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Rethinking Colonization: A Case Study of the North American Martyrs and the Middle Ground

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Rethinking Colonization: A Case Study of the North American Martyrs and the Middle Ground

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Abstract

For thousands of years, Native Americans lived in North America, including the Great Lakes region. In this specific area, they would create their own unique customs, traditions, and ways of living. In addition, they would experience times of great turbulence, as violence, slavery, and torture all existed in this region. In this midst of this complex sociopolitical world, the French entered. They colonized this area and called it New France. They called the Great Lakes area, the *pays d'en haut.* Both the French and the Native Americans living in New France and the *pays d'en haut* learned to accommodate and adapt themselves to one another. The Jesuits, an order of Catholic priests who came to New France as missionaries, came alongside their French companions. Of these Jesuit missionaries, I will focus on the North American Martyrs, a group of six Jesuit missionaries and their two lay companions.

By focusing on three case studies within the North American Martyrs and utilizing their writings in *The Jesuit Relations,* I will show how the North American Martyrs are representative of this cultural accommodation that occurred in New France and in the *pays d'en haut.* In addition, my primary sources will be supported through extensive secondary research. By doing so, this will shed light on the development of this cultural accommodation, early modern globalization, agency in colonial and Native American historiographies, the differences in European colonization, the reality of pre-Columbian North America, and early modern Jesuit missionaries and evangelization techniques. Ultimately, the goal is to bring the North American Martyrs back to the historiographical forefront and to show that the North American Martyrs are unique amongst early modern Jesuit missionaries given their cultural, social, political, religious, linguistic, and economic contexts.

Executive Summary

Colonial historiography is reduced often to the colonizer and colonized dichotomy, with Europeans on one side and indigenous peoples on the other. This is especially prevalent when it comes to the public's understanding of North American colonization. Frequently, this is understood in the context of Spanish colonization. Specifically, the Spanish conquered indigenous peoples and forced them into labor as part of the *encomienda* system. Also, they extracted minerals such as gold and silver and brought them back to Spain. Meanwhile, early-modern Catholic zealousness drove the Spanish to try to convert the Americas' native populaces. The themes of religiosity, military and personal gain, and the acquisition of gold is so prevalent in Spain's experience of colonization that it is described often as "God, glory, and gold." Undoubtedly, many of these sentiments and facts are true. However, while they are true in the case of the Spanish, they are not applicable to other European examples of colonization. This is pertinent to the case of French colonization in North America.

Like their European counterparts, the French came to North America seeking to expand their political and military influence, while reaping the rewards of its economic assets. However, the French experience of colonization in North America was vastly different from other European states. Unlike the Spanish, the French neither conquered outright the Native Americans living in New France. The geographic, political, social, economic, and military realities of New France created a situation where the French had to work with the Native Americans, in order to survive as a functioning entity in North America.[1] This meant that the

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[1] For why the French were unable to subjugate the Native Americans, did not need to acquire to large amounts of territory, and French cooperation with Native Americans, see Allan Greer, ed., "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," in *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000), 10.

French would become an additional power among the Native Americans of New France, and not its hegemonic ruler.[2] Because of this, the relationship between the French and Native Americans differed from other European colonizers.

Instead of the simple colonizer and colonized dichotomy, what emerged instead was the middle ground. Historian Richard White first put forth the notion of the middle ground in his book, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815.* The middle ground was both a conceptual and physical space where both the French and Native Americans adapted and accommodated one another, while living in New France and the *pays d'en haut,* which is what the French called the Great Lakes region. Indeed both Europeans and Native Americans helped to shape it.[3] An example of this is that New France diplomats utilized slavery as a means to adapt to Amerindian diplomacy.[4] However, of all the French groups that came to New France, French missionaries are of particular interest to this project.

Members of the Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits, were sent into New France, beginning in the seventeenth century. They were eager to convert its native populations. Of these Jesuits, six missionaries in particular, along with two lay French men who served the Jesuits, were martyred while living and working among Native Americans. The Catholic Church canonized these men collectively as the North American Martyrs. Three in particular, St. Jean Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues, will be the case studies for this project.

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[2] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), XXVI.

[3] For White's conception and development of the middle ground, White, *The Middle Ground*, XXV-XXX.

[4] Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous & Atlantic Slaveries in New France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 142.

By using the North American Martyrs, and three of their members specifically as case studies, this project serves to show that they are representative of the middle ground itself. Throughout this project, I will give examples of how their interactions with Native Americans were reciprocal and mutual, which shows that they were just as transformed by Native Americans as they transformed them. By doing this, I hope to highlight how their lives are a counterexample to the notion that every Euro-Amerindian encounter was simply one of conquest or forced conversion to Christianity.

This project will utilize both primary and secondary sources as evidence for my hypothesis. Crucial secondary sources include White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815,* Rushforth's *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous & Atlantic Slaveries in New France,* and True's *Masters and Students: Jesuit Mission Ethnography in Seventeenth-Century New France.*[5] Of the primary sources, *The Jesuit Relations* are the most foundational, as they include writings from St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues themselves. In addition, they contain historiographies and other entries about these men by other contemporary New France Jesuits. Because this project is based upon the entries of St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues or their hagiographers, this means that this project focuses on their missionary activities, beginning in the mid 1630s, and ending in 1649, which is when the last member of the North American Martyrs, St. Noël Chabanel, is killed.

This project is significant for a few reasons. First, this aims to complicate the simple colonizer and colonized dichotomy that is prevalent in the public imagination. This is meant to show the complex reality of colonization and that

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[5] White, *The Middle Ground;* Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance;* True, *Masters and Students: Jesuit Mission Ethnography in Seventeenth-Century New France* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

not every colonial encounter fits the public's perception of how colonialism was established in the Americas. Second, this project seeks to bring back the notion of Amerindian agency into Jesuit, colonial, New France, and Native American historiographies. This is meant to remind readers that the Native Americans were active in their own history and made decisions for themselves and their communities, including their interactions with Europeans.

Also, this project seeks to expand on White's research on the middle ground. White begins his book at 1650. However, by using the North American Martyrs as a case study, I hope to push the development of the middle ground farther back in time. In addition, this project serves to highlight how the middle ground itself was only part of the rising trend of globalization occurring throughout the early modern period. Finally, this project is a stark reminder that pre-Columbian North America was a violent and dangerous place. However, of the important themes of this project, there are two that are the most significant. First, Native Americans were changed dramatically but still persisted in the midst of a colonial European presence.[6] Second, although examples of Jesuit cultural accommodation can be found similarly elsewhere, the North American Martyrs are still unique among early modern Jesuit missionaries because their lives and actions are representative of the middle ground, which makes them unique compared to other contemporaneous Jesuit missionaries, given their social, political, economic, religious, and linguistic contexts.

This honors capstone project and history distinction thesis is only one source of research done on New France, Jesuit, Native American, and colonial historiographies. It seeks to inform the reader and add to the existing research done on this era and topic. Ultimately, it hopes to make its contributions to the public's understanding of the middle ground.

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[6] Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 31.

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Preface

Before I begin, I believe a quick preface is necessary. The goal of this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis is to bring the narratives of the North American Martyrs back into the forefront of Jesuit, Native American, New France, and colonial historiographies. Also, it is meant to use them as an example of the middle ground and as a counterexample to the notion that all European experiences in the Americas were the same to other European colonizers, e.g. the Spanish. In other words, I want to help create a more nuanced and complex view of European colonization in the Americas, utilizing the lives and actions of the North American Martyrs. That being said, the goal of this project is *not* to be an apologist for European atrocities in the Americas. It is no secret that Europeans committed horrible acts against the Native Americans and these acts need to be recognized. I do not want my readers to think that I am trying to cover up the atrocities that Native Americans faced. Knowing the sensitivity around Euro-Amerindian relations, I want to ensure my readers that I am not trying to downplay the atrocities of the past or be an apologist for European rationales for conquest. I am only adding to the previous scholarship of this topic through my own research and contribution to this field. With this preface in place, I hope that my readers will enjoy this honors capstone and history-distinction thesis. This project is meant to be educational. If there is one concept that I want my readers to understand, then I want them to recognize that the past is much more undefined than it is perceived to be. Although we, historians included, may not be able to understand everything, we can use what we do comprehend to make a better future.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Professor Takeda for all of her guidance and support throughout the process of making this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis. I owe her a great debt of gratitude for all of her help. She helped me to find sources, made sure that I was working smoothly, and challenged me to think critically and deeply. Her aid was invaluable, and I never would have been able to complete any of my research and work without her. Her support is exemplary, and I hope that she continues to guide students in the future.

I want to thank Professor Murphy and Professor Schmeller for their assistance in being readers for this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis. I want to thank them for reading my drafts, offering their feedback, and challenging me to think analytically and broadly. Their critiques are greatly appreciated and I thank them for their generosity in taking the time to do this.

I want to thank Syracuse University's Renée Crown University Honors Program and History Department for giving me the opportunity to do research at the undergraduate level. This has enhanced my research, writing, and critical thinking skills greatly. I never would be at this level of proficiency without their constant challenge to pursue ever greater heights in academia. Within the Renée Crown University Honors Program, I want to thank Naomi Shanguhyia specifically. It was through a conversation with her that inspired me to pursue this topic and research. I give her huge amount of credit for helping me determine the topic and nature of this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis.

Finally, I want to thank the Jesuits. They have helped to shape my academic, spiritual, and personal life both during and after my attendance at St. Ignatius College Preparatory in San Francisco, CA. In addition, they, along with

Naomi Shanguhyia, have provided the inspiration for my research. More importantly, I thank the Jesuits for helping me become the person who I am today. They have been great mentors, spiritual directors, and friends. Their influence in my life has been immeasurable and I am incredibly grateful for everything they have done for me.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

Introduction

European Colonization in the Public Imagination

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, European powers began arriving in the Americas. One of them was the Spanish. Through intrigue, violence, and disease, Spanish figures such as Hernan Cortes and Francisco Pizarro led to the downfall of the Aztec and Incan Empires, which forever changed the social, political, and cultural paradigms of the Americas. Their names have become synonymous with the destruction of these indigenous cultures and Spanish greed, as the conquistadores were obsessed with finding gold throughout the Americas. In addition to gold, motivations for the conquistadores included personal and political glory, as well as the opportunity to bring in civilization, i.e. Euro-Spanish culture and Christianity, to the indigenous peoples of the Americas. This theme is so prevalent, that historians have summed up the Spanish rationale for American conquest as "God, glory, and gold." All of the negative attributes of Spain's New Word colonization, e.g. religious intolerance, subjugation, etc., became encapsulated into what is known as the Black Legend, which aimed to explain "the essential character of Spain around the historical facts of Spain's imperial sway, Inquisition, and treatment of indigenous peoples of the Americas."[7] More specifically, the Spanish themselves became "a typological emblem of religious and political intolerance, tyranny, misrule, conspiracy, cruelty, barbarity, bloodthirstiness, backwardness, slothfulness, and degeneracy."[8] However, as time went on, the Spanish

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[7] María DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 4.

[8] DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow,* 5.

experience in the Americas became representative for *all* of the European colonial powers in the Americas in the public imagination.

Although there were similarities in the process of European colonization of the Americas, it would be incorrect to believe that all European colonizers behaved like the Spanish or that all colonial processes were akin to the Spanish experience. These themes are especially pertinent to New France, which was located in what is now Canada and the United States. This is because the French needed the Native Americans and *visa versa*. *Ceteris paribus,* the French depended on the Native Americans to survive as a political and economic entity in North America while the Native Americans depended on French alliances and military support.[9] Meanwhile, the French, Jesuit missionaries who went into Native American communities made efforts to understand local languages, even going so far as to make a written Huron language, which can be seen in their creation of a Huron dictionary.[10] However, these narratives and historical realities are often obscured by the assertion that Europeans destroyed Native Americans through conquest and that they imposed forcibly Christianity on the conquered indigenous peoples of the Americas. Unfortunately, many do not go beyond this simplified and generalized understanding of European colonization of the New World.

Research Question

My goal is to help laypeople and historians to move beyond a simplified understanding of Euro-Amerindian relations. More specifically, I would like to do

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[9] For French dependency on Native Americans, see Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10. For Native Americans looking to the French as allies, see White, *The Middle Ground,* 29-33.

[10] Jean de Brébeuf, et al. "[23] CHAPTER III. SPECIAL ASSISTANCE OF GOD TO US IN OUR PERSECUTION.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 15, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 65.

this in the context of the North American Martyrs: a French group of six Jesuit priests and two lay missionaries who were martyred in New France. In order to do this, I will guide myself by asking the following research question: *Do the lives of the North American Martyrs shed light on Jesuit and Native American relations in New France in a way that challenges the assertion that Europeans destroyed Native American cultures and forced them to convert to Christianity?*

Importance of This Research

The importance of this research cannot be underestimated. This research will help remind New France, Native American, and Jesuit historians that they cannot be content with reducing history to simple, sound-bite answers. Indeed, it is a reminder that history is much more complex than is perceived initially, and that broad generalizations of historical facts will fail eventually in their telling of any historical narrative. Also, this research fits into the historiography of colonization, as it shows that colonization is not simply a two-sided affair. That is, the narrative of colonization cannot be divided simply between the colonizers and the colonized, as there were plenty of collaborators or other indigenous peoples throughout history who either wanted or benefited from the presence of colonizers in their native territory, e.g. Benedict Arnold. Indeed, the newer scholarship on New France reveals the complex relationships that existed during European colonization.[11] In my own research, I hope to benefit from these newer studies to show how the Jesuit and Native American experience in New France was complicated and complex.

Another significant result of this research and an important theme of this project is the idea of agency in New France, Native American, Jesuit, and

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[11] The newer scholarship includes White, *The Middle Ground;* Greer, *Mohawk Saint;* Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance;* True, *Masters and Students;* and Abé, Takao, *The Jesuit Mission to New France: A New Interpretation in the Light of the Earlier Jesuit Experience in Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

colonial historiographies. By agency, I mean that Native Americans were active in their own history. The history of Euro-Amerindian relations has been reduced to Native Americans as the recipients of either conquest or persistence in the face of European colonization.[12] There is no doubt that atrocities occurred or that Native Americans suffered at the hands of Europeans. However, this is not the whole reality of Amerindian history. The Native Americans shaped the world that they lived in just as much as the French influenced it and this world cannot be reduced to either the Native Americans refusing to change their ways or succumbing totally to European colonization.[13] This project is a reminder of the complexity of Native American history.

Another example of Native American agency in New France was the fact that these Native Americans *chose* whether or not they wanted to convert to Christianity. Although there were a variety of reasons for Native Americans declining Christianity during the history of New France, the most basic explanation is that the Native Americans had the option to decline the offer to convert. This is because the Native Americans of the past, like other contemporary human beings, had the ability to choose for themselves. This notion often gets lost in the public perception of forced conversions of Native Americans to Christianity. Thus, this shows the need to bring Native American agency back into the forefront of New France, Jesuit, Native American, and colonial historiographies. In order to help refresh these historiographies, I will utilize primary and secondary sources to help answer my research question.

Primary Source Research

The foundation of this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis and the key to answering my research question is the use of primary

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[12] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXV.

