jesuits began to arrive in eastern Canada as early as 1611, they immediately sought to accomplish their primary religious and secular objectives and apply established Jesuit methods to the mission work in New France. First, they sought the right of exclusive evangelistic access to the Iroquoian and Algonquian tribes. This push for exclusive access was born of their belief in their own political, intellectual, and linguistic strengths and the conviction that their evangelistic method of exclusively targeting the indigenous population for evangelism would bear the most fruit.<sup>217</sup> While the Jesuits sought to adapt linguistically and, to an extent, culturally to the indigenous peoples of New France, their ultimate goal, and obligation from French authorities, remained to assimilate the Amerindians to French customs, language, and culture. In part due to their necessity to reflect the scripted colonialist underpinnings of the French's assimilation program more than the interests of the Amerindians themselves, the Jesuits' message of the Gospel in New France possessed a relativistic nature designed to promote docility within the newly "acquired" French subjects. However, French authorities did not immediately give the Jesuits exclusive spiritual access to New France. Regardless of their crucial role within the assimilation plan, the Jesuits had to compete against the Franciscan Recollets, who had a head start in evangelizing the area, and the French Calvinists, who had a considerable presence in the colony's commerce via the society of merchants who called themselves "De Montmorency." In response, the Jesuits sought to demonstrate their efficacy in evangelism and learning the native dialects as the means to

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<sup>217</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 32-33.

proving their superiority over the Recollets, who they viewed as less prepared and qualified to preach Christianity to the Indians. However, the Recollets insisted that they had invited the Jesuits to assist them in New France in a companion role. The Recollets had already built an up a significant infrastructure in the decade and a half that they had spent working in New France prior to their subsequent expulsion in 1629.<sup>218</sup>

Similarly important for their opposition to the Jesuits, French Calvinists in the early 1600s served as the “masters of the society of merchants” in New France. The presence of Huguenots in New France was due to the Protestant leanings of French king Henry VI, who reigned as king of France from 1589-1610. Since Henry VI was himself raised as a Protestant, he appointed many of his close Protestant associates to positions of power in New France. Furthermore, the Edict of Nantes, which was signed by Henry VI in 1598, granted rights to the Huguenots and sought to create an environment of religious toleration and cooperation across the French Empire. Due to their skill in money-lending and the presence of many Protestants in maritime locations, the Huguenots were considered well-credentialed to colonize New France.

As to the conflict between Huguenots and Jesuits in New France, the clear theological and doctrinal differences between the Jesuits and French Calvinists, who were perceived as heretical by the Jesuits, automatically generated animosity between the two missionary groups. Ultimately, the Jesuits believed that the Huguenots would actively limit the progress of the Jesuit-led Huron mission. The Jesuits’ principle attack against the French Calvinists was that they were not fulfilling their mandate given by the French

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<sup>218</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 32.



government to create settlements in New France and evangelize and convert the Indians. Instead, the French Calvinists focused primarily on economic ventures and this led to their replacement by Jesuits, for whom the French monarchs already possessed a sympathy for since they similarly shared Catholicism.<sup>219</sup> Consequently, this led the Jesuits to realize that their own place in the colony would be short-lived if the French Calvinists remained in a position of missionary influence in New France.

As soon as they landed and began to set up their mission, the Jesuits in New France, per their usual ministerial style, insisted that other religious orders had no authority over them.<sup>220</sup> Regardless of the obstacles, the Jesuits were able to secure a prominent place in New France's mission field due to their savvy political maneuverings—both before and after the colony was taken by the English following their capture of Quebec in 1629 and returned to French control in 1632.<sup>221</sup> The Jesuits demonstrated this political acumen by aligning themselves with the powerful political forces governing New France through shrewd economic means. In 1627, Father Noyrot was sent back to Paris to “describe the situation to the viceroy, the Duke de Ventadour, and have the colony established on a new basis” as a means of ousting the French Calvinists.<sup>222</sup> After meeting with little success as he went from door to door of the political leaders in Paris, Noyrot defied caution and went all the way to the top, to the ministry office held by Cardinal Richelieu. Fortunately enough for the Jesuits, Richelieu

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<sup>219</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 25-26.

