

## **Roman Catholic Ecclesiastics in English North America, 1610-58. A Comparative Assessment**

Luca CODIGNOLA

The idea of establishing missions in North America was not foreign to the English Roman Catholic community and its clergy. British historian David Beers Quinn has described some schemes that were devised between 1581 and 1609 and that involved Catholic noblemen and entrepreneurs.<sup>1</sup> The Jesuit Robert Parsons (1546-1610), perhaps the most influential ecclesiastic behind the re-establishment of the mission in England in the late sixteenth century, showed his enthusiasm towards the opportunities offered by the conversion of the North American native peoples although he considered any such enterprise to that effect “very prejudicial” to English Catholicism.<sup>2</sup> The Discalced Carmelite Thomas Doughty (c.1576-1652, in religion Simon Stock) did his utmost to convince the Holy See to support George Calvert, Baron Baltimore (1580-1632), in his attempt to establish the Avalon colony in Newfoundland, although he himself felt his presence was more useful at

---

<sup>1</sup> David Beers Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America 1471-1620. From the Bristol Voyages of the Fifteenth Century to the Pilgrim Settlement at Plymouth: The Exploration, Exploitation, and Trial-and-Error Colonization of North America by the English* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973), 364-97.

<sup>2</sup> Stonyhurst College Library, Ms Anglia III, no. 53, Robert Parsons, SJ, to Tristram Winslade, Rome, 18 March 1605; printed in Quinn et al., *New American World. A Documentary History of North America to 1612*, III: *The Extension of Settlement in Florida, Virginia, and the Spanish Southwest* (New York: Arno Press and Hector Bye, 1979), 364-5; John Bossy, “Reluctant Colonists: The English Catholics Confront the Atlantic,” in Quinn, ed., *Early Maryland in a Wider World* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), 152-4.

home.<sup>3</sup> Yet practical initiatives were far and between. The Catholic community, which represented about one per cent of the whole population,<sup>4</sup> was not interested. According to English historian John Bossy, “it seems exceptionally clear that English Catholics simply did not want to move out of England.”<sup>5</sup> As for their clergy, in spite of the international exposure that had affected many who were obliged to travel and reside abroad on account of religious persecution at home,<sup>6</sup> very few manifested any wish to carry on their missionary activity in the new North American environment. One must recall that, although the Crown had unofficially recognized that Catholicism would not be eliminated by repression and persecution alone, but rather by a policy of slow assimilation and anglicization, in the early seventeenth century the practice of Catholicism was illegal and priests could be jailed at any time and even sentenced to death.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Luca Codignola, *The Coldest Harbour of the Land. Simon Stock and Lord Baltimore's Colony in Newfoundland, 1621-1649* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> It is rather difficult to calculate the number of Catholics in the British continental colonies. The one per cent figure applies to the eve of the War of American Independence and corresponds exactly to the same figure in England. See Codignola, “The Policy of Rome towards the English-Speaking Catholics in British North America, 1750-1830,” in Terrence Murphy and Gerald John Stortz, eds., *Creed and Culture. The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 101. A 1641 report on Maryland mentions 400 inhabitants, of whom 100 were Catholic (Archives of the Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide,” Scrittura Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali [hereafter APF, SOCG], vol. 141, ff.348rv-349rv, [Carlo Rossetti], to [the Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide”], [Ghent, 7 September 1641]). Documents describing the end of the Avalon colony in Newfoundland in 1629 mention some forty Catholic settlers leaving for Virginia, others having already left for England, and some thirty Protestant fishermen being left in the settlement (George Calvert, Baron Baltimore, to Francis Cottington, Ferryland, 18/28 August 1629, in Lawrence C. Wroth, “Tobacco or Codfish. Lord Baltimore Makes His Choice,” *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 58 (1954), 527; Public Record Office, Colonial Office 1, 5, 27, Lord Baltimore to Charles I, Ferryland, 19/29 August 1629; APF, SOCG, vol. 100, ff.263rv, 266rv, Stock, OCD, to [Propaganda], London, 1 January 1631; printed in Codignola, *Coldest Harbour*, 122.