[13] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXX.

sources. In particular, I will use *The Jesuit Relations.* They were a series of letters and accounts written by French Jesuits living in New France. These writings were compiled into volumes and distributed back in France and even in New France itself.[14] They contain valuable information about the events occurring in New France, observations on various Native American cultures and customs, and the Jesuits' efforts to convert and preach to the Native Americans.[15] In addition, these sources have valuable insights into how the Jesuits accommodated and adapted themselves to the local groups that they encountered, which includes the Jesuits learning local languages so that they could preach to the Native Americans in their own language.[16] Moreover, the writings of and about the North American Martyrs are contained in *The Jesuit Relations.* For example, St. Isaac Jogues' martyrdom and St. Jean de Brébeuf's efforts to adapt certain theological teachings to fit Huron linguistics are told through the volumes of *The Jesuit Relations.*[17] Therefore, I will use selected accounts from within *The Jesuit Relations* to identify potential case studies from

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[14] True, *Masters and Students*, 25.

[15] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 1-2.

[16] Jean de Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 8, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1897), 131.

[17] For St. Isaac Jogues' martyrdom, see Jérôme Lalemant, "CHAPTER VIII. FATHER ISAAC JOGUES RETURNS FOR THE THIRD TIME TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] WHERE HE IS PUT TO DEATH.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 31, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Pageant Book, 1959), 117. For St. Jean de Brébeuf's efforts to adapt Catholic theology to Amerindian linguistics, see Jean de Brébeuf, "CHAPTER IV. OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 10, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1897), 117, 119, 121, 123.

within the North American Martyrs to help answer my research question. This shows that the importance of *The Jesuit Relations* cannot be underestimated.

Historiographical Research

My research uses as a springboard works on Jesuit encounters written in the last thirty years beginning with Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*.[18] Since White, additional historians have included White's work in their own research.[19] In addition, historians who have studied Jesuit-Native American encounters, including Jesuits owning Amerindian slaves, Jesuit institutional history, and early modern globalization have, in different ways, complicated the narrative of the Jesuits.[20] They have uncovered more nuanced ways of understanding the relationship between Europeans and non-Europeans. This shows that White's contributions to colonial and New France historiography is monumental and helps to challenge the notion that every European colonial encounter in the Americas was simply either conquest or forced conversion to Christianity, e.g. the Spanish experience of colonization. Ever since White, historians have been contributing their own findings to the middle ground. Each of these books guides my own research on *The Jesuit Relations*.

Of the secondary sources, perhaps the most crucial and foundational is Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the*

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[18] White, *The Middle Ground*.

[19] For White in Rushforth's research, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 24-25. For White in True's research, see True, *Masters and Students,* 18, 236. For White in Greer's research, see Greer, *Mohawk Saint*, 99, 226.

[20] For Jesuit-Native American encounters, see Greer, *Mohawk Saint.* For Jacques Marquette and slavery, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 61, 142-143. For Jesuit institutional history and influence in early modern globalization, see Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815. His work helped reshape colonial and New France historiography, by introducing this idea to the historical field: "the middle ground."[21] For White, the middle ground occurred in the *pays d'en haut,* which is what the French called the North American Great Lakes region. In this middle ground, a unique sociopolitical and cultural world emerged, where the French and Native Americans came together in a mutual fashion. Indeed, both the Native Americans and French adapted to one another and incorporated different aspects of each other's cultures in this North American environment. For example, the French adopted the calumet ceremony and the Native American usage of slavery as forms of diplomacy. Meanwhile, the Native Americans incorporated muskets into their arsenal while using French tools such as copper kettles and metal pots in their everyday lives.[22] As people living in and being affected by the middle ground, the North American Martyrs' lives will show this reality.

Building off White's middle ground is Brett Rushforth's *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous & Atlantic Slaveries in New France.* In this work, not only does Rushforth make a reference to Richard White's scholarship, but also discusses how slavery and the calumet ceremony affected the *pays d'en haut.* He shows how the French, both traders and missionaries, adapted themselves to the Native American understanding of slavery—an example of the adaptations and

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[21] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVI.

[22] For accommodation, context, and scope of the middle ground, see White, *The Middle Ground,* XXV-XXXI. For French incorporation of the calumet ceremony, see White, *The Middle Ground,* 21. For French incorporation of Native American slavery into colonial society, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 142-164, 174-192. For the French supplying Native Americans with guns, see White, *The Middle Ground,* 32. For Native Americans using French tools, see Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 107-108.

accommodations that took place in the middle ground.[23] Rushforth's work is key in helping to shape New France, Native American, and colonial historiographies.

Another scholar who was influenced by White's scholarship is Allan Greer. In *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits,* Greer discusses the unique Franco-Native American culture that emerged during the seventeenth century in New France. He first describes how the Mohawk village of Kahnawake was a direct product of French-Native American relations. For example, Kahnawake was populated primarily by Mohawks who had converted willingly to Catholicism, with French Jesuits residing among them. Among the residents of Kahnawake was St. Catherine Tekakwitha, who came to Kahnawake and was a Catholic convert and helped other women in her community lead a Catholic lifestyle. Although the Mohawks in Kahnawake were still living a very similar lifestyle to their ancestors, i.e. planting crops and hunting food, they were also using French tools such as copper kettles and metal pots in their everyday lives. This shows that Native Americans incorporated French influence into their own culture, which highlights the fact that Native Americans cultures were transformed undeniably, but not destroyed by French culture in New France. In addition, Greer also shows that St. Catherine Tekakwitha's Jesuit hagiographers were influenced by a continuing dialogue between France and New France and that her hagiographers wrote her hagiography in a way that would appeal to readers back in France.[24] This attempt by New France Jesuits to cater their writings to French readers is a theme explored greatly by Micah True.

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[23] For a reference to White's research, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 24-25. For the role of slavery and the calumet ceremony in Amerindian groups, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 30-35. For French incorporation of Native American slavery into colonial society, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 142-164, 174-192.

[24] Greer, *Mohawk Saint.*

In Micah True's *Masters and Students: Jesuit Mission Ethnography in Seventeenth-Century New France,* he argues that *The Jesuit Relations* need to be seen in the light of a bidirectional series of communication between France and New France. Rather than being told merely from a Eurocentric perspective, True shows that *The Jesuit Relations* came out of a colony-centric point of view, where the Jesuits catered and adapted their own writings in response to their French readers' reactions and expectations of them. For example, using primary sources, True highlights that French Jesuits in New France made references in *The Jesuit Relations* to how their previous accounts were responded to back in France. In addition, the Jesuits also wrote their writings in a way to help create a certain mental image for their readers or to combat criticism they faced back in France. For instance, although there were numerous papal decrees that declared that the peoples of the Americas were indeed human, many Europeans still believed that Amerindian peoples were sub-human and incapable of either reason or converting to Christianity. However, True argues that the New France Jesuits described events like Native American converts' martyrdoms and the intricate complexities of Native American linguistics as a means to combat the prevailing European notions of Native American savagery. This was done to portray the Native Americans' capability of converting to Christianity.[25]

Meanwhile, Jesuits faced French criticisms that their missions were not converting great numbers of Native Americans to Christianity. Knowing this, True believes that the Jesuits in New France responded to this challenge by saying that while they were experiencing initial setbacks, they would be able to overcome them. This was meant to show that they were the only qualified missionaries who would be able to work successfully in New France to save the

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[25] True, *Masters and Students.*

souls of Native Americans.[26] Out of this communication between the Old and New Worlds and the necessity to save souls comes the scholarship of Luke Clossey.

Like True, Clossey discusses the information exchange that occurred between the Jesuits in Europe and those abroad and that the Jesuits were concerned greatly with saving souls during this time period. However, in his book, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions,* Clossey describes the challenges and setbacks that early modern Jesuits faced in creating a global network and "global mission." For example, Clossey describes how distance created issues of communication and obedience between the Jesuits in Europe and those in missions scattered across the globe. In addition, he talks about how the Jesuits faced problems within the Catholic Church, from those both outside of the Society of Jesus and from within its own ranks. Meanwhile, like the Jesuits in New France, Jesuits in other parts of the world would also have problems trying to communicate effectively toward a group of non-Europeans and would struggle to get them to understand a theological point correctly.[27] Although Clossey shows the challenges to Jesuit centralization between the Jesuit's base in Rome and Jesuit missions abroad, authors such as A. Lynn Martin show that even Jesuits within Europe encountered their own difficulties in evangelization.

A. Lynn Martin's *The Jesuit Mind: The Mentality of an Elite in Early Modern France* is an example of internal issues that the Jesuits faced within early modern France. Martin describes these struggles in detail, such as a lack of qualified teachers, funding, patronage, and logistics, which were all necessary to run the schools, colleges, and parishes that the Jesuits wanted to establish

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[26] True, *Masters and Students.*

[27] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization.*

throughout the French countryside. In addition, Martin discusses the decentralized relationship between France and Rome, even though the distance between the two places was much smaller compared to other Jesuit missions. However, more importantly, Martin emphasizes a key theme about Jesuit missions, schools, and other humanitarian efforts: they were only a means to an end of saving souls. That is, although the Jesuits had a growing reputation for a quality education, for example, the Jesuits themselves only viewed education as a means of saving souls. For instance, the Jesuits would use education as a means of preparing future Jesuits, who, in turn, would aid in the salvation of souls as a member of the Society of Jesus. This is why the Jesuits placed an emphasis on training older, wealthy, and healthy boys because they could become future Jesuits. Also, the Jesuits' emphasis on saving souls shows that this religious order was an example of early-modern, Counter-Reformation Catholicism, as it contrasted from previous monastic orders' emphases on saving one's own soul.[28] Adding to this theme of saving souls and a case study of global Jesuit missions is the research provided by Abé Takao.

In Abé Takao's *The Jesuit Mission to New France: A New Interpretation in the Light of the Earlier Jesuit Experience in Japan,* Abé describes the similarities between the Jesuit missions in sixteenth century Japan and the Jesuit missions in seventeenth century New France. Abé's work challenges prior academic assertions about New France missions and sheds light on important similarities between the missions in the two areas. First, Abé describes how the common perception that the Franciscan Recollets were inflexible and Eurocentric while the Jesuits were flexible and open to other cultures should be changed, in that this shift came out of a change in how to best preach and maintain missions

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[28] A. Lynn Martin, *The Jesuit Mind: The Mentality of an Elite in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

rather than a strictly foundational difference between the two religious orders. Second, Abé describes a similarity between the two regions as the Jesuits in both areas tried to establish beneficial relationships with local leaders early on in order to gain patronage and approval to construct missions in local communities. These missions would lead to the implementation of schools and other humanitarian services in areas open to the Jesuits' presence. Also, Abé discusses the European debates about the humanity and capability of the Japanese and Native Americans to convert to Christianity. He analyzes how the Jesuits in Japan interpreted their own experience there using Euro-Christian terminology, while using that same terminology in their writings back to their European readers, just as the New France Jesuits would do later. Abé's description of the similarities between the Japanese and Amerindian missions show that even Jesuits from across the world and from different centuries had similar outlooks on what should be included in a Jesuit mission. Meanwhile, Abé explains how both the Japanese and Native American converts interpreted Catholicism in their own cultural settings, in a way that cannot be determined solely by depth of personal belief or resemblance to a European understanding of Catholicism. Abé describes how the Jesuits in both Japan and New France only viewed their own educational, philanthropic, and diplomatic efforts as a means of saving souls and that this theme existed in both Asian and North American settings. Finally, Abé believes that the interpretation of indigenous conversion to Catholicism should not be seen in the form of conquest or transformation, but rather as a form of intercultural interactions. Thus, Takao's work challenges and sheds light on the Jesuits' global missions and desire to save souls during the early modern period.[29]

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[29] Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France*.

Although I cite other secondary sources, the works mentioned previously are the most impactful. With the necessary historiographical research and explanations in place, it is time to formulate my hypothesis.

My Hypothesis

With the primary and secondary sources clearly detailed, I am able to construct my hypothesis. Based on the primary source readings, I argue that the North American Martyrs are representative of the middle ground, which signifies that they practiced cultural accommodation with Native Americans, and that their lives as missionaries serve as a counterexample to the notion that every European encounter with Amerindian peoples was one of conquest and forced conversion to Christianity.

My Own Contributions to This Topic

All of these authors mentioned previously are important and significant in their own right, and each contributed to Jesuit, Native American, New France, and colonial historiographies. As a student trying to familiarize himself with a plethora of new material on these subjects, I would not be able to accomplish this honors capstone and history distinction thesis without their invaluable information. Therefore, I am learning just as much as I am instructing my intended audience. However, during my research, I noticed that none of the previously mentioned authors had yet to focus deeply on the North American Martyrs themselves. For example, White's work begins after the death of all of the North American Martyrs in 1650. Another example is that although True mentions only briefly figures like St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Anthony Daniel, and St. Isaac Jogues, his chapters are not focused solely on them.[30] Because of this

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[30] For True's references to St. Jean de Brébeuf, see True, *Masters and Students,* 11, 45-46, 67-69, 192-193n20. For True's references to St. Anthony Daniel, see True, *Masters and Students,* 95. For True's references to St. Isaac Jogues, see True, *Masters and Students,* 104, 108-109, 179n9.

Illustration. 1: *The Eight North American Martyrs,* painting, courtesy of catholicism.org, Richmond, http://catholicism.org/eight-na-martyrs.html.

absence of the North American Martyrs in Jesuit, Native American, New France, and colonial historiographies, I wish to bring them back into the forefront of these historical studies, especially in light of the middle ground. I believe that their narratives would be a great example of the middle ground in action and another example of how the French experience in North America differed from the Spanish and other European colonizers' experience in the Americas. In addition, this would also extend the beginning of White's middle ground to before 1650. In order to place the North American Martyrs into the middle

ground narrative, I will focus primarily on the primary sources contained within *The Jesuit Relations,* while using the previously mentioned secondary sources as a means of providing the background information about the area of study. Therefore, my contributions to this topic will be to add the narratives of the North American Martyrs into the middle ground.

Honors Capstone and History-Distinction Thesis Outline

The rest of this honors capstone and history-distinction thesis will continue in the following manner. After this introduction, I will create several chapters, with one chronicling the broad historical events and movements during this era and the rest dedicated to a specific case study within the North American Martyrs, specifically St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues. These case studies will be backed by intensive primary source research within *The Jesuit Relations,* and will each serve to show how each of the selected members of the North American Martyrs is representative of the middle ground. After each of these case studies, this project will have a final conclusion, which will highlight my rationales for choosing these case studies, limitations within my research, and an invitation for future research. In addition, it will also include key themes and reflections for readers to consider, including the significance of my research and the uniqueness of the North American Martyrs among early modern Jesuits.

Important Themes to Remember While Reading *The Jesuit Relations*

First, although the North American Martyrs have been canonized as Catholic saints, this does not mean they were perfect. *Ceteris paribus*, they were just as human as anyone living in their time or as anyone living today. In other words, they were fallible. For example, St. Jean de Brébeuf uses the word “savage” when describing the Native Americans he encounters while in New

France.[31] Although this does not excuse the use of the word "savage" when describing another human being, modern-day readers must remember that St. Jean de Brébeuf, and the North American Martyrs as a whole, was a product of his time and was a product of seventeenth century French culture and attitudes towards indigenous peoples of the New World. Similarly, it must be understood that St. Jean de Brébeuf, as well as his French contemporaries living in New France, brought with them their own understandings of what constituted or what did not constitute civilization and had their own clear understandings of civilization and morality: "But on basic questions…there were absolute rights and wrongs. Civilization and religion were singular as far as Europeans of that period were concerned."[32] In addition to the issues facing the North American Martyrs and the culture that they came from, there are also problems concerning their own writings and the writings about them.