<sup>220</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 347.

<sup>221</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 33.

<sup>222</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 26.

already wished to weaken the Calvinist party due to domestic political reasons and accordingly stifled the Duke de Montmorency's company in New France since it had not upheld its mandate to colonize the area and convert its inhabitants.<sup>223</sup> Additionally, Richelieu assumed personal leadership of the colony's direction and thus provided the Jesuits with the stable and supportive political environment that they deemed as necessary for their long term success. This success gave them a monopoly on the role of New France's spiritual guardians, a defense against the constant criticism and attacks they faced from spiritual and secular rivals in Europe, and the success needed to inspire consistent support from the private donors and organizations that backed their mission.<sup>224</sup>

Other unforeseen events back in France—including the assassination of Henry VI in 1610 and the refusal of Huguenots in La Rochelle to lay down their arms at the request of King Louis VIII—ended the religious toleration of French Protestants. Since Huguenots were still needed to conduct trade, some were permitted to visit New France during summertime, but French Protestants were banned from settling the territory by 1627.<sup>225</sup> Later, when eastern Canada was returned to France, the Jesuits supported “the Crown's plan to govern the military, economic, and territorial affairs of the colony through the intermediary of a [Catholic friendly] trading company.”<sup>226</sup> Thus, in two

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<sup>223</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 27.

<sup>224</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 27.

<sup>225</sup> Richard Lougheed, “Cooperative Religion in Quebec,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 41, (2004): 174-175.

<sup>226</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 34.

shrewd moves, the Jesuits positioned themselves well ahead of the Recollets and French Calvinists and closer to the economic and political powers at play in New France.

### **Mastery of the Amerindian Languages and How the Jesuits Used Their Spiritual Monopoly**

The Jesuits' second aim, to learn the languages of the Indian tribes in eastern Canada, proved to be a powerful tool in securing exclusive access to New France. This strategy reflects the general practice of the Order and finds its origins from the earliest of the Jesuits, Loyola himself. Explicating the ideology of the early Jesuits, Loyola advises in the Jesuits' *Constitutions* that “[w]hen a plan is being worked out in some college or university to prepare persons to go among the Moors or Turks, [learning] Arabic or Chaldaic would be expedient; and Indian would be proper for those about to go among the Indians.” This statement is an early expression of the Jesuits' practical commitment to learning the languages of their prospective converts.<sup>227</sup> Indeed, the stringent vetting process that each Jesuit candidate went through sought to weed out any unstable or otherwise unqualified candidates even led to refusal to accept them into the Order because of their perceived “instability” and lack of maturity.<sup>228</sup> Thus, the Jesuits who came to New France were highly regarded and seen to possess the academic and spiritual virtues necessary to labor to learn the native languages and cultural practices within the harsh environment of eastern Canada. The Jesuits sent to New France had attended the

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<sup>227</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, translated by George E. Gnass, (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), 214.

<sup>228</sup> O'Mally, *The First Jesuits*, 56.

most prestigious universities in Europe, so the theological, linguistic, and philosophical training of each provided them with the academic knowledge believed to be necessary to succeed in their endeavor. Despite the practicality of this tactic, learning the languages of a people that did not have the structure and content of their language codified into dictionaries and grammar books proved very challenging, even to scholars as gifted as Biard, Le Jeune, Brébeuf, and other highly educated Jesuits who came to New France.

As to the fundraising practices, Jesuits, developed the technique of publishing the missionaries' correspondence to excite interest and donations from devout Catholics.<sup>229</sup> While it should be noted that the Jesuits' founders insisted that the order not take any money as payment for performing sacraments such as confession, Jesuits were expected to seek and accept support for the general activities of their mission. Indeed, Ignatius of Loyola must himself be described as a master beggar, since his own fundraising abilities either through face-to-face meetings or correspondence funded much of the early Jesuits' activities.<sup>230</sup> Such support was essential to fund an extensive organization whose members were prepared to be sent to anywhere on Earth.<sup>231</sup> For the founding of schools, generous benefactors were sought to cover the costs associated with the projects.<sup>232</sup> In his letters, Biard repeatedly maintained that the mission to New France required constant and significant financial assistance in order to succeed, and he mentioned by name several benefactors who had given to the mission to the point of jeopardizing their own financial

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<sup>229</sup> *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 41.