<sup>5</sup> Bossy, “Reluctant Colonists,” 158.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 154-5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 151. For a general overview of the English church, see Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975). On the English secular priests, see Godfrey Anstruther, OP, *The Seminary Priests. A Dictionary of the Secular Clergy of England and Wales 1558-1800*, Ware, Durham and Great Wakering: St. Edmund's College, Ushaw College and Mayhew-McCrummon, 1968-1977, II: *Early Stuarts 1603-1659*, 1975; and Dominic Aidan

In this note I will examine the experience of English North America during the years from 1610 to 1658. I will argue that North America was indeed a low priority in the agenda of the Catholic hierarchy, and that there was little agreement, if any, among the ecclesiastics who were involved in missionary activity. Finally, I will show that, although there is no evidence of any contact between the English and the French missionary networks, their experiences in the New World differed in scope, but followed exactly the same pattern.<sup>8</sup>

The first attempt to send Catholic missionaries to English North America originated from the planting of the Avalon settlement in Newfoundland. Ferryland was the centre of a colony established in 1621 by the future Lord Baltimore, a member of the English Privy Council who in 1624 had openly admitted his Catholicism. Just like the French did in Acadia and Canada prior to 1632, in his colony Lord Baltimore accommodated both Protestants and Catholics. This provided an opening for Catholic missionaries, five of whom, three secular priests (or “seminary priests,” as they were then known) and two Jesuits, did go to Ferryland, the centre of the Avalon colony, between 1627 and 1629. In 1629 Calvert abandoned Ferryland and set his eyes on Virginia, where his sons were able, some years later, to establish the new colony of Maryland.

The overall number of the missionaries who worked in Newfoundland between 1621 and 1629 is then minimal. In 1633, the Catholic community in England was served by about 600 priests.<sup>9</sup> A detailed report compiled in 1637 by a careful observer, papal envoy extraordinary Gregorio Panzani (c. 1576-1662), reckoned there were in England 500 secular priests, as many as 160 Jesuits and 100 Benedictines, 20 Franciscans, nine French Capuchins, seven Dominicans, five Discalced Carmelites, two Minims, and one Carthusian

---

Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests 1558-1800*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1984). On the English Jesuits, see Thomas M. McCoog, SJ, ed., *Monumenta Angliae. English and Welsh Jesuits. Catalogues (1555-1640)* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1992); and Francis Edwards, SJ, *The Jesuits in England. From 1580 to the Present Day* (Turnbridge Wells: Burn & Oates, 1985), 17-82. On the Benedictines, David Lunn, *The English Benedictines, 1540-1688. From Reformation to Revolution* (London: Burn & Oates, and New York: Barnes & Nobles, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Although the earliest English missionaries reached the North American soil only in 1627, I have used the 1610-58 time frame in order to make it possible a comparison with the French experience, that I have examined in Codignola, “Competing Networks: The Roman Catholic Clergy in French North America, 1610-58,” *The Canadian Historical Review* (1999), forthcoming

<sup>9</sup> Bossy, “Reluctant Colonists,” 149.

monk.<sup>10</sup> One must also concede, however, that the number of the Newfoundland missionaries, if not their quality, sufficed for the colony's sparse resident population, not more than a few dozen at any given time, given the virtual absence of contacts with the Beothuks.<sup>11</sup>

The origins and connections of the Avalon missionaries were very diverse. Two of them, the secular priests Thomas Longville (1598-after 1651) and Anthony Smith (c.1593-after 1629), were rabid anti-Jesuits who, most likely, went to Newfoundland to escape troubles at home. The former had been expelled from the Venerable English College in Rome, while the latter was a former Jesuit who had been rejected by the order. Their departure was probably due to their acquaintance with the Reverend John Southcote (1588-1637), chaplain to Lady Aston, the wife of John Aston (d.1627), who, a Catholic himself, was governor of Avalon during the winter 1625-6.<sup>12</sup> Two others, on the contrary, were Jesuits, most probably Alexander Baker (c.1582-1638) and the novice Henry Morley (1603-after 1648). There the influence of Tobie Matthew (1577-1655), possibly a Jesuit in secret, could be discerned. Matthew was a good friend of Lord Baltimore's even before the latter's conversion to Catholicism, and was probably influential in convincing Lord Baltimore to side with the Society of Jesus in its bitter dispute with the secular clergy led by Richard Smith (1566-1655), the bishop *in partibus* of Chalcedon.<sup>13</sup>

In those years, the Catholic community was indeed troubled not only by persecution from without, but also by dissent from within. In fact, the

---

<sup>10</sup> APF, SOCG, vol. 347, ff.487rv-517rv, *Relazione Dello Stato della Religione Cattolica in Inghilterra Data alla S[anti]ta di N[ostro] S[ignore] Vrbano VIII da Gregorio Panzani nel suo ritorno da quel Regno hanno 1637*. For a very good statistical overview of the English clergy, see Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests*, 246-8.