Second, undeniably, the North American Martyrs and their fellow Jesuits were highly concerned with religious matters. After all, they traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to convert the indigenous peoples of New France to Catholicism. However, this religiosity was not confined to their preaching, as it was a central theme in *The Jesuit Relations.* Writing with a religious tone was nothing new for either the Jesuits or for Christians as a whole, and they utilized prior Christian literary genres and styles in their writings, as they "framed many of their texts as works of witness, prophecy, and hagiography."[33] Writing with a religious agenda often meshed with the Jesuits' own views on non-Christians, as there was "a parallel religious dichotomy that opposed Christians and 'pagans.'"[34] This

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[31] Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:87.

[32] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 17.

[33] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 15.

[34] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 18.

dichotomy was often cast in the form of “good vs. evil” and “faithful vs. infidel” narratives. This is clearly seen in J.M. Chaumonot’s hagiography of St. Jean de Brébeuf, especially in his description of antagonistic, non-Catholic Hurons: “Often the Infidels conspired for his death.”[35] This dichotomy could play itself out in Jesuit descriptions of torture scenes. The use of imagery, particularly images of hell, could also be a means of exemplifying and convincing, to potential Amerindian converts and European readers, the sincerity and depth of a Native American convert’s faith in the face of torment.[36]

This does not mean that they outright lied about the events or the suffering that the martyrs endured. However, a Jesuit author’s choice of words could help sway a reader’s opinion of the martyr—or the martyr’s attackers, as the torture accounts in *The Jesuit Relations* were depicted to show that martyrs as “steadfast and unwavering in their new faith, regardless of who their tormentors are, bolstering arguments about the capacity of Amerindians to embrace Christianity.”[37] Not only were the Jesuit authors or hagiographers concerned with martyrdom and suffering imagery, but also the missionaries themselves were invested in these themes, like St. Jean de Brébeuf in his prayer: “‘I made a vow to you never to fail, on my side, in the grace of martyrdom, if by your infinite mercy you offer it to me some day.”[38] However, these scenes of suffering and desires of martyrdom should not be seen as a form of masochism but should be seen in the context of Catholic piety and “an

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[35] J.M. Chaumonot, “CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].,” in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 34, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 169.

[36] True, *Masters and Students,* 101-102.

[37] True, *Masters and Students,* 97.

[38] Chaumonot, “CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].,” 34*:*167.

effective tool for inducing onlookers to learn about Catholic doctrine and eventually convert."[39] Although the New France Jesuits utilized "good vs. evil" narratives in their accounts, desired martyrdom, and wrote highly religious texts, this should not deter the modern reader from utilizing and reading these sources. Rather, the modern reader must recognize that one cannot study *The Jesuit Relations* without acknowledging its religious undertones and the religious background of its authors.

Third, and going off of the previous point, the Jesuit hagiographers of the saints featured in the case studies are concerned with presenting the martyr's holiness and sanctity to a European audience. This poses the problem of exaggerating or over-emphasizing certain aspects, events, or virtues of that particular martyr or the villainy, evil, or vices of their antagonists. Despite these potential issues occurring in the hagiographies of St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues, I will utilize these accounts within *The Jesuit Relations,* because of their importance to my research.

Fourth, the modern reader must understand that *The Jesuit Relations* themselves are not merely Eurocentric texts. Although the Jesuits themselves could be Eurocentric or hold Eurocentric views, *The Jesuit Relations* cannot be seen merely in the light of Eurocentrism.[40] Rather, these narratives are part of a colony-centric conversation between New France and France, which means that "the *Relations* were…an overlapping and bi-directional circulation of information between France and New France."[41] What this means for the modern scholar and reader is that the Jesuits wrote their entries in *The Jesuit Relations* and sent them back to France where they would be edited or critiqued. After being edited

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[39] True, *Masters and Students,* 94.

[40] True, *Masters and Students,* 25.

[41] True, *Masters and Students,* 25.

and published in France, *The Jesuit Relations* would be sent back to New France, where the authors could read them, as well as read any comments or letters from their readers about their previous entries.[42] This shows their writings circulated on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Based on these conversations, the New France Jesuits could cater their writings to these comments and critiques in mind which "not only influenced what the missionary writers chose to include in the *Relations,* but also could prompt them to omit details that they otherwise might have included."[43] This type of editing process could only have existed through the prior Jesuit information network and constant communication between New France and France.[44] This means that *The Jesuit Relations* cannot merely be seen as Eurocentric, one-directional texts. Seeing them in a colony-centric light allows the modern reader "to see them and all of their contents as a reflection of an ongoing conversation between Jesuits on both sides of the Atlantic, rather than a traveller's [*sic*] earnest, if perhaps biased, perceptions of a foreign place."[45] Even if *The Jesuit Relations* have elements of Eurocentrism and bias in them, this does not mean that they should be disregarded as historical documents. Indeed, their importance is invaluable to Jesuit, Native American, New France, and colonial histories and they are "far too interesting to be categorized as colonialist texts, pure and simple."[46] Therefore, the modern reader must move

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[42] For the feedback from readers influencing *The Jesuit Relations,* see True, *Masters and Students,* 147-151.

[43] True, *Masters and Students,* 150.

[44] For the Jesuit information network, see Clossey, "The Jesuit Information Network," in *Salvation and Globalization,* 193-215. For communication between New France and France, see True, *Masters and Students.*

[45] True, *Masters and Students,* 170.

[46] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 17.

beyond the simple categorization of *The Jesuit Relations* as a Eurocentric text, in order to seem as part of a larger, colony-centric conversation between New France and France.

Finally, the modern reader must understand that they carry their own biases when reading and encountering quotations and accounts from *The Jesuit Relations.* While it is important to recognize the issues within *The Jesuit Relations,* it is equally important to recognize that a modern-day perspective also influences the interpretation and reaction to these texts. Although it is easy for contemporary readers to point out the ignorance and backwardness of people living four hundred years ago, it is equally easy for individuals living four hundred years from today to make remarks about our own ignorance and backwardness! *Ceteris paribus*, we cannot place the New France Jesuits, including the North American Martyrs, within our own context of what it means to be accepting, diverse, or correct and "Instead of trying to place them on some sort of single scale of tolerance and intolerance, we might better recognize the fundamental discontinuity between their way of thinking about cultural difference and ours."[47] Therefore, modern-day readers should be doubly aware of both the bias within *The Jesuit Relations* and their own bias as they encounter the texts within this distinction thesis.

All the points stated here are applicable to every chapter in this capstone. With these points in mind, one can have an analysis of the North American Martyrs as examples of the middle ground.

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[47] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 17.

Chapter I

Life in the Great Lakes before the French

If there are three words that can be used to describe the Great Lakes region of the seventeenth century, then it would be these words: warfare, diplomacy, and slavery. These institutions and policies would dominate this area for centuries, encapsulating the lives of thousands of Native Americans. While Native Americans were trying to comprehend and adapt themselves to this violent and unstable environment, another group of people came and introduced themselves into this political arena. They brought technologies, institutions, policies, and ideas that would forever change the Great Lakes for centuries afterwards. Life from then on would not be the same as it had been for both groups. These newcomers were the French.

However, before an analysis of the French arrival can begin, this chapter lays out the cultural and demographic contexts into which these Europeans entered. Before the French or any Europeans even set foot in the New World, Native American groups had been living on the North American continent for thousands of years. Each group adapted to the environment in which they found themselves, and those living in the Great Lakes region developed ways of life that set them apart from other Native Americans living elsewhere in North America. Even the Native Americans of the Great Lakes region could be incredibly diverse and different from other neighboring groups, e.g. the differences between the Algonquians and the Iroquoians.[48] For example, this included various ways of living: “Whereas the northern Algonquians generally depended on hunting, foraging, and fishing—and consequently lived in small, mobile bands—the Iroquoians cultivated corn and other crops, a practice that

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[48] Greer, “Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits,” 7.

allowed them to live in concentrated, year-round settlements."[49] Also, even the term "Algonquian" refers to a language family, which was different from Iroquoian languages.[50] In addition, the terms "Huron" and "Iroquois" referred to the names of confederacies, and each confederacy had their own respective tribes within them, such as the Arendarhonons within the Hurons and the Mohawks within the Iroquois.[51] These are only a few examples of the diverse and varied groups that lived within this region.

However, while there were differences among the Native Americans living across the Great Lakes, there were some commonalities among them. If there was one common theme among the people of the Great Lakes, it would be warfare. For example, the Hurons and the Iroquois, among other Native Americans in the area, waged war against one another throughout the region and throughout the seventeenth century. Although the causes of war are varied, war still existed and there is evidence to suggest "that until the development of the fur trade, the Huron were at least sporadically at war with the other Iroquoian peoples in Ontario."[52] By the time the French arrived in North America, the Hurons and the Iroquois were still at war with each other, and they continued to be "militarily at odds through most of the period covered by the *Jesuit Relations.*"[53] The persistent warfare among the Native American groups in this region had profound, long-lasting effects: "these peoples responded to Iroquois and other warfare—as well as to new trade opportunities—by moving villages to

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[49] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 7.

[50] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVII.

[51] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 7.

[52] Bruce G. Trigger, *The Huron: Farmers of the North* (Fort Worth: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1990), 51.

[53] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 9.

more secure locations nearby or by forming new defensive alliances."[54] In moving villages and forming new alliances, they reorganized the previous *status quo* of how alliances and political unity were maintained.

Although Native Americans are often classified into tribes or confederacies, this did not amount to a political state or the formation of a single, political entity that ruled all the members living within the same group. Indeed, the ongoing violence in the region disrupted traditional notions of Native American political organization, as the violence had displaced entire villages and communities.[55] This meant that when displaced populations settled into a new area, they established communities and policies that were independent from their original tribe: "Without a clear national territory and lacking even the most rudimentary national government, villages of the same nation…could and did pursue independent policies."[56] Also, these newly reorganized villages included members of different tribes: "The region became a hodgepodge of peoples, with several groups often occupying a single village."[57] These new villages could be heavily populated, and an example of this is the Green Bay area, where French missionaries living in the area recorded that "15,000-20,000 persons lived in these settlements."[58] Native American political unity changed dramatically through the warfare that tore through the region. However, just as the violence forced Native Americans to create new ways of organizing themselves, it also

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[54] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance*, 24.

[55] For the lack of a political state, disruptions of traditional forms of Native American political organization, and demographic displacement, see White, *The Middle Ground,* 10-17.

[56] White, *The Middle Ground,* 17.

[57] White, *The Middle Ground,* 14.

[58] White, *The Middle Ground,* 14

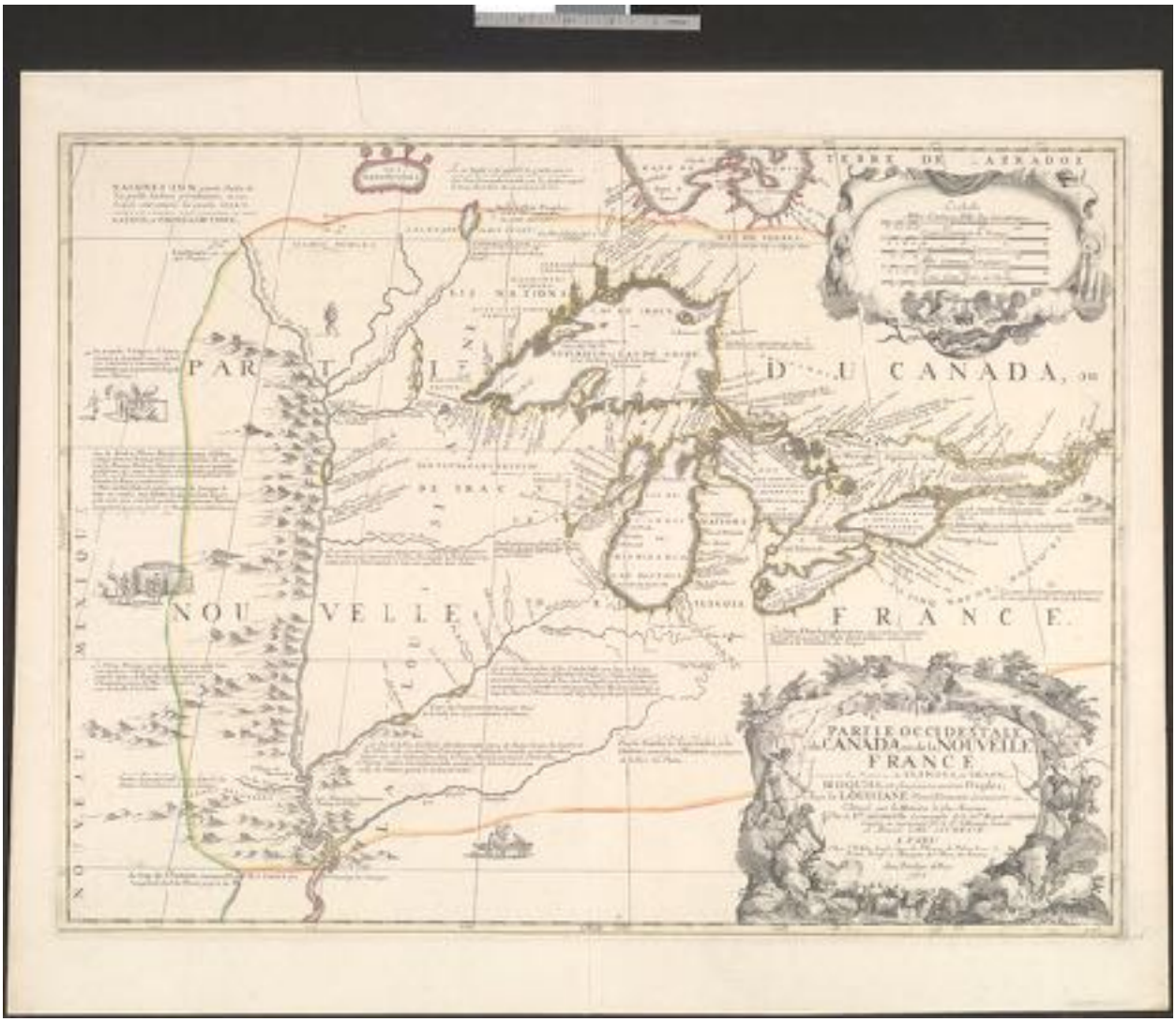

Illustration. 2: Vincenzo Maria Coronelli, cartographer, *Partie occidentale du Canada ou de la Nouvelle France [document cartographique] : ou les nations de Ilinois [sic], de Tracy, les Iroquois, et plusieurs autres peuples, avec la Louisiane nouvellement decouverte etc,* ill., *coloriée à la main*, 1688, 43 x 59 cm *sur feuille* 53 x 65 cm, courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/ourl/res.php?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&url_tim=2018-04-26T01%3A41%3A19Z&url_ctx_fmt=info%3Aofi%2Ffmt%3Akev%3Amtx%3Actx&rft_dat=3708622&rfr_id=info%3Asid%2Fcollectionscanada.gc.ca%3Apam&lang=eng.

forced a newfound necessity to create and maintain alliances with the groups around them.