<sup>230</sup> John Patrick Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits*. (New York: Longman, 2004) 39, 41.

<sup>231</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 353.

<sup>232</sup> Pierre Biard to Christopher Baltazar. n.d., in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 1: 141, n35.

position.<sup>233</sup> One of Biard's best supporters, Huguenot writer Marc Lescarbot—who worked with the Jesuits despite their apparent theological differences during the religious toleration created by the Edict of Nantes—gave frequent references to classical literature and romanticized New France as a tool to engage and impress the reader with both exoticism and importance of their work. An example of the exoticizing nature of Lescarbot's work is apparent when he describes the country of New France as “the most beautiful earthly habitation that God has ever made” and refers to the Indians as “the Savages of the country.”<sup>234</sup> Employing this strategy of the early Jesuits to great success, the Jesuits of New France found increased financial and political support, took control of the discourse over missionary activities in the New World, and created important historical and anthropological documents that are still considered invaluable by scholars of the indigenous peoples of seventeenth-century eastern Canada.<sup>235</sup> However, it must be noted that, due to the often carefully scripted narrative created in the *Relations* for the benefit and added support of the French public, it is often difficult for scholars to understand deeper characteristics of Amerindian cultures.

Undoubtedly, it did not hurt the Jesuit cause that the same Indian interpreters who denied offers to aid the Recollects at the beginning of their missionary efforts chose to lend their linguistic services to the Jesuits.<sup>236</sup> While it is not clear why these Indians

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<sup>233</sup> Marc Lescarbot, “The Conversion of the Savages who have been baptized in New France during this year, 1610,” 1610, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 1. 61-62.

<sup>234</sup> Lescarbot, “The Conversion of the Savages,” *The Jesuit Relations*, 1: 65-66.

<sup>235</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 14-15.

<sup>236</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 25.

chose to aid the Jesuits over the Recollets, it is evident that the Recollets' inability to solicit this help led to an early lack of progress in learning the Amerindian dialects. When Jesuits missionaries first began in earnest the process of evangelizing New France in the 1620s, they encountered, among other smaller tribes, the Algonquin, Huron, Iroquois, and Montagnais; Algonquin that spoke a language that proved very difficult to learn. In order to master this language, missionaries like Fathers Paul Le Jeune and Jean de Brébeuf spent extended time among the Indians. Brébeuf lived with the Montagnais in 1626, and Le Jeune wintered, albeit to mixed success, with the Montagnais to learn these much-needed language skills. However, in this case, Le Jeune spent much of his time suffering through the deadly Canadian winter and getting into conflicts with his hosts and teachers.<sup>237</sup> Nevertheless, Le Jeune, the founder of the Huron mission, managed to gain mastery of the Montagnais language, after great efforts. Le Jeune was able to create a list of "conjugations, declensions and some little syntax, and a dictionary" for future language learners.<sup>238</sup> Eventually, the enthusiasm and ceaseless labors of the Jesuits as they learned various Amerindian languages resulted in the creation of a system of dictionaries, syntaxes, and grammars that were very detailed and effective in spreading and preserving the languages of the Iroquoians and Algonquians.<sup>239</sup>

Concerning the Jesuit emphasis on learning the languages of the natives, one account tells of the shallow religious instruction that one secular priest with no

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<sup>237</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 56.

<sup>238</sup> Le Jeune, "Brief Relation of the Journey to New France," *The Jesuit Relations*, 5: 11-13.