<sup>11</sup> One should recall that the Avalon mission was contemporary to the earliest French Jesuit and Recollet attempts in Canada and Acadia. The French Jesuits sent 12 priests or lay brothers there between 1625 and 1630, whereas the French Recollets sent 22 priests and lay brothers between 1615 and 1629. See Codignola, "Competing Networks."

<sup>12</sup> Codignola, *Coldest Harbour*, 43-4, 163.

<sup>13</sup> APF, SOCG, vol. 347, ff.487rv-517rv, [Panzani], *Relazione*, f.511r; Bossy, "Reluctant Colonists," 162-3; Codignola, *Coldest Harbour*, 44, 53-4, 164, 169. McCooog, ed., *Monumenta Angliae*, curiously does not record any Jesuit presence in Ferryland, although the book itself is an in-depth analysis providing much needed background to both the Avalon and Maryland colonies. Alexander Baker was the only Avalon priest who returned to North America. He spent the winter of 1634-5 in Maryland.

regular orders and the secular priests fought violently on the issue of whether the church was to be ruled in a traditional way, with a bishop and his hierarchy, or as a mission territory, with each community acting independently of the others. For a short time, between 1625 and 1627, Smith, the newly-arrived ordinary, tried to impose his own rule upon the regular orders, but to no avail. Disavowed by the Holy See, Smith left the country in 1631 and the communities were again left to their own means.<sup>14</sup>

Between 1624 and 1629 the Avalon colony caught the imagination of Stock, an English Discalced Carmelite priest in his late 40s active in the London-Canterbury area. Stock, a well-travelled priest who had studied in Belgium and in Rome, knew many languages, and had written several books, met and, according to his own version, converted Lord Baltimore in 1624. Stock's hope to send some of his confrères to Avalon met with the opposition of the superiors of his order and of most of his confrères. For one thing, they accused him of refusing to join the Avalon mission himself, and, to make sure that Stock's project was not picked up by somebody else, they doctored a report on Newfoundland that they had received from one of Stock's companions in England, John Hiccocks (c. 1588-1647, in religion Bede of the Blessed Sacrament), so that the new garbled version would make Stock's project meaningless. Just as the Jesuit upper echelons regarded Canada and Acadia as a waste of time, so did the Discalced Carmelites regard Avalon when this was compared to the missionary effort to be made in their Middle East missions.<sup>15</sup>

In sum, the missionaries who were involved, successfully or not, in the short-lived Avalon mission had very little in common. One common element was their age, as, with one exception, their average age at the time of departure was about 30. Another was the fact that most of them had studied or worked in the Belgian colleges, some of them in Spain and Italy. As mentioned above, this occurrence was quite common among English ecclesiastics, given the religious persecution and the absence of seminaries or schools at home. Yet the missionaries differed in everything else and showed evidence of mutual distrust. Of those who went to Avalon, some belonged to the anti-Jesuit party, some were

---

<sup>14</sup> On the dispute between Bishop Smith and the regulars, see Codignola, *Coldest Harbour*, 31, 41, 162; Philip Hughes, *Rome and Counter-Reformation in England* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1944), 347-77; Lunn, *English Catholic Community*, 54-7; Bossy, "Reluctant Colonists," 157.

<sup>15</sup> Reports in Archivio Generale dell'Ordine dei Carmelitani Scalzi, Litterae, Bede, 271.h, ff.3rv-4rv (original); APF, SOCG, vol. 189, ff.347rv-8rv (doctored). See Codignola, *Coldest Harbour*, 26-9.

Jesuits. None, in spite of his claims to the contrary, had any connection with Stock, who did not convince any of his Discalced Carmelite confrères to join the mission that he did not want to join himself. Lastly, with regard to the spreading of information regarding the New World, we should point out that Lord Baltimore's tacit experiment in religious tolerance in Newfoundland was an unknown entity to his contemporaries. Although much was written on the island in the 1610s and early 1620s, his failure made the Avalon colony fall into a well-deserved literary oblivion (see Table 1).