Although diplomacy had always existed for these Native Americans, it was the widespread and horrific violence that created an intensified need to look to diplomacy as a means of stemming warfare.[59] The formation of new villages,

[59] For necessity of alliances and stemming warfare, see White, *The Middle Ground,* 14-23.

which may have included Native Americans from different tribes, made alliance-building imperative to these newly settled populations: “Each group of refugees sought ties with strangers precisely because they feared outsiders…To create real or metaphorical kinspeople [*sic*], the Algonquians turned to familiar cultural forms and borrowed new ones.”[60] The Iroquois, Huron, and other groups of this area resolved conflicts, conducted diplomacy, and built alliances through a variety of ways. One way was through reciprocal violence. Although the use of reciprocal violence may have seemed ironic, it could be used as a mediator of violence in that it was utilized “to discourage warfare because war councils knew that they risked their own people’s enslavement each time they authorized a raid.”[61] Another solution was intergroup marriages, as they could create “ties with outsiders who could assist a people in times of hunger and war.”[62] However, of the list of diplomatic options, the calumet ceremony was the most sacred and significant diplomatic measure.[63]

The calumet itself was a pipe that was decorated with artistic designs and materials unique to the tribe that had created it, according to French accounts.[64] Its effects reached beyond the immediate village area, as one could display the calumet to an unknown group of Native Americans to identify themselves or show that they were allies of another tribe.[65] Indeed, the seriousness and significance of the calumet’s ceremonies should not be underestimated as it “facilitated trade and diplomacy among friends by

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[60] White, *The Middle Ground,* 15.

[61] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 29.

[62] White, *The Middle Ground,* 17.

[63] For the calumet and calumet ceremony’s importance, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 30-35; White, *The Middle Ground,* 20-22.

[64] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 32.

[65] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 32-33.

expressing a commitment to violence against common enemies…They were sacred bonds, and those who violated them risked disaster."[66] A crucial part of the calumet ceremony, and another form of diplomacy for Native Americans living in this region, was the usage and threat of slavery: "Generally understood as an instrument of peace, the calumet's power was expressed through the violent imagery of enslavement."[67] Slavery dominated not only Native American diplomacy but also the diplomacy of those who would come from another shore: the French.

The institution of slavery had existed in this region long before the French had even arrived, with evidence of Native American slaves even going back to the Cahokian era.[68] Although records on the exact numbers of Native American slaves during this period are difficult to obtain, it is safe to say that "Between about 1660 and 1760, French colonists and their Native allies enslaved thousands."[69] The slavery that Great Lakes Native Americans practiced would be different from the slavery of the African slave trade used by Europeans throughout the early modern period, as Amerindian slaves were captured prisoners of war: "taking captives took precedence over killing enemies."[70] However, it was still slavery nonetheless, where one person, or a group of people, was the designated property of their master.[71] For Native Americans of this region, the threat of slavery and the fear of enslavement was enough to be a form of outright diplomacy: "slaves stood at the heart of both Natives' regional

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[66] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 30, 32.

[67] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 33.

[68] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 20-21.

[69] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 10.

[70] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 39.

[71] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 51-59.

war culture and the diplomacy that kept warfare from overtaking the region."[72] While the fear of slavery may have prevented wars, the exchange of slaves facilitated peace between warring tribes or was used to cement alliances with potential partners, as an integral part of the calumet's ceremonies were the exchange of slaves: "At every stage…the calumet drew upon enslavement as the earthly expression of otherworldly powers harnessed to protect and unite the ceremony's hosts and their guests.[73] The reminded the allying entities that the other party was powerful enough to enslave their enemies.[74] However, slaves could be exchanged between groups without the calumet ceremony, as releasing slaves to another group could be used either as confirmation of trading alliances or as signs of peace between two parties: "their most important diplomatic role came as they were made objects of trade, symbolic gifts that signified peace between peoples."[75] In these diplomatic negotiations, it would not be uncommon for slaves to act as interpreters between the groups: "slaves often served as translators and intercultural brokers."[76] However, slaves were not used merely as negotiating tools. They could be used for demographic and personal purposes too.

The widespread warfare and the formation of new villages throughout the Great Lakes region created unstable and constantly shifting village populations. In order to compensate for the loss of village and family members, because of warfare, enslavement or death, slaves could be used as a means of "replacing" these lost community members. For example, female slaves could become

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[72] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 34-35.

[73] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 30.

[74] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 33-34.

[75] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 63.

[76] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 61.

additional wives to men living in the village while child slaves could be integrated into a family within their new village. This meant that even if a child slave was ethnically a Huron, and were given over to the Iroquois, then that child slave could be assimilated into Iroquois culture. Even adult slaves could be used as a "symbolic" kin of a deceased family member. However, although slaves could be introduced and assimilated into their enslaving group, their status as a slave, an outsider, and as property was always made clear to them.[77] This is especially noted in the language that Native Americans of this region had regarding slaves: "Language and ritual reduced slaves to the status of animals, and like dogs they become the personal possession of their masters."[78] Although the slavery that Native Americans of the Great Lakes practiced was different from the slavery that Europeans practiced on African slaves, it was still slavery nonetheless, and it was one of the main forms of diplomacy for those living in this area. The French would enter into this environment of warfare, slavery, and diplomacy. Their presence added to this tense political and diplomatic atmosphere, which transformed radically the Great Lakes region.

The Arrival of the French in the *Pays d'en Haut*

Like the Spanish and the English, the French looked to the New World as a continent filled with endless possibilities for economic, political, and religious expansion. Although the French had done some exploration of North America during the sixteenth century, the French were not able to begin establishing

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[77] For rationales for keeping captives alive, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 45. For female slaves as wives and assimilation of children into their captors' society, see Rushforth *Bonds of Alliance,* 46. For using captives as fictive kin, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 47-49. For reminding slaves of their place in the social structure, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 49.

[78] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 51.

permanent communities in the North America until the seventeenth century.[79] This is for a few reasons. First, the French had been wrestling with internal crises, especially with Catholic-Protestant conflicts like the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, throughout the sixteenth century. This meant that the French government had to focus their energy on internal stability before turning their attention outward towards the New World.[80] Second, prior efforts of French colonization ended in warfare, disease, and an inability to adapt themselves to the North American environment, which led to the ruin of many initial settlements, such as *France-Roy*.[81] Although attempts were made to establish fur trading sites and bring over French colonists to settle these sites, some of these initial locations ended with closure or partial use.[82]

Third, another source of trouble for establishing North American colonies was the question of *who* financed and initiated these colonial operations. During the explorations of Cartier in the first half of the sixteenth century, the French government had sponsored his treks into North America.[83] However, towards the end of the sixteenth century, private individuals, especially merchants from St. Malo, led the way for French colonization in North America: "It was private citizens, already commercially active in the region, who provided the initiative and were to take hold of the northeastern corner of America."[84] In 1603, the French monarchy would become more invested in North American colonization:

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[79] Marcel Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France 1524-1663,* trans. Patricia Claxton, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), XI.

[80] For religious conflicts within France affecting stability, see Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 54.

[81] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France*, 49-52.

[82] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 62-68.

[83] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 34-35.

[84] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 55.

"From 1603 on, the kings of France were to follow a colonial policy that become a sustained tradition, and no longer spasmodic."[85] However, even with political backing, the actual day-to-day operations in the North American colonies were carried out by private individuals that the government sponsored, such as Pierre Du Gua de Monts.[86] The questions of who financed and supported the New France colony would end in 1663, when Louis XIV established direct government control of the New France colony.[87] Despite these initial setbacks, French colonization in North America persisted and once stability had been reintroduced domestically, the French were ready to expand into North America.

In 1604, the first year-round French settlement was established in Acadia, in what is now Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and northern Maine. In 1608, the French explorer Samuel de Champlain established Quebec in the St. Lawrence River Valley, which shows that French were expanding father west and farther inland into the North American continent. It was father inland, in the St. Lawrence River Valley and the Great Lakes, that the French would establish the nucleus of their North American colony.[88] They would call their North American colony New France and they would call the Great Lakes region, which they had just entered, the *pays d'en haut* (the upper country). It was in this colony that the French would find themselves heavily invested in the political, economic, and cultural developments of the *pays d'en haut.*

Like their European counterparts, the French had come from another shore into North America to establish themselves economically and politically.

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[85] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 73.

[86] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 84.

[87] W.J. Eccles, *Canada under Louis XIV 1663-1701* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), 6.

[88] For the development of French colonies in North America during the seventeenth century, see Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 9.

However, there are some key differences that make the French experience of colonization vastly different from other contemporary Europeans of the early modern period. First, unlike the Spanish, who gained their wealth through the gold and silver of the Aztecs and the Incas, and unlike the English, who gained their wealth through the cultivation of tobacco and cotton, the French were seeking to make their fortunes initially through cod fishing and then through the fur trade. This change in commercial focus came about in the latter half of the sixteenth century, when French explorers came across the abundance of furs and the prior existence of a fur trade among Native American groups living in the St. Lawrence River Valley as well as elsewhere in the *pays d'en haut*.[89] This shift towards furs coincided with the shift into the North American interior, especially within the St. Lawrence River Valley, where "it was decidedly furs that took the limelight in commercial circles."[90] This focus on acquiring furs and participating in the fur trade meant that the way the French accumulated wealth differed from other contemporary Europeans, which also was a factor in how New France was settled.

Second, there was no large-scale French migration into New France. To give an example of how small New France's population was, in 1629, the English had captured Quebec from the French. By the time the English entered into the settlement as victors, Quebec was still small, with a slow population growth, and amounted "to little more than a commercial entrepôt with only a few dozen settlers."[91] Although the English returned Quebec back to the French, Samuel de Champlain's 1633 journey back to Quebec involved him revitalizing the

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[89] For shift in economic focus in New France, see Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 56-58.

[90] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France*, 58.

[91] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 139.

remnants of an already tiny settlement in the New France wilderness.[92] Even by 1660, the colony of New France had "barely three thousand inhabitants."[93] Although New France's population later increased and spread westward into the *pays d'en haut*, its population would still be small, as even by the time the English ousted the French from Canada, places like Quebec, Montreal, and Trois-Rivières did not have "a population of more than 8,000, and Trois-Rivières was merely a rural bourg."[94] Meanwhile, the English population in North America was much larger: "During the first two centuries, the non-indigenous peoples of the mainland English colonies grew from none to 2.7 million."[95] New France's tiny population and slow growth rate ensured that its population stayed small in comparison to other European colonies in the Americas.

Third, the Franco-Amerindian relationship differed greatly from Spanish or English relations with Native Americans. For example, the French did not employ an *encomienda* system that exacted tribute from Native Americans nor did they have a rigid hierarchical class system that the Spanish had developed in their Central and South American colonies.[96] Although the French involved themselves in Native American slavery, it was not akin to the Spanish *encomienda* system, where "Indians owed the colonizers labor service and other forms of tribute as both a symbol of their subjection and a contribution to the

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[92] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 139.

[93] Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France,* 270.

[94] Leslie Choquette, *Frenchmen into Peasants: Modernity and Tradition in the Peopling of French Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 38.

[95] Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 67.

[96] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

Spanish economy."[97] Meanwhile, the New France economy was centered around the fur trade, which meant that the French were not seeking to take over Native American land for farming: "their settlement of Canada did not require any substantial appropriation of Indian lands."[98] Meanwhile, the English were in conflict with Native Americans over their land, as the English colonizing goal "elevated land over people as the primary object of the colonizer's attention."[99] Although the French needed some space to function, they did not need large swathes of territory in order to establish themselves in the *pays d'en haut,* which contrasted English colonization.

Fourth, the French did not subjugate, dominate, or control fully the *pays d'en haut* as its single ruler.[100] This is for a few reasons. Unlike the Spanish who toppled entire political, social, and economic structures through their conquest of the Aztec and Incan empires, the French never had the military capacity to take over completely the political, social, and economic structures of the *pays d'en haut,* which meant that "the Indians were never really conquered…the French were never in a position to impose their will by force of arms on the Indians in general."[101] More importantly, another reason why the French did (or could) not subjugate the Native Americans living in the *pays d'en haut* was that the French needed the Native Americans as political, economic, and military allies because both parties "created an elaborate network of economic, political, cultural, and social ties to meet the demands of a particular historical

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[97] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

[98] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

[99] Tomlins, *Freedom Bound,* 133.

[100] For the lack of French domination of this area, see Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10; White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVI.

[101] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

situation."[102] Because the French did not have total control over the region and because they entered into a region filled already with warfare, this meant that they could be in conflict with other powers, such as the Iroquois. This meant that they needed the help of other groups, such as the Algonquians, to combat the threat of Iroquois attacks, which necessitated the formation of alliances with other Native Americans.[103]

Also, because the French were interested in trading and obtaining furs, they had to establish good relations, i.e. alliances, with Native American groups that were willing to trade with them.[104] This the French had to adapt themselves to Native American customs and styles of diplomacy, including learning the calumet ceremony.[105] They also learned the importance and necessity of Native American slavery: "Adapting to the region's diplomatic culture…many French traders and diplomats accepted slaves as symbolic gifts from the Indian peoples they encountered."[106] In other words, the French had to create alliances with Native Americans for survival while adapting to Native American forms of diplomacy if they wanted furs or good relations. This showed that the French presence in New France was contingent upon the beneficial relationships they had with Native Americans, which meant that they had to form alliances. Thus, Native Americans such as the Hurons, Iroquois, and the Montagnais retained a

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[102] White, *The Middle Ground,* 33.

[103] White, *The Middle Ground,* 29.

[104] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

[105] White, *The Middle Ground,* 21.

[106] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 139, 142.

large amount of autonomy while the French became an additional competitor—not the conqueror—within the *pays d'en haut.*[107]

While the French traders preoccupied themselves with finding furs and establishing trade routes in New France, another group of French sojourners to the *pays d'en haut* would come with their own agenda into the French colony. Their presence would be a part of the transformation that would occur in the *pays d'en haut.* This transformation would change both them and the Native Americans they would encounter. These men were the Jesuits.

The Jesuits

The Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits, is a religious order of priests within the Catholic Church. St. Ignatius of Loyola founded the order, and Pope Paul III approved the Society of Jesus as an official religious order in 1540.[108] One of Pope Paul III's rationales for approving the creation of the Jesuits was to combat the spread of Protestant Christianity throughout Europe, and an example of this was when the Pope sent the Jesuits "to various cities in Italy where the new doctrines were showing signs of establishing themselves and to counter them."[109] However, in order to understand the Jesuits, there are few points that need to be considered. First, the Protestant Reformation changed completely the unity, organization, and hegemony of Western Europe. Although there had been serious issues within the Catholic Church throughout the medieval era and that there existed both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the Protestant Reformation was the tipping point for the

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[107] For the lack of French domination of this area, see Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10; White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVI.

[108] Christopher Hollis, *A History of the Jesuits* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), 15.