<sup>239</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 58.

connection to the Jesuit Order provided his “flock.” Without knowledge of the tribe’s language, Jesse Fleche reportedly baptized “about a hundred Micmacs,” which in turn raised the ire of Jesuit Father Pierre Biard, one of the first Jesuits to come to New France in 1611.<sup>240</sup> Writing to his superior, Biard assessed that “[t]he trouble is, he has not been able to instruct them as he would have wished, because he did not know the language, and had nothing with which to support them; for he who would minister to their souls, must at the same time resolve to nourish their bodies.” Scathingly, Biard argued that this ineffective priest could return home to France “without regret at leaving a vine which he has planted.”<sup>241</sup> Baird’s evangelistic philosophy is seen throughout this letter and involved serving practical needs by engaging in difficult acts of physical labor to support villages and the instruction of the mind and soul, which cannot be undertaken without knowledge of native languages. Brébeuf very bluntly warned would-be missionaries to New France that “[y]ou may have been a famous professor or an outstanding theologian in France, but here you will be merely a student” in order to learn the languages and customs of the indigenous people.<sup>242</sup>

Speaking to the value that the Society placed on language and prayer, Le Jeune recorded having “arranged a few prayers in their language” and that this seemed to help

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<sup>240</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 34.

<sup>241</sup> Biard to Christopher Baltazar, 1611, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 1: 162-163.

<sup>242</sup> Brébeuf, “Important Advice for Those whom it Shall Please God to Call to New France, and Especially to the Country of the Hurons,” 1636, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 10: 89-90.

spark questions from his host about a multitude of topics.<sup>243</sup> Similarly, Biard asserted that the liturgical elements of the faith were essential for the indigenous peoples to understand. Writing in a letter to provincial superior in France, Biard insisted that the Jesuits in New France “have not yet succeeded in translating into the native language the common creed or symbol, the Lord's prayer, the commandments of God, the Sacraments, and other principles quite necessary to the making of a Christian.”<sup>244</sup> Moreover, in addition to learning the languages, ethnohistorian John Steckly asserts that, just like the first Jesuits, the Jesuits to New France sought to learn the customs and behaviors of the indigenous tribes and were almost always effective in this endeavor.<sup>245</sup> Indeed, Jesuit scholar Francois Roustang asserts that the fervor with which the Jesuits sought to adapt to the customs and culture of the Huron serves to underscore their commitment to the success of what would ultimately prove to be an exceptionally difficult mission.<sup>246</sup>

In due course, the Jesuits were able to consistently combat the claims of the Recollets to New France's mission via a shrewd use of correspondence to inform the political powers in France of their trials and successes in New France. The trick was striking the right balance between describing the obstacles faced in fulfilling their mission and their asserting the competence of the missionaries as both ministers and

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<sup>243</sup> Le Jeune, “Containing a Journal of Things Which Could Not be Set Forth in the Preceding Chapters,” 1634, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 10: 89-90 .

<sup>244</sup> Biard to Christopher Baltazar, 1611, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 1: 162-163.

<sup>245</sup> John Steckly, "The warrior and the Lineage: Jesuit Use of Iroquoian Images to Communicate Christianity," *Ethnohistory (Print)* no. 4, (1992), 478.

<sup>246</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 36-38.



intellectuals. Additionally, the Jesuits were forced to defend the spiritual value of the American Indians in eastern Canada. To accomplish this, the Jesuits “argued that Amerindian languages were beautiful and complex” and that they originated from divine origin on the grounds of their aesthetic qualities. Using these arguments, the Jesuits denied that Amerindian cultures and European were radically different, and instead there were many shared characteristics between Europe and the New World.<sup>247</sup> Jesuits were committed to salvation of the Huron, despite their inability to convert a majority of the indigenous population. Nevertheless, the Jesuits leveraged the fruits of their linguistic labors to support the justification of their mission.