The second attempt to send Roman Catholic missionaries to English North America is linked to the short-lived experiment in Catholicism which took place in Maryland, a direct outcome of the failure of the aborted Avalon colony. In 1629 Lord Baltimore abandoned Newfoundland and set sail for Virginia, taking with him some forty settlers and most probably his two Jesuits, Baker and Morley. Since on religious grounds he was refused permission to reside there, Lord Baltimore returned to England, where he died in 1632 before being able to return to North America. His son, Cecil Calvert (1606-1675), inherited the title and the new colony that his father had been granted north of the Potomac River, and sent there his brother Leonard Calvert (1610/1-47) as governor in 1633. Maryland became the only colony in English North America where, from 1634 to 1654, something similar to the contemporary French Jesuit experiment among the Hurons of present-day Ontario took place. As with their northern confrères, the Maryland Jesuits started off with the idea of converting the local Indians,<sup>16</sup> but after the Protestants first invaded the colony in 1645 and in 1654 made it an offense to practice Catholicism, they contented themselves with the already difficult task of keeping the faith among their few co-religionists. In fact, after 1645 Maryland became a Protestant colony like all the others, but the colony remained the core of American Catholicism until the age of the War of American Independence, when the English province of the Society of Jesus's jurisdiction over all the continental British North America was terminated.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> On the general framework of the Indian missions, with information on the sparse pre-1610 activity, see Codignola, "The Holy See and the Conversion of the Indians in French and British North America, 1486-1760," in Karen Ordahl Kupperman, ed., *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 195-242.

<sup>17</sup> The most recent and best summary of the Jesuit mission is James L. Axtell, "White Legend: The Jesuit Missions in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 81 (1986), 1-7; reprinted in Axtell, *After Columbus. Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 73-

In 1633 three Jesuits accompanied Leonard Calvert to the newly-founded colony. In total, eighteen Jesuits (fourteen priests and four lay brothers) were sent to Maryland and neighbouring Virginia between 1633 and 1658. There were never more than five of them in the colony at the same time (1638).<sup>18</sup> Here again, the historian is struck by the paucity of the ecclesiastical personnel, especially when compared to the magnitude of the Society of Jesus, which, founded in 1534 and approved in 1540, had missions all over Europe, besides those in Asia (begun 1541) and in Iberian America (begun 1566).<sup>19</sup> In 1638 the English province of the Society of Jesus, which enjoyed responsibility over the Maryland-Virginia mission, had five of its members there, against an overall membership at its disposal of 347 (237 priests and 44 lay brothers), besides another 159 students at various levels.<sup>20</sup> Yet these figures are not unreasonable, when placed in the proper North Atlantic context. In fact, the proportion between the priests who were active in English North America and their counterparts who had remained in England was in line with the difference in population between the colonies and the mother country. The overall population of the Upper South, where most of the English-speaking Catholics resided, in 1660 had 24,000 residents of

---

85. See also the well-documented, but rather confused account by Thomas Aloysius Hughes, SJ, *History of the Society of Jesus in North America Colonial and Federal. Text and Documents* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907-17), [I]; *From the First Colonization Till 1645*, 1907, 145-564. On the end of the Jesuit jurisdiction, see Codignola, "Policy of Rome," 101-02.

<sup>18</sup> The French Jesuits sent 68 priests or lay brothers to Canada and Acadia between 1632 and 1658. See Codignola, "Competing Networks."

<sup>19</sup> L. Szilas, "Les fondations des Jésuites en Europe jusqu'en 1615," in Hubert Jedin, Kenneth S. Latourette and Jochen Martin, eds., *Atlas d'histoire de l'église. Les églises chrétiennes hier et aujourd'hui* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990 [1<sup>st</sup> ed.: *Atlas zur Kirchengeschichte. Die Christlichen Kirchen in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970]), 58, 78; also 60-64, 84-85, 89-90. Also John W. O'Malley, SJ, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); and O'Malley, "The Society of Jesus," in Richard L. DeMolen, ed., *Religious Orders of the Catholic Reformation. In Honor of John C. Olin on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 138-63.

<sup>20</sup> Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu, Angl. 10, ff.190rv-197rv, Catalogus; printed in McCoog, ed., *Monumenta Angliae*, II: 181-92. Biographical information on the missionaries of the English province of the Society of Jesus in McCoog, ed., *Monumenta Angliae*, 88-99, 117-28, 162-74, 181-92, 327-8, 340, 342, 534-5. McCoog's *Monumenta* stops in 1640. For the following period we still have to rely on a 1917 list which contains a very useful catalogue, with biographical notices, of the 144 Jesuit missionaries who were active in the British continental colonies between 1632 and the second half the eighteenth century. See Hughes, *History*, [II]: *From 1645 till 1773*, 1917, 676-704.

European origin, whereas almost at the same time (1656) England had 5,470,000 inhabitants.<sup>21</sup> Lastly, and similarly to Newfoundland, there is no pattern in the lives and careers of these priests that shows any kind of special departure point, except the usual stint in foreign colleges and the average age of the priests at the time of arrival in Maryland, which was in the upper 30s (see Table 2).