[109] Hollis, *A History of the Jesuits*, 18.

disintegration of Christianity and presented a huge paradigm shift for Europe: “It provoked the break up of the unity of Christendom and the breakthrough of modern Europe…The Protestant Reformation was a conjuncture of critical importance for the whole course of modern history.”[110] Meanwhile, Martin Luther’s publications were spreading rapidly throughout Europe, which were aided by the help of the printing press.[111] In order to stem the tide of Protestantism and solve internal issues, the Catholic Church began what is called the Counter Reformation or the Catholic Reformation: “the Counter Reformation was the entire Catholic Church’s defence [*sic*] against Protestant attack.”[112] It was out of this context that the second point arises.

Second, early modern Catholicism incited a renewed emphasis on the care of souls.[113] Now, the Catholic Church and its clergy had always been concerned with saving souls. However, with the discovery of the New World and its inhabitants, the Catholic Church realized that the “lost” souls of Protestants, as the Catholics believed that the Protestants were heretics, could be “made up” with the newly converted souls of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas: “the notion that the Catholic Church was compensated for the lost Protestant souls with the newly won souls of newly discovered peoples became commonplace in the sixteenth century.”[114] Therefore, this added to the emphasis of saving souls. With the formation of a new religious order born out of

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[110] For the Protestant Reformation’s effects on the disintegration of Western Europe, see Lewis W. Spitz, *The Protestant Reformation 1517-1559* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 5.

[111] For the spread of Luther’s ideas through the printing press, see Spitz, *The Protestant Reformation,* 88-93.

[112] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 239.

[113] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 245.

[114] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 231.

the energy of the Counter Reformation, the Jesuits were sent as missionaries into the New World, including New France, as well as Africa and Asia.

Finally, the Jesuits' own spiritual mentality towards the world itself made them especially suited for their role as missionaries. For centuries, many of the religious orders within the Catholic Church had been monastic, which meant that they had withdrawn from the broader society, to go and live in monasteries with other monks, while leading lives of prayer and communal work.[115] Although monasticism had been a main focus of Catholic spirituality throughout the medieval era, the Jesuits would diverge from this tradition.[116] Instead of having "contempt" for the world, the Jesuits advocated "indifference" to the world.[117] This meant that Jesuits would still have the mentality of detaching themselves from worldly objects while recognizing that they were called to serve *in* the world: "Indifference or detachment would allow a person to act rather than to contemplate."[118] In other words, Jesuits were allowed to work in the world, so long as they were not distracted by non-spiritual matters. Through this mentality of being and working in the world, the Jesuits, as missionaries, sought to construct "Christianity as a universal religion."[119] This gave the Jesuits incredible freedom and flexibility to work as missionaries, especially in territories that few early modern Europeans would have exposure to: the New World.

The Jesuits would find themselves scattered throughout the New World, in places such as Brazil, Mexico, and New France. The Jesuits were invested heavily in New France during the seventeenth century. However, initially, the

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[115] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 26.

[116] For the Jesuits' divergence from former Catholic spiritual traditions, see Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 26-29.

[117] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 28.

[118] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind*, 28.

[119] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 9.

Jesuits were not the primary missionaries to New France, as the Franciscan Recollets had been the primary missionaries of New France: "When Jesuits priests arrived on the continent…in 1625, they joined the Franciscan Recollet missionaries who already had been working the missionary field for ten years."[120] While living there, the Franciscan Recollets instructed the local Native Americans in Catholicism but in *French.* This meant that they would attempt to teach the Native Americans the French language.[121] However, this changed in 1629 when the English had taken over Quebec "by the Kirke brothers, British privateers who seized the colony."[122] Although the English would return Quebec to French control in 1631, as part of the treaty of St. Germain en Laye, this change would alter the missionary structure of New France, as the Jesuits, not the Franciscan Recollets, would become the new primary missionaries of New France.[123] This is for a few reasons.

First, the Jesuits had backing both in France and in New France, where their new role as the head of New France missionary efforts could be attributed to "their attention to mission politics in the previous decade, and seem to have viewed collaboration with governmental and commercial interests as essential to the success of their mission."[124] For decades, French Jesuits had been seeking actively the patronage of French nobility: "The Jesuit cultivation of the elite made good sense…and it was an essential part of the Society's strategy."[125]

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[120] True, *Masters and Students,* 29.

[121] For Franciscan Recollet instruction of Native Americans in French, see True, *Masters and Students,* 29.

[122] True, *Masters and Students,* 31.

[123] For the English returning Quebec, see True, *Masters and Students,* 31. For the shift from Recollect Franciscans to Jesuits, see True, *Masters and Students,* 32-54.

[124] True, *Masters and Students*, 33.

[125] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 15.

They sought these influential and wealthy people because they could finance and support the Jesuits' missionary efforts: "As a 'silent partner' in the formation of the Compaigne de 100 Associés…the Jesuits aligned themselves with the company's mission…the Compaigne de 100 Associés, in turn, aligned itself more closely with attempts to Christianize the colony."[126] Thus, many New France Jesuits received and asked for aid from their benefactors back in France. However, the Jesuits' connection ran deeper than just the French elite, and extended even to the French monarchy itself, as the Jesuits were the official confessors of Louis XIV, which gave the Jesuits great influence and prestige within the French royal court.[127] Also during Louis XIV's reign, the Jesuits were still France's primary missionaries, as they "led the way in the foreign missionary effort."[128] However, despite their close connections to the French monarchy, the Jesuits in New France became much more subservient to the French government and its New France policies over time.

Initially, the Jesuits were not obliged to follow Champlain's colonial lead, as the Compaigne de 100 Associés brought the Jesuits over to New France, and Cardinal Richelieu set the company's mission.[129] This meant that "In supporting the Crown's plan to govern the…affairs of the colony through the intermediary of a trading company, the Jesuits had aligned themselves with powerful French colonial interests."[130] This gave the Jesuits independence in pursuing and establishing their missions as separate from administrative control. However, this would change during the 1660s. Although the Jesuits would remain as

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[126] True, *Masters and Students,* 33.

[127] François Bluche, *Louis XIV,* trans. Mark Greengrass (New York: Franklin Watts, 1990), 390.

[128] Bluche, *Louis XIV,* 391.

[129] True, *Masters and Students,* 33.

[130] True, *Masters and Students,* 34.

missionaries in New France, the implementation of direct, political control of the New France colony put the Jesuits under the jurisdiction of the French government, which "displayed a marked determination to suppress what they believed to be the excessive authority wielded by the clergy in New France."[131] Despite greater political control over their day-to-day activities in the latter periods of the 17th century, the Jesuits of the 1630s and 1640s would still have great independence and flexibility in pursuing their missionary activities.

Second, the Jesuits' approach to the missions of New France differed from the previous Franciscan Recollet experience. Rather than teaching the Native Americans French and having them adapt to French ways, the Jesuits made efforts to learn local languages and immerse themselves in the Native American communities that they encountered.[132] Although there is a temptation to label the Franciscan Recollet missionaries as cultural absolutists and the Jesuits as cultural relativists, this divergence should be seen more as a change in missionary tactics rather than as a fundamental difference between the two religious orders, as the Franciscan Recollets were new to the environment and had limited options on how to interact with Native Americans: "No matter how Eurocentric from a cultural perspective the missionary strategy of the French Friars may have been, it was not because they were Franciscans but because they were the pioneer missionaries with little practical experience."[133] For the Jesuits, learning local languages was a means to an end of teaching Christianity.[134] However, it was the Jesuits' willingness to gain fluency, or lack thereof, in Native American languages that proved to be one of their greatest

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[131] Eccles, *Canada under Louis XIV*, 222.

[132] For the difference in language tactics, see True, *Masters and Students,* 29-30.

[133] Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France*, 102.

[134] True, *Masters and Students,* 35.

challenges because they had to convince both their detractors and their supporters back in Europe that they were learning languages fluently and indeed saving souls: “While language barriers…might have been an acceptable excuse for disappointing results, Jesuit missionaries still were under pressure to justify their presence in New France.”[135] To address these concerns, the Jesuits would turn to their greatest asset of the early modern period: written communication.

In addition to connecting with one another spiritually through the Catholic Church, written communication between Jesuits or between Jesuits and laypeople would be another form of connection. This is especially significant because the Jesuits’ written communications allow historians to have a plethora of primary sources about what life was like both inside and outside of Europe during the early modern period as it is “a body of discourse representing a global conversation, with participating voices from around the world.”[136] However, this communications system was not perfect, as transporting messages took time, which two Jesuits communicating across the Pacific Ocean experienced in the eighteenth century: “each became concerned only after not hearing from correspondents for three years.”[137] Nonetheless, the Jesuits used their information network to gain support for their mission back in France, as they “were well-positioned…to define for French and religious authorities, as well as potential financial backers of any missionary effort, what it would take to successfully bring Christianity to the Amerindians.”[138] Through their political backing, emphasis on learning languages, and communication

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[135] True, *Masters and Students,* 44.

[136] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 194.

[137] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 196.

[138] True, *Masters and Students,* 45.

network, the Jesuits would become the undisputed head of French missionary efforts in New France.

The Jesuits' written information go beyond asking for aid or trying to convince readers of their success in saving souls. They provide an excellent source of information about their lives and the lives of the people they encountered. This is especially true in New France, where Jesuits served, unknowingly, as ethnohistorians, and they were instrumental "in collecting and preserving information about the Amerindian groups of the New World."[139] Their writings would be compiled and collected in a series of volumes known as *The Jesuit Relations,* and would contain an account of the daily lives of the Jesuits living with Native Americans while documenting what they saw and experienced. These are the writings which will be the main focus of this study. It is these volumes that contain the works of Jesuits such as St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Isaac Jogues, and St. Charles Garnier. Here, one shall find the men who brought with them their French, Catholic background. One also shall find the men who encountered and immersed themselves completely in a new culture. In the midst of this, these men would become representations of all the social, political, economic, and religious changes that were occurring in the *pays d'en haut.* They would become examples of the middle ground itself.

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[139] True, *Masters and Students,* 141.

Chapter II

A Brief Introduction to the Life of St. Jean de Brébeuf

The Catholic Church canonized St. Jean de Brébeuf as one of the eight men who are known collectively as the North American Martyrs. He was born in France in 1593 and entered the Society of Jesus in 1617. J. M. Chaumonot, one of his hagiographers, wrote that St. Jean de Brébeuf planned originally to enter into the Society of Jesus as a lay brother: "He had asked, on entering the Society, to be a Brother Coadjutor; and, before taking his vows, he proposed this again, esteeming himself unworthy of the Priesthood."[140] Despite this sentiment, Brébeuf became a Jesuit priest.

Although Chaumonot did not go into detail about Brébeuf's actual religious training while in France, it can be inferred that St. Jean de Brébeuf had a similar religious education when compared to other Jesuits of his day and other Jesuits who had entered before him. In addition to studying theology and Jesuit spirituality, early modern Jesuits, including those living in France, studied the humanities, as St. Ignatius of Loyola "wanted his followers to study subjects fundamental to the humanist educational curriculum, especially grammar and rhetoric."[141] Also, part of Jesuit formation included serving as teachers within Jesuit colleges: "Each Jesuit spent at least two years as a teacher in Europe's Jesuit colleges as part of his training."[142] Finally, early modern Jesuits studied Latin, as St. Ignatius of Loyola "stressed the importance of cultivating the polished Latin that was in vogue during the Renaissance."[143] At the end of Jesuit

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[140] Chaumonot, "CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].," 34:179.

[141] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 31.

[142] True, *Masters and Students,* 46.

[143] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 55.

formation, the ideal Jesuit had "solid learning, the ability to preach and to teach, and a knowledge of how to deal with men."[144] These were the skills that early modern Jesuits were supposed to have, and it would be reasonable to infer that St. Jean de Brébeuf was educated in this manner. Also, it would be entirely plausible that he utilized the skills he had learned through his formation while learning Huron culture and preaching to Huron converts. With these skills, he was ready to make the trek into the New World.

In 1625, Brébeuf went to New France. During his first year in New France, he lived among the Montagnais, a Native American group living in the area around Quebec. In 1626, he lived with the Hurons, where he stayed until the English took over Quebec in 1629. Although the English had taken over the settlement of Quebec, St. Jean de Brébeuf had made his way back to France. However, his three-year tenure among the Hurons was productive, as he was able to gain an understanding of the Huron language. In 1633, he came back to Quebec, armed with his prior knowledge of Huron language.[145] During his lifetime, according to Chaumonot, St. Jean de Brébeuf experienced profound religious experiences, including mystical visions, and exhibited great piety and devotion to the Catholic faith: "Often, Our Lord appeared to him,—sometimes in a state of glory, but usually bearing his Cross, or indeed, being attached to it."[146] While St. Jean de Brébeuf was discovering spiritual peace, there was a lack of political peace between the Hurons and the Iroquois. In 1649, while living in the village of St. Ignace, the Iroquois staged an attack upon its inhabitants. The Iroquois tortured and killed both Huron and French alike, including St. Jean de

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[144] Martin, *The Jesuit Mind,* 31-32.

[145] For St. Jean de Brébeuf's first and second entries into New France, see Chaumonot, "CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].," 34:159, 161.

[146] Chaumonot, "CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].," 34:161.

Brébeuf and St. Gabriel L'Alemant, who is another member of the North American Martyrs.[147] Although St. Jean de Brébeuf met a tortuous and horrific death, his twenty-four years of experience living and learning in New France gives great insight into the development of the middle ground.

With a biographical background of St. Jean de Brébeuf in place, it is time to look into the first case study of this joint history distinction thesis and honors capstone. This chapter will be divided into different sections. Each section will cover a different topic that existed within New France and the *pays d'en haut,* and which St. Jean de Brébeuf had an encounter with or was mentioned in his writings. These topics include Amerindian languages, disease, the differences among French colonists and their interactions with Native Americans, Jesuit accounts of Native American culture, and martyrdom. Each of these sections will first have an explanation of the historical context behind each topic. Afterwards, I will detail how St. Jean de Brébeuf reacted to or encountered each of these topics. His reactions will be the examples I use to show how he helps represent the middle ground. To do this, I will utilize his own writings or his hagiographers' accounts of his life and death, both of which are from *The Jesuit Relations.*

Amerindian Languages and the Jesuits

As the Jesuits immersed themselves among the Amerindian groups living in New France and the *pays d'en haut,* they became aware of each group's particular language and discovered the linguistic differences among Native Americans. Rather than teaching Native Americans the French language, each Jesuit living within an indigenous village made an extensive effort to learn the local language as the main form of everyday communication, as they learned

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[147] For an account of St. Jean de Brébeuf's martyrdom, see Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34: 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37.

Illustration. 3: *Jean de Brébeuf,* illustration, courtesy of Martyrs' Shrine*,* Midland, https://martyrs-shrine.com/gallery/jean-de-brebeuf/.

that "one could not teach Christianity in New France without first having learned Amerindian languages."[148] However, the Jesuits did not learn these languages for its own sake. The Jesuits made an effort to become fluent in these languages as a means of saving the souls of Native Americans: "Speaking well to a potential convert in his own language…was the key to securing a change of heart."[149] In their linguistic study, the Jesuits encountered both beauty and

[148] True, *Masters and Students,* 35.

[149] True, *Masters and Students,* 64.

difficulties that separated Amerindian languages from their familiar Romance languages.