Placing a high value on the opening and operation of schools, the early Jesuits saw education as a means of creating stability, establishing a central hub for ministry work, strengthening converts to create reliable spiritual allies for evangelism, and spreading the message of Christianity through direct instruction. Jerome Nadal himself wrote that “every Jesuit must bear his part of the burden of the schools” that were opening throughout Europe during the Order’s early founding. O’Malley identified one of the most significant documents marking the Jesuits’ commitment to education, a letter written by Juan Polanco in 1560. Polanco asserted that the Jesuits could most effectively accomplish their mission via work in “the colleges through the education of youth in letters, learning, and Christian life.” Moreover, these scholastic labors were also to be accompanied with the usual ministerial methods of preaching sermons, hearing confessions, and what Polanco referred to as “the other means that accord with our

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<sup>247</sup> True, *Masters and Students*, 57

customary way of proceeding.”<sup>248</sup> Likewise, Donnelly asserts that very early in the Jesuits’ formation a fundamental shift towards education as “the main Jesuit ministry” occurred.<sup>249</sup> The educational efforts of the Jesuits in New France mirror those of the earliest Jesuits, so it is therefore no surprise that the Jesuits in New France set about to establish a school among the Huron. Despite the long history of successful Jesuit-run schools, the best efforts of the Jesuits in New France were not enough to fully maintain an educational system that convinced Huron men that spending their days within the confines of a four-walled building was a useful enterprise. Addressing this problem, Brébeuf wrote that “[h]aving left a highly civilized society, we are now in the midst of a barbarous people who care nothing for our philosophical and theological education. All the fine qualities that make us admired and respected in France are like pearls trampled under the feet of swine.” Adding to this assessment, Brébeuf states that only physical labor would make one admirable and wise in the opinion of the tribes of eastern Canada.<sup>250</sup> In many ways, this attitude somewhat negated the intellectual and educational strengths of the Jesuit missionaries. Quite understandably, many Jesuits would have been frustrated at the meager value provided by their years of philosophical training; on the other hand, their years of linguistic practice learning the classical languages would obviously pay dividends in the New World. However, even though Roustang makes it clear that Brébeuf’s own immense stature and physicality greatly impressed the Indians to

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<sup>248</sup> O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 200-202.

<sup>249</sup> Donnelly, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 127-128.

<sup>250</sup> Le Jeune, “Instructions for the Fathers of Our Society Who Shall be Sent to the Hurons,” 1637, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 12: 121-122.

whom he ministered, it is not clear that Brébeuf himself incorporated this method of performing physical labor among the Indians as tool for evangelization.<sup>251</sup> However, his stoicism in the face of death by torture certainly demonstrated these masculine characteristics to both the readers of the *Relations* and the inhabitants of New France.

Having established themselves as the sole spiritual guardian of New France, the Jesuits' third objective was to develop and implement ministerial strategies for their evangelistic goal of converting the Amerindians and secular goal of further their cultural assimilation. Gaining mastery of indigenous languages among the Jesuits was the first step, and to follow up upon that success, Le Jeune proposed a simple apostolic plan to convert the Huron. In Le Jeune's plan, which was clearly influenced by the assimilation policies of the French state, the Jesuits must accomplish three primary goals. First, they must "stabilize as much as possible the itinerant tribes" as a means of promoting the development of the Jesuits' nascent missionary network. Essentially, this would require the Amerindians to shift from being roving hunter-gathers to using the more sedentary profession of farming as their more exclusive food source. Spreading out from Quebec to the interior of Canada, Jesuits used their developing connections with the Huron to facilitate contact with neighboring people groups."<sup>252</sup> Approved by his peers, Le Jeune's plan was hoped to achieve much success for the goals of both the French colonizers and the Jesuits' spiritual mission in New France.

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<sup>251</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 123.

<sup>252</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 31.

Le Jeune's plan mirrors Biard's earlier insistence that the Jesuits "domesticate and civilize [the Amerindians]"<sup>253</sup> and do so by turning them from a nomadic lifestyle to farming.<sup>254</sup> Essentially, instead of the Jesuits following the indigenous tribes across the frozen tundra of eastern Canada, their goal was induce a sedentary existence to the tribes' movements before venturing deeper into Canada to preach to new tribes. Certainly, the Indians would be much easier to evangelize if they remained in the same place long enough to experience the influence of a nearby Jesuit mission, and the Jesuits themselves could focus more on building a stable infrastructure that would allow them to create a more permanent system of missions. To aid in this process of stabilizing tribal migration, Le Jeune opened a college-seminary. However, the school proved a total failure since the young Indian men quickly moved on from the four-walled confines of the Jesuit mission to pursuits more to their liking. Attempting to adapt the Order's model of education, the schoolmasters tried to accommodate their pupils by insisting on only a very lax regimen. However, after several different attempts, the school ended in total failure, and it became clear that Le Jeune's adaptation of the Jesuits' educational strategy would not work in the context of New France. On the other hand, one significant success came in the form of a young girl's boarding school overseen by the Ursulines that found more long-term success.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Biard to Christopher Baltazar, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, Thwaites, 1: 181-182, 86-87.