Information on their activities is almost non-existent, and even within the order it was difficult to keep track of them. Two small pamphlets were published, one in 1633, only a few months prior to the three Jesuits' departure for Maryland, and another in 1634. Some excerpts from the eight-page *Declaration of the Lord Baltimore's Plantation in Mary-Land*, written by Andrew White (1579-1656), the first superior, and revised by Cecil Calvert, were translated into Italian and reached Rome, where it had no visible effect. The second pamphlet was White's fourteen-page *Relation of the Successfull Beginnings of the Lord Baltimore's Plantation in Maryland*.<sup>22</sup> One can easily conclude that there was no major difference between the French Jesuit network in Canada and Acadia and the English Jesuit one in Maryland, except for the former's celebrity, mainly due to the printing of their relations. Maryland was indeed a very minor enterprise of the London province of the Society of Jesus. We are not aware of any dissension among the Jesuits who participated in the Maryland mission. Yet any evidence thereof would have been unwarranted, as these priests were all under the jurisdiction of the same province and probably shared their previous experiences. In total, then, the ecclesiastics who between 1627 and 1658 were sent to the missions of English North America were twenty-two, far from less than one a year (see Table 3).

---

<sup>21</sup> John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 136; R.A. Houston, "The Population History of Britain and Ireland 1500-1750," in Michael Anderson, ed., *British Population History. From the Black Death to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 118.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew White, SJ, [and Cecil Calvert], *A Declaration of the Lord Baltimore's Plantation in Mary-Land, nigh upon Virginia: manifesting the Nature, Quality, Condition, and rich Vtilities it contayneth* (London: 1633); manuscript excerpts translated into Italian in APF, SOCG, vol. 347, ff.376rv-377rv; White, *A relation of The successfull beginnings of the Lord Baltimore's Plantation in Maryland. Being an extract of certaine Letters written from thence, by some of the Adventurers, to their friends in England. To which is added, The Conditions of plantation propounded by his Lordship for the second voyage intended this present yeere* ([London:] 1634).

We know of a third and last attempt to send Catholic missionaries to English North America. This was apparently not prompted by the superiors of the Jesuit mission, and might suggest a competing, or at least uncoordinated, effort on the part of another group of ecclesiastics. Sometime in early 1641 the Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide,” the department of the Holy See established in 1622 to plan and coordinate missionary activities, received an unsigned petition which was supported by an interested “English gentleman,” then in Rome. The petition asked for English secular priests for the Maryland colony and mentioned Leonard Calvert’s support. In the late summer the former nuncio in Brussels, Carlo Rossetti (1614-1681), archbishop *in partibus* of Tarsus, who was in charge of the English mission and had been asked to enquire, forwarded to Rome a detailed report on Maryland and a list of fourteen priests, apparently not members of the Society of Jesus, who were deemed “apter to withstand” the difficulties of the new mission.<sup>23</sup> Although they were, on average, somewhat older than the Maryland Jesuits, the background of the five priests that I was able to identify is very similar to the latter, as they had all studied in Spain or Belgium and came from different regions of England (see Table 4).

In the end, however, none of the seminary priests listed by Rossetti was sent to Maryland to join forces with or, more likely, to compete with the local Jesuits. In fact, far from being an example of sought cooperation, this occurrence is further evidence of the strained relationship between Propaganda and the Society of Jesus. Disregarding the fact that the Maryland mission had been entrusted, from its very beginning, to the London Jesuits, the initial petition asked explicitly for secular priests. Furthermore, the nuncio was entrusted with the selection of the missionaries, and the assistance of the Spanish or Venetian embassies in London was suggested. Neither the London province of the Society of Jesus nor the upper echelons of the Society in Rome would be mentioned in the correspondence between Rome and Rossetti, were it not in order to emphasize the declining number and strength of the Maryland

---

<sup>23</sup> APF, SOCG, vol. 402, ff.112rv, 116rv, Catholics of Maryland to Propaganda, [1641]; copy in APF, SOCG, vol. 402, ff.193rv, 209rv (notes appended to the latter mention the interest of a “Gentilhuomo Inglese”); APF, Lettere, vol. 20, f.169v, [Propaganda] to Rossetti, Rome, 13 July 1643; APF, Lettere, vol. 20, f.188rv, [Propaganda] to Rossetti, Rome, 24 August 1641; APF, SOCG, vol. 141, ff.346rv, 351rv, Rossetti to [Propaganda], Ghent, 7 September 1641 (“più idonei a sustenere”); APF, SOCG, vol. 141, ff.347rv, 350rv, [Rossetti] to [Propaganda], [Ghent, 7 September 1641] (list); copy of the latter in ASV, Segreteria di Stato, Inghilterra, vol. 4, f.58rv; APF, SOCG, vol. 141, ff.348rv-349rv, [Rossetti] to [Propaganda], [Ghent, 7 September 1641] (report).