The Jesuits described Native American languages' linguistic beauties as "rich" while they described linguistic difficulties as "poor."[150] By "rich," the Jesuits meant that there was a particular linguistic and divine beauty about the complexities and intricacies of Native American languages, especially in their differences with European languages: "differences between them could be understood as beautiful, and evidence of God's work."[151] The Jesuits made a special point to emphasize the beauty of Native American languages as a means of proving to their European counterparts that Native Americans were indeed human beings and capable of being converted to Christianity: "the Jesuits described linguistic difference in terms that would…suggest that Amerindians were as much children of God as were Europeans, and demonstrate the necessity of the missionaries' own work."[152] However, despite the Jesuits' commentaries on the beauty of local languages, they still described Native American languages as "poor." More specifically, Amerindian linguistic poverty was attributed to the difficulties in translating or finding the suitable vocabulary necessary to explain Christian doctrine.[153] This linguistic difficulty could cause great confusion for both the Jesuits and Native Americans.

One example of the difficulty in translation was in explaining the person of Jesus Christ to Native Americans. For example, the Algonquian language included the word *manidowek* or *manitou.* The *manitou* was "an other-than-

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[150] For Jesuit interpretations of linguistic "richness" and "poverty," see True, *Masters and Students,* 68-76.

[151] True, *Masters and Students,* 65.

[152] True, *Masters and Students,* 74.

[153] True, *Masters and Students,* 70-71.

human person, a spiritual being capable of taking manifold physical forms."[154] The Jesuits, seeking a way to explain person of Christ to the Algonquians, utilized the preexisting word *manitou* as a way to articulate to Algonquians who Christ is and His spiritual power. However, because Algonquians utilized various *manitous* for spiritual and material guidance, e.g. for the abundance of food, success in war, etc., Christ became incorporated into the Algonquian pantheon of *manitous.* Because of this, from the Algonquian perspective, if Christ failed to bring about an abundance of food, then Christ could be set aside, and the Algonquians could look for another *manitou* who could bring about material success.[155] Thus, for the Algonquians, they could look to Christ as another *manitou* and "sought his aid so long as he delivered it reliably."[156] To summarize, the Jesuits' use of the word *manitou* to explain Christ actually harmed missionary efforts in that "Indians were not so much being converted to Christianity as Christ was being converted into a manitou."[157] This shows that the Jesuits experienced difficulty in the form of linguistic barriers when trying to communicate theological points to Native Americans.

Nonetheless, even with the difficulty of translating and finding comprehensible ways to explain complex Catholic theology to Native Americans, the Jesuits continued their missionary and translation efforts. They had come across the Atlantic Ocean to save souls, after all. St. Jean de Brébeuf was one of these Jesuits, who continued to find a meaningful and accessible way to teach Catholicism to the Hurons and save their souls, while living amongst them in New France.

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[154] White, *The Middle Ground,* 25.

[155] For Jesuits and the term, *manitou,* see White, *The Middle Ground,* 26-27.

[156] White, *The Middle Ground,* 27.

[157] White, *The Middle Ground,* 26.

St. Jean de Brébeuf and Language

St. Jean de Brébeuf immersed himself completely in the geographic, political, and cultural environment of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* While living in the *pays d'en haut* and New France, Brébeuf became affiliated with the Hurons and acknowledged that the only way to connect with the Hurons was learning their language: "In the first place, we have been employed in the study of the language…One can, nevertheless, do nothing without this study. All the French who are here have eagerly apply themselves to it."[158] While learning Huron, St. Jean de Brébeuf discovered that "A relative noun with them includes always the meaning of one of the three persons of the possessive pronoun, so that they say…my father, thy father, his father."[159] The Hurons' use of the possessive pronouns will help to show St. Jean de Brébeuf's linguistic entry into the middle ground.

Like his Jesuit companions, St. Jean de Brébeuf looked for ways to adapt Catholic theology into a way that made grammatical and cultural sense to Hurons, given the confines of the Huron language. Most notably, St. Jean de Brébeuf encountered this when trying to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity to the Hurons.[160] However, because the Huron language attributed possessive pronouns to their nouns, he was unable to instill the phrase, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" to the Hurons, as "Father, Son, Holy Spirit" do not have possessive pronouns attached to them.[161] Thus, St. Jean de Brébeuf needed to find a solution. In 1636, St. Jean de Brébeuf wrote a

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[158] Jean de Brébeuf, " [113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] to *Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:131.

[159] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER IV. OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.," 10:119.

[160] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER IV. OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.," 10:119.

[161] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER IV. OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.," 10:119.

letter to the superior of the New France mission, Paul Le Jeune. In it, he tells Le Jeune of this dilemma and of his solution to it: “Would you judge it fitting, while waiting a better expression, to substitute instead, *In the name of our Father, and of his Son, and of their Holy Ghost?* Certainly it seems that the three Persons of the most holy [*sic*] Trinity would be sufficiently expressed in this way.”[162] This shows his willingness to adapt Catholic theology into a comprehensible and meaningful way for Hurons. Another example of this is St. Jean de Brébeuf and other Jesuits’ attempts to translate and teach the Our Father prayer to the Hurons: “At the beginning, we chant on our knees the *Pater noster* [*sic*]*,* translated into Huron verse. Father Daniel, as its author, chants a couplet alone, and then we all together chant it again.”[163] This mixture of Catholic theology and Huron linguistics is representative of the unique Franco-Native American culture that emerged in the middle ground.

Although St. Jean de Brébeuf was a key figure within the Huron missions, he was by no means the sole Jesuit missionary among the Hurons. With him were men like St. Isaac Jogues and St. Charles Garnier. Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, they learned Huron not only as a means of everyday communication but also as a way to save the souls of potential Huron converts. In a letter to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Mutius Vitelleschi, St. Jean de Brébeuf commented on his Jesuit community’s prowess with the Huron language, which included St. Isaac Jogues and St. Charles Garnier’s respective proficiency with it: “So persistent and studious are they all, that in only one or two years they have gained a truly wonderful proficiency in a language still rude and not

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[162] Brébeuf, “CHAPTER IV. OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.,” 10:119.

[163] Brébeuf, “[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].,” 8:143.

reduced to grammatical rules."[164] This shows that these members of the North American Martyrs were invested truly in learning Huron, and that their linguistic dexterity was remarkable among the Jesuits living in the Huron mission. This highlights also that St. Jean de Brébeuf was not the only Jesuit studying Huron. In addition, this quotation also reveals St. Jean de Brébeuf's own commentary on the Huron language itself, as he described it as "rude."[165] This goes back to the Jesuits' description of Native American languages being either linguistically "rich" or "poor."[166] However, this negative view on Huron does not mean that this quotation is not valuable. Indeed, this quotation shows the dual nature of the North American Martyrs, as they have a willingness to meet the Hurons on a linguistic level, while retaining a European understanding of Native American languages. In other words, this shows that they carry elements of both European and Native American cultures within them, which is what occurred within the middle ground.

Of the Jesuits' efforts to learn Native American languages, it can be argued that their pinnacle is their creation of a written Huron language, as prior to the Jesuits, the Hurons did not have any written form of their language, which True reflects on when he sees a stop sign with the Huron word for stop, *seten,* painted on it: "Without the intervention of the Jesuits…it would have been impossible for 'seten' to be painted on a sign—or written at all."[167] This means

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[164] Jean de Brébeuf, "Letter of Father Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 11, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 19.

[165] Brébeuf, "Letter of Father Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," 11:19.

[166] For Jesuit interpretations of linguistic "richness" and "poverty," see True, *Masters and Students,* 68-76.

[167] True, *Masters and Students,* 80.

that the Jesuits created an entirely new form of Huron, which is a sign of their extensive linguistic study. As part of this, they created a dictionary for the Huron language and were very careful to guard it with the utmost care, especially when New France Jesuits, such as St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Charles Garnier, were notified of an impending attack: "I have charged them to carry…above all, to be especially careful to put our Dictionary, and all that we have of the language, in a place of safety."[168] This statement reveals that the Huron dictionary was the product of the Jesuits' linguistic labors while highlighting its significance within the New France Jesuit community.

St. Jean de Brébeuf's writings were not limited solely to linguistic examples. He wrote extensively on other matters concerning Huron life—all of which can be seen as examples of the middle ground. One element that became an increasingly large aspect of Huron life was death and disease. This would trouble both Hurons and French alike, and shape future interactions between the two groups.

The Jesuits and Disease

As the French settled deeper into the North American continent and came into contact with greater numbers of Native Americans, they brought with them more than merely objects of trade. They also brought with them diseases such as measles and smallpox. The Native Americans living around the Great Lakes had no biological immunity to these diseases. Thus, Native Americans communities living in New France and the *pays d'en haut* were devastated by these diseases, which led to declining populations and famine throughout the countryside. To give an idea of this demographic change, although there are conflicting sources, the number of people within the Huron population ranged

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[168] Brébeuf, et al. "[23] CHAPTER III. SPECIAL ASSISTANCE OF GOD TO US IN OUR PERSECUTION.," 15:65.

from 22,500 to 40,000 people prior to the mid-1630s.[169] By 1640, there were 10,000 Hurons.[170] This shows the massive impact European diseases had on Native Americans. The Jesuits became witnesses to how disease affected demographic and social change in New France. Their experience of disease would also help to record this aspect of the middle ground and their role and development in it.

Because many Native Americans did not convert in large numbers to Catholicism, the Jesuits used the huge number of sickly individuals, including infants, as an opportunity to baptize them, and the lack of willing converts meant that they had to "content themselves with…performing surreptitious baptisms on ailing and dying infants."[171] As the Jesuits continued to baptize those who had been affected by biological maladies, they eventually became associated with disease itself, and Amerindian attitudes towards them could shift from them being healers to being the sources of the disease, which meant that "they received blame as well as gratitude for the result of events beyond their control."[172] The Jesuits were caught in the middle of this shift between praise and blame. This dichotomy would exist throughout the Jesuits' experience in New France and in the *pays d'en haut.* This is only example of how the middle ground was a confusing and uncertain place for multiple groups. St. Jean de Brébeuf was not only immersed in the midst of this confusion over the source of the pestilence affecting Native Americans, but also was someone who would chronicle it through the pages of *The Jesuit Relations.*

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[169] Georges E. Sioui, *Huron-Wendat: The Heritage of the Circle,* trans. by Jane Brierley (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 84.

[170] Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest 1492-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 195.

[171] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 12.

[172] Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France,* 192.

St. Jean de Brébeuf and His Experience with Disease

Like the other Jesuits who came to New France, St. Jean de Brébeuf had his own encounters with disease-ridden Native Americans. As early as 1635, while on his journey to a Huron village, he noticed the significant toll that the contagions were taking upon the Native American populations that he encountered: "I attribute, nevertheless, all these extraordinary difficulties to the sickness among our Savages…It has been so universal among the Savages of our acquaintance that I do not know if one has escaped its attacks."[173] Meanwhile, St. Jean de Brébeuf took note of how the disease affects his French and Native American companions differently and realized that "neither on the journey hither, nor while in this Country, has one of us been taken with this sickness…Some have had since then light attacks of sickness, but they have passed in a few days."[174] This quote is significant because it shows both his awareness of how the disease affected Europeans and Native Americans differently and his struggle to comprehend why Native Americans were affected more severely than their European counterparts. St. Jean de Brébeuf was trained to be a priest, not a doctor. This reveals how even early modern Europeans still lacked medical knowledge. This being said, both Native Americans and Europeans looked to spiritual matters as means to cure disease. For example, Paul Le Jeune attributed the cause of a Native American's sickness to a punishment from God: "'But dost thou not see that it is God who

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[173] Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:87.

[174] Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:89.

has punished thee by this sickness?'"[175] Meanwhile, the Hurons of St. Jean de Brébeuf's community looked to conversion to Catholicism as a means of healing: "For our Hurons have thought that, if they believed in God and served him as we do, they would not die in so large numbers."[176] Although neither of these responses are legitimate means of medical care, they do show how both Europeans and Native Americans were searching for solutions to sickness. While St. Jean de Brébeuf and the Jesuits may have had little understanding of medical treatment, both he and his fellow missionaries were aware fully of the implications that this widespread pestilence had on them as Jesuits.

As the ravages of disease affected more and more villages throughout New France and the *pays d'en haut,* St. Jean de Brébeuf saw the range of desperation the Hurons had when it came to looking for a cure for their ailments. However, the Hurons' desire to look for an end to this epidemic turned desperation into fear and hysteria. Because the Hurons did not know where these illnesses came from, they sought a plausible and comprehensible answer to this. Over time, the Hurons began to associate the Jesuits with the disease and believed that they were the ones who were spreading it from village to village: "tales spread among the people…that our Frenchmen, and we in particular, were the cause of this pestilence, and that our sole purpose in coming to their country was to compass their destruction."[177] Because of this belief, the Jesuits came to be seen as sorcerers by the Hurons: "At worst, Indians regarded

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[175] Paul Le Jeune, "[21] CHAPTER II. OF THE CONVERSION AND OF THE DEATH OF SOME SAVAGES.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 7, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1897), 279.

[176] Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the yearn 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:149.

[177] Brébeuf, "Letter of Father Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," 11:15.

them as dangerous witches."[178] Although the Jesuits and the French may have unknowingly carried the contagion with them, they did not spread it by supernatural means. However, this did not stop the Hurons from fearing the Jesuits' presence, which became so great that even Jesuits like St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Charles Garnier realized that the Hurons "were already so bitter that the Captains most favorable to us told…plainly that the greatest favor we could hope for was to be driven from the country and sent back to Kébec [*sic*]."[179] However, despite knowing the heightened tensions and danger to their physical safety, the Jesuits continued to spend time with the Hurons. This can be seen in the continued publications of *The Jesuit Relations*.

St. Jean de Brébeuf's writings in particular highlight a firsthand account of how the physical contact between Europeans and Native Americans resulted in an unimaginably high mortality rate because of the spread of foreign contagions to the Amerindian population. However, despite the horrors of this biological epidemic, this was a part of the middle ground, as this was a representation, albeit a negative one, of the interactions between the French and the Native Americans living in the *pays d'en haut* and New France. Contacts between the Native Americans and the newly arrived French brought with them unintended consequences. This was one of them. As time passed, the connections between Native Americans and the French became more and more complex, as Amerindians became more exposed to different types of French groups. Knowing this, the Jesuits would have to learn how to differentiate themselves from their French counterparts, who also came to North America for their own reasons.

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[178] White, *The Middle Ground,* 27.