<sup>254</sup> Marc Lescarbot to Queen Marie de Medici, "The Conversion of the Savages who have been baptized in New France during this year, 1610," 1610, in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1. 61-62.

<sup>255</sup> *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 31.

Bronwen Catherine McShea shifts the paradigm of the Jesuits' views of Native Americans. Primarily relying upon Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations* to demonstrate the bias Jesuit missionaries had towards French culture, McShea asserts that "the *Relations* reveal a Jesuit effort to appeal to elites who identified with a newly evolving, Paris-centered culture of consumption Aesthetics, and self-conscious distance from France's poor."<sup>256</sup> Accordingly, the Jesuit *Relations* "mirrored and redeployed elite attitudes toward marginal populations on behalf of the mission and reveal that Jesuits sought to import this specific culture to North America with Catholicism."<sup>257</sup> For example, the early *Relations* made statements regarding New France's indigenous peoples using terms like "Empire of Satan" and the "Devil's kingdom" for rhetorical effect.<sup>258</sup> Considering that historian Gerald McKevitt's essay argues that a different, less ethnocentric approach is found in the Jesuits' nineteenth century Northwestern Mission, it is important to note that this ethnocentric, European approach seems to be more of a problem among the early Jesuit missionaries to New France. Indeed, the relative success that the Jesuits found in their later mission to the American Northwest in the 1800s stands in contrast to their lack of progress made among the Hurons and Iroquois in eastern Canada. Indeed, the Northwestern mission's success in evangelization is due to their effective and essential arbitration in a variety of disputes; the Jesuits' usually uncanny ability to master difficult

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<sup>256</sup> Bronwen Catherine McShea, "Presenting the 'Poor Miserable Savage' to French Urban Elites: Commentary on North American Living Conditions in Early Jesuit Relations," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44, no. 3: (2013): 683.

<sup>257</sup> McShea, "Presenting the "Poor Miserable Savage' to French Urban Elites," 683.

<sup>258</sup> Goddard, "The Devil in New France: Jesuit Demonology, 1611-50," 60.

American dialects; a syncretic approach to religious systems; a shared passion for song with the Indians; and the Jesuits' desire to find common ground by celebrating Christian holidays and feasts on Indian holidays.<sup>259</sup> Therefore, due to its similarities to the Huron and Iroquois missions, the Northwestern mission serves as a useful comparison to discuss the efficacy of the Jesuits' ideology and methods in the various regions of North America.

Ultimately, the Jesuits' later evangelistic activities among the Iroquoians temporarily resulted in a greater and faster spread of Christianity, and the Jesuit work among the Huron from 1634-1649 facilitated later mission work from the seventeenth-to-nineteenth centuries by inspiring many to join the Jesuits missions across the world. Since its earliest years, the Jesuits had used recruitment of members of the native population who had converted to Christianity to swell its ranks in far off countries and further its far-flung global mission.<sup>260</sup> The Huron took what they learned from the Jesuits and spread it among the tribes around the Great Lakes and beyond, thus laying the groundwork for future missions. Moreover, Le Jeune's culturally and racially disdainful views are not dissimilar to the prejudice leveled against indigenous recruits into the Society during its early years. Nevertheless, considering the tremendous examples of

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<sup>259</sup> Gerald McKevitt, "Northwest Indian Evangelization by European Jesuits, 1841-1909," *Catholic Historical Review* 91, no. 4: (2005): 691, 695, 697, 699, 702-703.