missionaries. This strained relationship should not come as a surprise. In fact, we well know that, ever since the establishment of Propaganda, the Society of Jesus had maintained a closed-door policy towards the new coordinating missionary agency because the latter had refused to extend to the New World the so-called missionary “privileges” enjoyed by the Jesuits in the East Indies. Until the 1650s, when relations did somewhat improve, even the exploits of the Canadian Jesuits were an unknown entity to the officials of Propaganda.<sup>24</sup>

In a forthcoming article,<sup>25</sup> I have examined the geographical, family and educational background of the ecclesiastics who left for French North America; the rationale behind their departure; the length of their stay and the career of those who returned to Europe; finally, the spreading of information regarding the New World. The evidence shows, I pointed out, that only 179 to 182 male and 25 female ecclesiastics, at all levels, 204 to 207 in total, left Europe for Canada and Acadia between 1610 and 1658. On average, it was as if the ecclesiastics who left the French ports for North America during almost half a century were just over four a year. I concluded that North America was a rather low priority in the overall aims of the active members of the Roman Catholic church, and

---

<sup>24</sup> A general discussion of the relationship between Propaganda and the Society of Jesus and the latter’s faculties over North America is in Lucien Campeau, SJ, *L’évêché de Québec (1674). Aux origines du premier diocèse érigé en Amérique française* (Québec: La Société Historique de Québec, 1974), 33-49; in Codignola, *Guide to Documents Relating to French and British North America in the Archives of the Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide” in Rome, 1622-1799* (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1991), 7-8; and, most recently, in Matteo Sanfilippo, “Tra curia di Roma e corte di Francia: la fondazione della diocesi di Québec (1631-1674),” in Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia, eds., *La corte di Roma tra Cinque e Seicento “Teatro” della politica europea* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1998), 481-507. See also the documents printed in Campeau, ed., *Monumenta Novae Franciae* (Rome, Québec and Montréal: Monumenta Hist. Soc. Iesu, Institutum Historicum Soc. Iesu, Les Presses de l’Université Laval and Les Éditions Bellarmin, 1967-1996 to date), II: *Établissement à Québec (1616-1634)* (1979), 87-91, 279-80; III: *Fondation de la mission huronne (1635-1637)* (1987), 482-4; IV: *Les grandes épreuves (1638-1640)* (1989), 13-16, 57-61, 209-10, 250-2; V: *La bonne nouvelle reçue (1641-1643)* (1990), 570-1, 591-2, 626-7; VI: *Recherche de la paix (1644-1646)* (1992), 320-1, 438, 517-8, 537-8, 542; VII: *Le témoignage du sang (1647-1650)* (1994), 233-7. To these, the following documents should be added: APF, SOCG, vol. 74, ff.196rv, 201rv, Alessandro Bichi to Francesco Barberini, Paris, 16 April 1632; APF, Lettere, vol. 19, f.48rv, [Propaganda] to Le Jeune, Rome, 14 May 1639; APF, SOCG, vol. 417, ff.287rv, 290rv, [Jérôme Lalemant] to Propaganda, [1647].

<sup>25</sup> Codignola, “Competing Networks.”

that, as a consequence, the networks of people who were involved in the evangelization of French North America, on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, were numerically very small. The age of these ecclesiastics, both male and female, I also showed, had nothing extraordinary, and their regional provenance confirmed that they came from a great variety of regions, just like the rest of the emigrants. Yet the proportion between priests and nuns who were active in French North America and their counterparts who had remained in France was strikingly in line with the difference in population between the colonies and the mother country. Thus, I argued, the above figures were not unreasonable, when placed in the proper North Atlantic context. Finally, I showed that those who were involved in the evangelization of French North America took for granted their being part of God's grand design, but differed in almost everything else. The group allegiances of the missionaries (seculars priests, Sulpicians, Jesuits, Recollets, Capuchins, Minims, Cordeliers, Ursulines, Augustines Hospitalières) were much more significant, in practical terms, than their common belonging to the Catholic church. In sum, between 1610 and 1658 there was little co-operation between the several Catholic networks, and hostility within the church was almost as evident (see Table 5).