[179] Brébeuf et al., "CHAPTER II. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY, WHERE OUR DEATH IS UNDER DELIBERATION.," 15:37

The Jesuits and their French Co-inhabitants of the *Pays d'en Haut*

The Jesuits were only one among various groups of French colonists who came to New France. They came alongside traders, colonial administrators and soldiers. They also came with proprietors, who "would finance colonization from the proceeds of commercial monopolies; they, and not the crown, would bear responsibility for recruitment."[180] Proprietors would still exist in this colony; however, this would change in 1663, when "the crown intervened directly in both administration and recruitment."[181] Regardless of administration, people came to New France. However, although these French groups may have come from the same political state, this did not mean that they all necessarily shared the same views or the same rationales for coming to New France. While the administrative officials were busy running colonial affairs and conducting diplomacy with Native Americans, the traders were interested in obtaining furs, while the Jesuits sought to save Native American souls and spread Christianity. These affairs could sometimes conflict, as "Saving souls, gathering furs, and gathering allies…were endeavors that could not always easily be reconciled."[182] Because each of these colonists came to New France with different objectives, this meant that their agendas could often conflict with one another, which could turn into suspicion and distrust even amongst the French themselves: "Even a cursory examination of the accusations of Jesuit missionaries against traders and coureurs de bois, of the governor against the Jesuits, of the Montreal traders against the governor…reveal the depths of French suspicion."[183] This

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[180] Choquette, *Frenchmen into Peasants*, 250.

[181] Choquette, *Frenchmen into Peasants,* 249.

[182] White, *The Middle Ground,* 28.

[183] White, *The Middle Ground,* 28.

disunity among the French would not be kept among themselves and it would spill over into their interactions with Native Americans.

Throughout tenure of the French's presence in New France and the *pays d'en haut*, the Native Americans' attitudes towards the French as a whole worsened over time.[184] At first, they had even gone so far as to liken the French to *manitous*: "The Algonquians received the first Frenchmen who arrived in the lands between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi during the 1650s and 1660s as…manitous."[185] However, this attitude quickly changed as the Native Americans discovered that some French individuals were concerned only with the procurement of furs: "The French were greedy and often quite vulnerable men with an insatiable desire for old, greasy beaver robes."[186] Although the Native Americans' perceptions of the Jesuits ebbed and flowed between being sorcerers and being benefactors, they at least managed to differentiate them from their French counterparts who were interested merely in trading beaver furs, which meant that they arguably had a better status than other French people: "The status of other Frenchmen declined more precipitously than did that of the Jesuits, since traders failed far more rapidly and seriously to fulfill Algonquian expectations."[187] St. Jean de Brébeuf himself recognized this differentiation of French people's status in his accounts in *The Jesuit Relations.*

St. Jean de Brébeuf and the Jesuits Are Here for Souls

Unlike the French traders, St. Jean de Brébeuf and his fellow Jesuits focused themselves on spiritual matters over material concerns, i.e. saving souls. This goes back to their formation as Jesuits and to early modern

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[184] White, *The Middle Ground,* 27.

[185] White, *The Middle Ground,* 25.

[186] White, *The Middle Ground,* 27.

[187] White, *The Middle Ground,* 27.

Catholicism. Thus, their rationale for coming to New France did not include obtaining beaver skins or facilitating the fur trade between the French and the Native Americans. However, St. Jean de Brébeuf knew that the reality of the situation was that the Jesuits, by virtue of them being French themselves, could shape the Hurons' perceptions and relationships to the French as a whole, as he noted that their coming to the Huron village, Teandeouïhata, had implications for how the villagers perceived their own relations with the French: "Besides, if we had gone elsewhere the people of this village would have thought themselves still in disgrace with the French, and perhaps would have abandoned trade with them."[188] Nonetheless, St. Jean de Brébeuf asserted the Jesuits' religious identity and that their religious motives differed from the purely monetary rationales of the French traders.

Brébeuf made this clear to the Hurons multiple times, both in times of safety and in time of danger for the Jesuits. Through his efforts, he believed that the Hurons finally "understood, from our actions and from our truths [of religion], that we have not come hither to buy skins or carry on any traffic, but solely to teach them and win them to Christ, and to procure for them their souls' health, and finally everlasting and immortal life."[189] St. Jean de Brébeuf's focus and rationale on saving the souls of Native Americans even shaped his views on how his French counterparts should approach their sojourns and interactions with Amerindian groups in New France, and he goes so far as to say that "he who thinks of coming here…for any other than God, will have made a sad mistake."[190] This highlights how St. Jean de Brébeuf's personal commitment to

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[188] Brébeuf, "[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic.*]," 8:103.

[189] Brébeuf, "Letter of Father Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," 11:15.

[190] Brébeuf, "Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:99.

his role as a missionary and that his motives for interacting with the Hurons were religious, not economic.

The necessity to show how Brébeuf's purpose for living with the Hurons was different from French traders reveals the middle ground's complexity. It was filled with administrators, merchants, missionaries, villagers, and warriors. All of these people coexisted with one another, in a confusing and uncertain world for all parties involved. However, the fact that these differences existed was a reality of the middle ground, one that forced both the French and Native Americans to navigate it with uncertainty. In addition, asserting one's religious identity and intentions in the midst of all the confusion and chaos showcased the challenges of living as a Jesuit missionary in the middle ground. This analysis highlights how St. Jean de Brébeuf addressed these complexities, which reveals his participation in the middle ground. His participation in it would go deeper, and reveal his own investment, observations, and insights into the Huron community.

Jesuits in the Villages

During their village stays in New France and the *pays d'en haut*, the Jesuits did not limit themselves to learning only local languages. They immersed themselves completely into the local culture through living in a local village and conversing with its inhabitants on a daily basis. Also, they recorded what they saw occurring within villages or their conversations with villagers. This included learning about and describing various Native American rituals, belief systems, village organization and leadership, etc. This made them, and their accounts in *The Jesuit Relations,* highly valuable as important examples of ethnographic texts.[191] Even if the Jesuits' own biases and perspectives are present in *The Jesuit Relations,* this does not discount the value of these texts: "their accounts

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[191] For the Jesuits' ethnographic observations and accounts, see True, *Masters and Students,* 5.

of Amerindian cultures undeniably reflect an effort to extract from a distant and poorly known place information for the benefit of the home left behind."[192] Many of the Jesuits' entries contain information about Amerindian customs, including St. Jean de Brébeuf's letters. His accounts are particularly noteworthy because they reflect his in-depth experience of living and working among the Hurons in New France. His witness to Huron culture in *The Jesuit Relations* is a testament to his living in the middle ground.

St. Jean de Brébeuf Among the Hurons

St. Jean de Brébeuf's tenure with the Hurons showed the depth and breadth of his knowledge of Huron culture. There, he not only helped to translate and explain Christianity in a sensible and sensitive way to the Hurons, but also learned from them as well. Namely, he was able to describe, in detail, various aspects of Huron life and culture. For example, he wrote extensively about Huron religious beliefs and rituals and observed the game of lacrosse and its role within Huron society.[193] In addition, St. Jean de Brébeuf became acquainted with Huron diplomacy, and was a witness to the importance and sacredness of the calumet ceremony to the Hurons: "they never attend a council without a pipe or calumet in their mouths."[194] In addition, a later entry also shows his and other Jesuits' participation in this ceremony in a Huron council: "The council was opened by our presenting to them a cake of Tobacco [*sic*] in a dish…They never speak of business, nor come to any conclusion, except with the pipe in the

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[192] True, *Masters and Students,* 5.

[193] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER IV. CONCERNING FEASTS, DANCES; THE GAMES OF DISH AND CROSSE [*sic*]; WHAT CALL THEY *ONONHAROIA.,*" 10:185, 187.

[194] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER VI. OF THE POLITY OF THE HURONS, AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.," 10:219.

mouth."[195] The Jesuits learning the rituals of the calumet ceremony is a clear sign of the middle ground and of its importance in Huron diplomacy. Thus, St. Jean de Brébeuf's presence at the council and knowledge of the ceremony reveals both his familiarity with Huron customs and diplomacy and his participation in the middle ground through the calumet ceremony. His extensive experience and knowledge of the Hurons shaped his views on how the Jesuit missions in New France should be organized and structured.

Ever since the founding of the Society of Jesus, all Jesuits, including members today, have to make vows of obedience to their superiors. St. Jean de Brébeuf would have taken this vow of obedience when he became an ordained priest in the Society of Jesus. Theoretically, every Jesuit was supposed to be obedient to their superior. In reality, this was not always the case.

In a 1648 letter sent to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Vincent Caraffa, St. Jean de Brébeuf wrote on the selection of the future superior of New France. This is because the current superior, Paul Ragueneau, was going to be rotated out of his position, as the position of provincial superior changed every three years.[196] Although St. Jean de Brébeuf mentioned that he would accept whoever the Superior General chose to be Ragueneau's successor, if the decision had already been made, he stated explicitly that he would prefer that the next candidate "ought to be taken only from those who are here, and not from others who have no experience whatever in these regions."[197]

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[195] Brébeuf et al., "CHAPTER FIRST. OF THE PERSECUTIONS THAT WE SUFFERED IN THE YEAR 1637.," 15:27.

[196] Jean de Brébeuf, "Letter of Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 32, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 61, 63.

[197] Brébeuf, "Letter of Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," 32:63.

His sentiment reflected his desire for having a superior who is accustomed to living and working in New France, which shows that he recognized that the province's organization and spiritual success would be best attained through a Jesuit who had lived in New France for an extended period of time. St. Jean de Brébeuf's sentiment could only have emerged out of a deep understanding of Huron culture and the intricacies of New France and its relations to Native Americans, and reflects why he would have protested the assignment of another non-local superior to the province.

St. Jean de Brébeuf's familiarity with Huron language, culture, diplomacy, beliefs, etc. make him an invaluable representation of the middle ground. However, like other human beings, St. Jean de Brébeuf could not live forever, and met his death, by martyrdom, in 1649. However, even in his final hour of being tortured and executed, St. Jean de Brébeuf and his torturers still showcased the middle ground.

The Jesuits, New France, and Martyrdom

The Jesuits, like their French counterparts, knew that when they entered into New France off French ships and stepped onto North American soil for the first time, they would come into a land that was completely unfamiliar to them. They knew nothing or almost nothing of the land's environment or its inhabitants. However, what they did know was that New France itself would be a hostile and unforgiving place, where it was very likely that one would die in this place and never see France again. Despite the inherent dangers of coming to North America, some of the Jesuits who came not only accepted the risks but also embraced them. That is, these Jesuits themselves actually looked forward to death, specifically martyrdom, as they likened their suffering to Christ's Passion: "All this pain and adversity was not without meaning for the Jesuits: It allowed them to identify with Christ on the cross and to assure themselves that

out of affliction would come glory."[198] Even St. Jean de Brébeuf desired martyrdom when he came to New France, as Chaumonot wrote that "I see nothing more frequent in his memoirs than the desires which he had to die for the glory of Jesus Christ."[199] Brébeuf's desires would be granted to him. In 1649, while living in the village of San Ignace, St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Gabriel L'Alemant were martyred by Iroquois forces, who were at war with the Hurons.

The Death of St. Jean de Brébeuf

Although St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Gabriel L'Alemant were probably expecting to die in New France, they could not have predicted when or where they would breathe their last breath. According to an account written by Christophe Regnaut, St. Jean de Brébeuf died on March 16th, 1649.[200] According to an account written by Chaumonot, St. Gabriel L'Alemant died on March 17th, 1649.[201] News of their death spread from Huron survivors of the attack, who relayed the information to Regnaut.[202] He eventually visited the site of the attack to verify the survivors' claims, and, unsurprisingly, he discovered that the survivors' tales were true.[203] St. Jean de Brébeuf's martyrdom is an

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[198] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 13.

[199] Chaumonot, "CHAPTER V. SOME REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*].," 34:165.

[200] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:33.

[201] Chaumonot, ""CHAPTER IV. OF THE BLESSED DEATHS OF FATHER JEAN DE BREBEUF [*sic*], AND FATHER GABRIEL LALLEMENT [*sic*].," 34:157.

[202] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:25, 27.

[203] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:33, 35.

important element in understanding the cultural complications of the middle ground. First, his torturers themselves were products of the middle ground. This is because one of them was a Huron who Brébeuf had once baptized and instructed in the Christian faith, as Regnaut described him as a "wretched huron [*sic*] renegade,—who had remained a captive with the Iroquois, and whom Father de Brebœuf [*sic*] had formerly instructed and baptized."[204] However, this Huron torturer was clearly a Catholic apostate and used his theological knowledge to belittle and profane St. Jean de Brébeuf's faith: "The barbarian… took a kettle full of boiling water, which he poured over his body three times, in derision of Holy baptism [*sic*]…the barbarian said to him, with bitter sarcasm, 'Go to Heaven, for thou art well baptized.'"[205] Although they had given Brébeuf this inverted baptism, placed burning hot hatchets around his neck and other parts of his body, and set fire to his body, this did not stop him from preaching to his executioners or from maintaining his courage in the face of peril, according to Regnaut's account.[206] Angered by his resistance to pain and suffering and his attempts to convert his assailants, St. Jean de Brébeuf's torturers decided to continue their religiously-inspired assaults: "His executioners were enraged against him for constantly speaking to them of God and of their conversion. To prevent him from speaking more, they cut off his

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[204] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:27.

[205] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:29.

[206] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:29, 31.

tongue, and both his upper and lower lips."[207] The Iroquois and Hurons' knowledge of Christianity made their torture of St. Jean de Brébeuf unique and plausible only within the confines of the middle ground.

Second, aside from the anti-Christian tortures, the way that the Iroquois and Hurons inflicted pain and treated St. Jean de Brébeuf's body immediately *post mortem* are significant. Some of the methods that they inflicted onto him were typical forms of Iroquois torture, while others were used on special occasions. For example, stripping prisoners naked and beating them with clubs, and were commonplace, and even Regnaut himself noted his familiarity with these forms of torture: "I do not doubt that all which I have just related is true… for I have seen the same treatment given to Iroquois prisoners whom the huron [*sic*] savages had taken in war."[208] However, one aspect of St. Jean de Brébeuf's death is distinctive: his cannibalization. Cannibalization was a part of Native American torture in the Great Lakes and the *pays d'en haut,* and Brébeuf was aware of how Native American captors consume their prisoners: "They put him in a kettle piece by piece…in this case the head is given to the lowest person in the company; indeed some taste of this part, or of all the rest of the body, only with great horror. There are some who eat it with pleasure."[209] Prisoner cannibalization even extended to captured children: "Every night as the Senecas

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[207] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:31.

[208] For stripping prisoners and beating them, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 42-44. For Regnaut's familiarity with Amerindian torture, see Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:33.

[209] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER VI. OF THE POLITY OF THE HURONS, AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.," 10:229.

traveled home, they killed and ate a Miami child."[210] However, what is different from these examples, is *how* St. Jean de Brébeuf is cannibalized. Regnaut recalled that St. Jean de Brébeuf's executioners tore out, roasted, and ate his heart.[211] In addition, they drank his blood immediately after he died, "saying that Father de Brebœuf [*sic*] had been very courageous to endure so much pain as they had given him, and that, by drinking his blood, they would become courageous like him."[212] In addition, Chaumonot wrote that St. Gabriel L'Alemant's heart was also torn out and eaten like Brébeuf: "Before their death, both their hearts were torn out, by means of an opening above the breast; and those Barbarians inhumanly feasted thereon."[213] These forms of cannibalism are significant because they show that even his torturers admired his bravery, as this was used only on prisoners they found particularly brave, which St. Jean de Brébeuf knew about: "if he was a brave man, they tear out his heart, roast in on the coals, and distribute it in pieces to the young men; they think that this renders them courageous."[214] Coincidentally, the Iroquois' cannibalization of St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Gabriel L'Alemant's hearts confirms Brébeuf's own accounts and observations.