<sup>260</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 76.

early Jesuits like Francis Xavier across the Asian continent, the Order's founders had set a strong precedent for globally-minded and ethnically heterogeneous missional efforts.<sup>261</sup>

However, the Jesuits political and ethnic alignment with France in eastern Canada frequently led to violent disputes with the native population. Since its founding, the Jesuits had believed that their role as mediator to be one of their most valuable duties, and indeed in the American Northwest this role was one of their most impactful ministerial tools.<sup>262</sup> Ethnohistorian Daniel K. Richter argues that in attempting to mediate inter and intra-tribal conflicts of the Iroquois resulted in the Jesuits becoming the targets of violent massacres and forcible evictions from Iroquois lands. As the relations between the French and the Iroquois decayed in the late 1670s and 1680s, the Jesuit missionary efforts among the Iroquois in the latter half of the seventeenth century also ended abruptly.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 76.

<sup>262</sup> McKevitt, "Northwest Indian Evangelization," 691.

<sup>263</sup> Daniel K. Richter, "Iroquois Versus Iroquois: Jesuit Missions and Christianity in Village Politics, 1642-1686," *Ethnohistory* 32, no. 1, (1985): 11-12.

## V. CONCLUSION: THE END OF THE HURON MISSION AND ITS IMPACT ON LATER MISSION WORK

The general goal of the Jesuit missions in New France during the Huron Mission was to secure the genuine conversion of the Huron tribes and to achieve the cultural assimilation required by the French state. Those who undertook this mission attempted to follow the methods set forth by the early Jesuits by attempting to start schools, maintaining frequent and detailed communication, learning the dialects used in their respective mission fields, and adapting to the context of New France by living in Iroquoian and Algonquian villages. However, the missionary efforts of the highly-trained Fathers Pierre Biard, Paul Le Jeune, Jean de Brébeuf, and many others were not successful in terms of religiously and culturally converting great numbers of the indigenous peoples. Summarizing the first decades of the Jesuit mission to New France as a whole, Jesuit scholar Cornelius Michael Buckley argues that “[t]he Huron mission began with an irresistible momentum of success, quickly floundered and ended in dismal failure.” So complete was this failure that Brébeuf himself, a man whose peers and modern historians describe as possessing a dynamic and relentless approach to evangelism, spent six years laboring among the tribes and “baptized only one single adult.” Writing on his lack of success, Brébeuf “blamed it on the Indians’ immorality, on a lack of their creative energies, and on the epidemics that reduced the population more than fifty percent within a few years’ time,” rather than the Jesuits’ insistence on the cultural conversion of Amerindians before considering them to be “true converts.”<sup>264</sup> At

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<sup>264</sup> Cornelius Michael Buckley, foreword to *Jesuit Missionaries*, edited by Francois Roustang, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 13.



its closing, the Jesuits' time among the Huron ended due to the widespread death among their tribes and the subsequent blame placed upon the newly arrived Christian missionaries in their presence. Demonstrating the challenging presence of so many enemies to their mission, the Iroquoians who killed Brébuf and Lalemant were specifically recognized to be former Huron who had already posed challenges to the Jesuits as "enemies of the Faith."<sup>265</sup>

Ultimately, the numerical inferiority of Jesuits and French colonists in New France led to the failure of assimilation, which theoretically could have been achieved if thousands more French settlers had been persuaded to settle in the harsh Canadian wilderness. The inability of the French to either economically, militarily, or politically dominate the region left them unable to control the indigenous peoples or fully protect the Jesuits or their Amerindian allies. In total, the Jesuits failed in part due to the lack of support they received from the French government and military in their region, a "perfect storm" of epidemics and wars, and a high mortality rate among the Jesuit missionaries as they died due to the harsh environment and were killed by hostile Amerindians. While many of the ministerial ideologies and methods laid out by the earliest Jesuits were followed ardently by the Jesuits in New France, the strict interpretation of what a "true convert" would look like made it very difficult for many Huron to leave their way of life to subordinate themselves to the Jesuits and the French state. Ultimately, the lack of a broader interpretation of conversion, the French authorities' influence on the content of

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<sup>265</sup> Joseph Marie Chaumont, 1649, in Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed. "Of the Blessedness Deaths of Father Jean de Brébuf, and Father Gabriel Lalemant." 33: 139-140.

their message, and the sometimes-condescending depictions of American Indians in the *Relations* demonstrate that the Jesuits' of the Huron Mission did not always faithfully apply the Order's globally-minded and culturally respectful ministerial approaches.