The evidence presented in this note seems to point to the fact that the experiences of the English and French clergy in North America followed exactly the same pattern, although they differed in scope, given the larger number of missionaries employed by the latter and the visibility of the printed Jesuit reports. The two experiences, however, did not differ as far as the age and regional provenance of the missionaries was concerned, and in both instances North America was a rather low priority. Overall, the missionaries were quite few, 226 to 229 over a period of 49 years (1610-58), that is, less than five a year (see Table 6). In the case of the missionaries of English origin, these were 22 over a period of 32 years (1627-58), that is, less than one a year. Yet the number of the missionaries was in line with the difference in population between the colonies and their mother countries. As for the absence of co-operation, if not outright hostility, among missionaries, the short Avalon experience and Rossetti's attempt at intruding in Jesuit Maryland provide yet further evidence of such an attitude. Projects were conceived and protected as secrets within individual groups, and the few ecclesiastics who crossed the bridge between groups, such as Stock, were banished. In these early years, even Propaganda was quite simply a group among others, in spite of its representing the pope and the Holy See in general, and its attempts to fulfill its co-ordinating role doomed to utter failure. Quite clearly, there was no involvement of the Catholic church per se. Rather, there

were several initiatives, whose promoters or actors showed no inclination to share with others.

## TABLES

For the sake of clarity, to calculate the years of residence of each missionary I have computed all the calendar years between arrival and departure (or death). This is a rather subjective exercise, as winters, not calendar years, should be accounted for, were more accurate data available. Names listed in italics indicate previous visits to North America (there is only one extant case, that of Alexander Baker). In order to calculate the total number of missionaries, these are entered only once, at the time of their first visit. Data have been collated from a variety of archival and printed sources, all listed in the article's notes.

TABLE 1

Avalon mission in Newfoundland 1627-9

<i>name</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>status</i>	<i>period</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>age, origin</i>
?Baker, Alexander	Ferryland	SJ priest	1629	1	Norfolk, c.1582-1638
Hacket, <i>alias</i> Anthony Whitehair?	Ferryland	secular	1628-9?	1+	Sussex, 1594-after 1653
Longville, Thomas	Ferryland	secular	1627	1	near Stony Stratford, Bucks., 1598-after 1651
?Morley, Henry, <i>alias</i> Lawrence Rigby	Ferryland	SJ novice	1629	1	Bury, Lancashire, 1603-after 1648
Smith, Anthony, <i>alias</i> Pole or Rivers	Ferryland	secular, SJ until 1622 or shortly thereafter	1627-9	3	London, c.1593-after 1629

*Ecclesiastics 5 (4 priests, 1 novice).*

*Years 3, ecclesiastics per year 1.66*

TABLE 2  
 Jesuits priests in Maryland and Virginia 1633-58

<i>names</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>period</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>origin, age</i>
<i>Baker, Alexander</i>	Virginia or Maryland	1634-5	2	Norfolk, c.1582-1638
Bradford, Thomas	Maryland	1656	1	1612-68
Cooper, John	Maryland Virginia	1643-6	4	Hampshire, c.1610-46
Darby, Francis, <i>alias Fitzherbert</i>	Maryland Virginia	1654- 1661/2	8+	1613-87
Drury, John, <i>alias or vere</i> Abington	Virginia or Maryland	1634-5	2	London, c.1605-63
Fisher, Philip, <i>alias</i> Thomas Copley	Maryland (in London 1645)	1637-45, 1648-52	14	Madrid, c.1596-1652
Gervase, Thomas	Maryland	1633-7	5	Derbyshire, c.1590-1637
Grosvenor, John, <i>alias</i> Gravener	Maryland	1633-40	8	Warwickshire, c.1589-1640
Hartwell, Bernard	Maryland Virginia	1643-6	4	Buckinghamshire, c.1607-46
Knowles, John	Maryland	1637	1	Staffordshire, c.1604-37
Morley, Walter	Maryland	1638-41	4	London, c.1589-1641
Payton, Thomas	Maryland	1658-60	3	1607-60
Poulton, Ferdinand, <i>alias</i> John Brooke, William Brooks, & Ferdinand Palmer	Maryland	1638-41	4	Burton, Buckinghamshire, c.1602-41
Rigbie, Roger, <i>alias or vere</i> Knowles	Maryland Virginia (in London 1645)	1641-6	6	Lancashire, c.1608-46
Rogers, Francis	Maryland	1635-6	2	Norfolk, c.1599-1660
Sankey, Lawrence, <i>alias</i> Starkey	Maryland Virginia	1648-57	10	1606-57
White, Andrew	Maryland (in London 1645)	1633-45	13	London, c.1579-1656
Wood, John	Maryland	1635-6	2	Devon, c.1587-1664