Throughout the 1640s, indigenous tribes martyred numerous Jesuit missionaries in brutal and torturous ways. Adding trauma upon trauma, the Dutch aggressively armed their Iroquois allies who proceeded to destroy most Huron villages during the years 1648 and 1649.<sup>266</sup> As to the issue of martyrdom, it is important to consider that many of the letters of the Jesuits in New France discuss either the threat of death or the martyrdom of missionaries. Brébeuf, who met his torturous death at the hands of the people he sought to convert, had written many times before his demise that he felt close to death and that only by taking every precaution to not offend any one of his Indian hosts that he remained alive.<sup>267</sup> The violent, dangerous, and politically unstable context in which these missionaries ventured is doubtless one of the largest factors to blame for their lack of success.

Scattered and severely disrupted, the Jesuit Huron mission ended without success in regard to securing a high number of converts and influencing the Amerindians within New France to become more European in their culture and social structure. However, some success did come from their work. The surviving Huron later reassembled in large part at the Île d'Orléans in Quebec, "where Father Chaumonot... made model Christians

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<sup>266</sup> *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 33-34.

<sup>267</sup> Le Jeune, "Special Assistance of God in Our Persecution," 1638, in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, 15: 60.

of them.”<sup>268</sup> To the Jesuits, these model Christians would have given up many of the cultural and religious practices of their people to live in sedentary fashion within the confines of French and Jesuit controlled settlements. The mission on Île de Orléans demonstrated a relatively peaceful cohabitation between the Huron and Jesuits that resulted in a stable, long-lived Jesuit mission hub. However, these mass conversions were the only option for those Huron that did not wish to fall prey to the Iroquois, so their conversion largely is unrelated to the efficacy of the Jesuits’ evangelism. Demonstrated the fruits of following one of the most foundational Jesuit missionary methods, the linguistic efforts of the Jesuits in New France led to an explosion of recorded knowledge of the Iroquoian and Algonquian linguistic branches and cultural practices, which stand as perhaps the greatest contribution of the Huron Mission. Armed with this exponential growth, future missionary activities in the region were indebted to the Jesuits of the Huron Mission. Although the first mission in New France did produce crowds of converts, the Jesuit *Relations* published in France created an intense enthusiasm for mission work in the *collèges* of France. The horrifying stories of Brébuf and Lalemant’s deaths, among others, and the anecdotes of their daily struggle to Preach the Gospel generated a powerful response to join the labor of Jesuits in various other missions. Indeed, the blood of martyrs is the fuel for further religious fervor and the enthusiastic response of the *Relations* in Europe sparked “a veritable mission mania” that fueled the spread of the Jesuits worldwide and especially to parts of Asia.<sup>269</sup> While Brébuf and his fellow martyrs can be criticized for their support of the exploitative colonialist policies of

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<sup>268</sup> Roustang, *Jesuit Missionaries*, 34.

<sup>269</sup> Buckley, foreword to *Jesuit Missionaries*, Roustang, 13.

the French government, their dedication to convey the Gospel message to their audience and apply the ideologies and practices of the earliest Jesuits cannot be doubted. Since many of the most gruesome martyrdoms occurred after the Jesuits left the protection of French trading posts to directly communicate their message, it is worth further study to determine the Jesuit reaction to the dangers risked by their members in New France and how that might have impacted future decision-making when attempting to evangelize other Iroquoian tribes in eastern Canada. With this additional research, it can be determined if future generations of Jesuits looked to the Huron Mission to further develop the ministerial ideologies and methods of the Order.

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