*Ecclesiastics 18 (14 priests, 4 lay brothers), of whom 17 newcomers (all except Baker)*

*Years 26, ecclesiastics per year 0.65*

*Grosvenor seems to have replaced, at the last minute, Timothy Hays (c.1584-1646), from Dorset or London, as the latter is in the 1633 catalogue, but not in the one of the following year*

TABLE 3

Summary: ecclesiastics in English North America, 1610-58

<i>status</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>period</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>number</i>
SJ	Newfoundland Maryland	1629-58	26	19
secular	Newfoundland	1627-9	3	3
<i>total ecclesiastics</i>	<i>Newfoundland Maryland</i>	<i>1627-58</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>22</i>

*Years 32, ecclesiastics per year 0.68*

TABLE 4  
England, list of prospective missionaries for Maryland 1641

<i>names</i>	<i>status</i>	<i>varia</i>	<i>origin, age</i>
Biddulph, Andrew, <i>alias</i> Fitton	secular	studied in Belgium and Spain	Staffordshire, 1605-61
Blacke, Thomas	secular		
Britton	secular?	a doctor in theology	
Harrington, Mark, <i>alias</i> Drury and Metham	secular	studied and taught in Spain, Belgium, France, Portugal, a canon in 1641	Yorkshire, 1592-after 1653
Fitton	secular?		
Harrison	secular?		
Holden	secular?		
Layborn	secular?		
Nelson (?Olson)	secular?		
Page (?Gage), George	secular?		
Redman, William	secular	studied in Belgium and Spain	Yorkshire, 1581-after 1641
Strickland, Nicholas, <i>alias</i> Middleton	secular	studied and taught in Belgium	Yorkshire or Westmorland, 1609-before 1645
Trollope	secular		
Pettinger, John, <i>alias</i> John Wentworth and Hidalgo	secular	studied in Spain	<i>fl.</i> 1624-41

*Ecclesiastics 14 (these have not been computed in the overall number of missionaries)*

TABLE 5

Summary: male and female ecclesiastics in New France, 1610-58

<i>status</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>period</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>number</i>
secular priests	Acadia	1610	1	1
SJ	Acadia	1611-3	3	4
OFM Rec	Canada Acadia	1615-29	15	22
SJ	Canada Acadia	1625-30	6	11
SJ	Canada Acadia	1632-58	27	62
PSS	Canada	1657-8	2	4
secular priests	Canada Acadia	1634-58	25	8
OFM Cor	Acadia	1651	1+	1
OFM Rec	Cap-Sable, in Acadia	1630-45	16	6+
OFM Cap	La Hève, in Acadia	1632-5?	4	3/6
OFM Cap	Acadia New England	1639-56	18	57
OSU	Canada	1639-58	20	11
AMJ	Canada	1639-58	20	14
<i>total ecclesiastics</i>	<i>Canada Acadia New England</i>	<i>1610-58</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>204/207</i>

*Years 49, ecclesiastics per year 4.16/4.22*

*AMJ=Augustines Hospitalières de la Misericorde de Jésus, Cap=Capuchins, Cor=Cordeliers, OFM=Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans), OSU=Order of Ste. Ursula (Ursulines), PSS=Society of Priests of St. Sulpice (Sulpicians), Rec=Recollets, SJ=Society of Jesus (Jesuits)*

TABLE 6  
 Summary: male and female ecclesiastics in  
 French and English North America, 1610-58

<i>status</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>period</i>	<i>number</i>
secular priests	Acadia Canada Newfoundland	1610-58	49	12
SJ	Acadia Canada Newfoundland Maryland	1611-58	48	96
OFM Rec	Canada Acadia	1615-45	31	28+
OFM Cap	Acadia New England	1632-56	25	60/63
OFM Cor	Acadia	1651	1+	1
PSS	Canada	1657-8	2	4
OSU	Canada	1639-58	20	11
AMJ	Canada	1639-58	20	14
<i>Total</i>	<i>Acadia Canada</i> <i>Newfoundland</i>  <i>Maryland New England</i>	<i>1610-58</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>226/229+</i>

*Years 49, ecclesiastics per year 4,61/4,67*