Although the potential for a Jesuit bias to make martyrs' deaths seem more horrific exists, Regnaut based his hagiography not only on reports from

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[210] White, *The Middle Ground,* 4.

[211] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:31.

[212] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:31.

[213] Chaumonot, "CHAPTER IV. OF THE BLESSED DEATHS OF FATHER JEAN DE BRE-BEUF, AND FATHER GABRIEL LALLEMENT.," 34:147.

[214] Brébeuf, "CHAPTER VI. OF THE POLITY OF THE HURONS, AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.," 10:227.

Hurons who survived this attack but also on his own personal observation, as he visited this site: “I saw and touched the opening which these barbarians had made to tear out his heart.”[215] Regnaut’s personal visit to Brébeuf’s place of death and witness to the sight of his corpse adds credibility to his hagiography by showing that he was not simply making up details in his telling of Brébeuf’s death.

However, not all the North American Martyrs were killed and cannibalized in this way. For example, St. Anthony Daniel was shot to death by arrows and a bullet, and his corpse placed into a fire: “At last he fell, mortally wounded by a musket-shot; and, pierced with arrows…until at length, the church having been set on fire, his naked body cast into the midst of the flames was so completely consumed that not even a bone was left.”[216] Nonetheless, although the North American Martyrs may have died in different ways, their experience of torture and death came out of a preexisting Native American culture that had its own ritualistic and complex approaches to warfare and torture. Thus, the fact that they are tortured and killed by Native Americans shows that they have been incorporated into this violent environment and their Jesuit contemporaries’ knowledge of it both point to the middle ground. More importantly, this shows that the very means used to kill St. Jean de Brébeuf is part of what brings him into the middle ground: a French man killed by Native American torture methods, whose heart was cannibalized out of admiration for his courage.

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[215] Regnaut, “A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L’Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.,” 34:35.

[216] Paul Ragueneau, “Letter of Father Paul Ragueneau to the Very Reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.,” in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 33, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 263.

Therefore, the death of St. Jean de Brébeuf can still teach modern day observers about the middle ground and his role in it.

Analysis of St. Jean de Brébeuf

This chapter has shown that St. Jean de Brébeuf's life and actions are representative of the middle ground. His willingness to learn the Huron language and find ways to explain Catholic doctrine in an accessible and comprehensible way to the Hurons shows linguistic, cultural, and religious accommodation. The epidemics and pestilences that shaped the populations of New France and how its survivors coped with fear and death is reflective of the contacts between the Native Americans and their newly arrived French counterparts. The diversity of Native American cultures and French sojourners to North America shows the variety of groups who tried to make sense of the new world that they were building. The recording and learning of Native American rituals and customs by the French and the learning of Catholic doctrine by Native Americans highlights the cross-cultural educational experience that occurred. Finally, even the experience of martyrdom reveals that both Native Americans and the French knew of each other's cultures and applied this cultural knowledge to martyrdom itself. In the midst of all these movements is St. Jean de Brébeuf. He and his writings not only stand as a witness to the middle ground but also his participation in it. That being said, it must be admitted that he was not perfect and that he did have Eurocentric views.

However, this does not lessen his significance in being a representation of the middle ground. If there is any doubt left to him being a part of the middle ground I would like to introduce the fact that St. Jean de Brébeuf had a Huron name: Echom.[217] When he had returned to the Huron village of Teandeouïhata, the villagers' excitement, according to his rendition of his return, is palpable:

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[217] Brébeuf, "Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:93.

"'Why, there is Echom come again' (that is the name they give me); and at once every one came out to salute and welcome me, each calling me by name and saying: 'What, Echom, my nephew, my brother, my cousin, hast thou then come again?'"[218] However, St. Jean de Brébeuf was not the only member of the North American Martyrs to be given a Huron name. For example, St. Isaac Jogues was given a Huron name: "the Hurons set aside some presents for the Iroquois, beseeching Ondesson—this is the name which they give to Father Isaac Jogues —to convey their word to those peoples."[219] St. Jean de Brébeuf's Huron name gives a sense of intimacy and closeness between him and the villagers of Teandeouïhata. However, skeptically, one must be cautious and wonder if there are ulterior motives to including these details about Brébeuf's Huron name, such as trying to convince European readers of the Jesuits' closeness to indigenous populations in New France. This could be to show that St. Jean de Brébeuf wanted to be seen by European audiences as someone who was welcomed into the tribe. He may have been trying to portray a kinder, more welcoming environment that was in stark contrast to the reality of the political situation of New France and the *pays d'en haut*. Although there is no way to be completely certain of the validity of his Huron name, the fact that St. Isaac Jogues also has a Huron name adds credibility to St. Jean de Brébeuf's account.

Nonetheless, the fact that these Huron names exists for both of these saints is representative of the middle ground. Thus, the two names of Jean de Brébeuf and Echom reveals the dual nature of the Franco-Native American

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[218] Brébeuf, "Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635. *Sent to Kebec* [*sic*] *to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf* [*sic*].," 8:93.

[219] Jérôme Lalemant, "CHAPTER X. OF SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE COUNTRY, AND OTHER THINGS WHICH COULD NOT BE RELATED UNDER THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 29, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Pageant Book, 1959), 233.

experience in New France. This is the middle ground itself. St. Jean de Brébeuf physically and culturally represents it.

Chapter III

An Introduction to the Life of St. Charles Garnier

St. Charles Garnier was born in 1605 in Paris. Like his two brothers, he became a priest in the Catholic Church, even though each brother entered into a different religious order.[220] In 1624, St. Charles Garnier would enter the Society of Jesus. Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, we can infer that St. Charles Garnier was educated in a similar manner, i.e. he studied Latin, rhetoric, theology, Jesuit spirituality, etc. Eventually, he would become an ordained Jesuit priest. Although he was a fully ordained priest, Garnier's father had reservations about him entering the Society of Jesus since the beginning of his Jesuit formation, as he did not want to be separated from his son, and this fear of separation was only worsened with the idea of Garnier going into New France as a missionary: "He had experienced the greatest of difficulties in obtaining permission from his father to enter our Society; but these were very much enhanced when…it became necessary to reconcile the father to…his departure from France."[221] Despite his father's reservations, in 1636, Garnier would cross the Atlantic Ocean from France into New France. While living in New France and like his Jesuit companions, Garnier would go on to learn the Huron language, and Ragueneau wrote that "He had mastered the language of the Savages so

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[220] Paul Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 35, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1899), 143.

[221] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:119, 121.

thoroughly that they themselves were astonished at him."[222] St. Charles Garnier's proficiency in the Huron language was confirmed in an earlier report by St. Jean de Brébeuf, which was mentioned in the previous chapter.

Meanwhile, St. Charles Garnier also came into contact with the issues that the Hurons and other Native Americans faced, which included famine: "During that last year of famine, acorns and bitter roots were, to him, delicacies."[223] In addition, he traveled throughout the Jesuit's Huron missions, baptizing and preaching among the Hurons, and Ragueneau recorded that: "he might baptize some dying man, or a captive of war who was to be burnt that same day."[224] St. Charles Garnier exhibited great piety and devotion to his Catholic faith, which included the medieval and early-modern practice of mortification, i.e. self-harm to one's own body, and Ragueneau made it clear that St. Charles Garnier performed this ritual in his hagiography: "Every time that he returned from his Mission rounds, he never failed to sharpen freshly the iron points of a girdle all covered with spur-rowels, which he wore next to his skin."[225] This intense religious practice does not discredit St. Charles Garnier or his sanity, simply because modern readers might find mortification extreme and overly zealous. This shows that he was a product of his time and that forms of expressing religious devotion have evolved over time. Nonetheless, even with

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[222] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:123.

[223] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:127.

[224] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:129.

[225] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:125.

eating bitter roots and acorns and with mortification, Garnier was able to function normally. However, this could not last forever. Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier was caught in the middle of the conflict between the Hurons and the Iroquois. On December 7th, 1649, a group of Iroquois soldiers attacked the mission and village of St. Jean. During the attack, the Iroquois soldiers killed St. Charles Garnier.[226] Although St. Charles Garnier did not live in New France as long as St. Jean de Brébeuf, his life and writings give much insight into the development and his experience of the middle ground.

In the following chapter, I will be looking at three main themes that appear in St. Charles Garnier's accounts in *The Jesuit Relations.* First, I will analyze his experience with having to exemplify true Catholic piety when earlier French colonists proved to be bad examples of Catholics. Second, I will discuss his experience with Amerindian conversion in New France, and how the Native Americans incorporated their new, Catholic faith into their daily lives. Finally, I will show how the details of St. Charles Garnier's martyrdom is revelatory of the technological shifts that were occurring among Native Americans. Ultimately, I will show how each of these themes are emblematic of the middle ground.

Jesuit Piety Against French Material Interests

Each of the various French groups entering New France had their own specific agenda in this colony, ranging from administrative affairs to obtaining furs to saving souls.[227] With this variation in rationales and agendas also came differences in Catholic piety. Although Catholicism was the major religion of France in the early modern period, it would be a fallacy to believe that every

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[226] For St. Charles Garnier's martyrdom, see Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:107, 109, 111, 113, 115.

[227] White, *The Middle Ground,* 28.

French individual during this era was a devout Catholic. Although it is difficult to measure one's devotion to a religion, it is plausible to assume that there were early modern French people who did not practice or care for Catholicism, including the French sojourners who came to New France. Because the Jesuits' French counterparts in the colony were not subscribed to or concerned with their religious agenda, this meant that their perceived immoral behavior could affect missionary efforts to interact with Native Americans, as one missionary remarked that the Native Americans' resistance came from "an earlier visit by 'two traders in Beaver-skins.' If these French 'had behaved as they ought, I would have less trouble giving these poor people other ideas of the whole French nation.'"[228] Because French traders' actions influenced Amerindian perceptions of other French individuals, including the Jesuits, this meant that Native Americans could come to see the French as "merely rich, powerful, arrogant, and quarrelsome strangers."[229] In addition to saving souls, the Jesuits had to task themselves with differentiating themselves from their French companions who also lived in New France and the *pays d'en haut.*

This distancing was not merely limited to explaining that their rationale for coming to Native American villages was different than that of the French traders, as St. Jean de Brébeuf did in the previous chapter. Although this was an important aspect of establishing Jesuit relations with Native Americans, the Jesuits had to distance themselves from other French people in other ways, i.e. through their actions and lifestyles. St. Charles Garnier was one of many missionaries who found themselves caught in the midst of this difficult position. In this confusion, St. Charles Garnier would help to show yet another aspect of the middle ground.

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[228] White, *The Middle Ground,* 9.

[229] White, *The Middle Ground,* 28.

Illustration. 4: *St. Charles Garnier,* painting, courtesy of Catholic Online, Bakersfield, https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=599.

The Faith of St. Charles Garnier and the Black Robes

Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier lived in Huron villages throughout New France. There, he was able to interact with Huron villagers on a daily basis. It can be inferred that Garnier was cognizant of the same developments occurring in the middle ground that Brébeuf experienced, such as the fur trade. Although the Jesuit missionaries were in New France to save the souls of the Native Americans they encountered, it is plausible that their Amerindian counterparts conflated the Jesuits and French traders together. For example, in 1642, in the village of St. Joseph, a Huron convert allowed the

Jesuits to build a chapel in his cabin.[230] In gratitude for housing this place of worship and for the French monetary and material assistance that went into the chapel's construction, this Huron convert presented St. Charles Garnier and his Jesuit companions with his mother's beaver robe as a gift.[231] St. Charles Garnier noted that "This act touched us the more because we knew that These poor People were very poorly Covered…We assured him that God took pleasure in having their good will, and we gave them back their Robe."[232] Although giving specifically a beaver robe could be seen as a symbol of gratitude and good will, it can also be inferred that the beaver robe gift came out of earlier interactions with French traders. In other words, prior meetings with French traders who sought beaver robes could have been a factor in why a beaver robe was specifically given to St. Charles Garnier and his Jesuit companions, as they too were French. Thus, St. Charles Garnier's declination of the beaver robe served as a reminder to the Huron convert that he and the Jesuits are in New France to save souls—not procure beaver robes. The Jesuit need to differentiate themselves from French traders would recur throughout St. Charles Garnier's time in New France.

During his life in New France, St. Charles Garnier would move through the Jesuit missionary network in Huron territory. In 1644, two years after his beaver robe gift experience in the village of St. Joseph, he found himself in the

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[230] Charles Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to his Brother.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 21, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, The Burrows Brothers, 1898) 285.

[231] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to his Brother.," 21:287.

[232] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to his Brother.," 21:287.

Residence of Sainte Marie of the Hurons.[233] There, in addition to living with his fellow Jesuits and Huron villagers, he also lived with domestics, or *donnés*, who were lay French males who lived with and served the Jesuit missionaries.[234] In a letter to the Superior General of Jesus, Mutius Vitelleschi, St. Charles Garnier expressed his gratitude and praise for the domestics' organizational and logistical assistance in running the mission and that they also served as moral examples for the Hurons and the Huron converts to emulate.[235] He noted that their morality stood in contrast to the example set by other French individuals, who did not live out upright lives, which made the Hurons themselves change their attitudes towards French immorality: "since to us who expound the law of the gospel they opposed the corrupt morals of the French who first landed on these shores."[236] For St. Charles Garnier, this living example of Catholic principles and ethics became a sought-after qualification for domestics in New France.[237] The Hurons' perceptions of the Jesuits' morality would also make an impression on them.

Over time, according to St. Charles Garnier, the Hurons were able to distinguish the differences among the French that they encountered.[238] Because

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[233] Charles Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 25, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 87.

[234] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:83, 85, 87.

[235] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:83, 85.

[236] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:85

[237] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:85

[238] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:85

the Hurons' experience with the French prior to the Jesuits and their domestics left such a negative impression on them, Garnier implied that the Hurons considered the Jesuits to be devout Catholics, in contrast to lay French traders, as they "deemed us alone Christians, who wear the black gown."[239] This Huron distinction between who is and who is not a legitimate Christian among the French highlighted, for him, the Hurons' deep understanding of French relations and Catholic piety. This distinction could only have occurred in the middle ground, where the Hurons were exposed to diverse French groups, each with their own agendas and levels of devotion to the Catholic faith. St. Charles Garnier was a witness to this.

St. Charles Garnier, his fellow Jesuit missionaries, and their domestics would have made it clear to the Hurons and other Native Americans of New France that they were interested solely in saving their souls. This agenda, coupled with their religious enthusiasm and upright lifestyle, when compared to the other French colonists, allowed them to attract Hurons and other Native Americans to Catholicism. However, Catholic conversion in New France came with its own set of features that made it distinctive when compared to other Jesuit missions elsewhere in the early modern period. These features would help show the unique experience of Native American conversion to Catholicism in the middle ground.

Conversion in the Middle Ground

When the Jesuits entered into the Americas, they hoped to win over thousands of new converts to Catholicism. Not only did the indigenous populations of the Americas represent a whole body of people who had not been exposed to Catholicism, but also served to counterbalance the growing

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[239] Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to the Reverend Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society of Jesus.," 25:85

number of Protestant converts in Europe.[240] However, the Jesuits' plans for a mass conversion of Native Americans in New France did not go as planned for a few reasons. First, Native Americans themselves were resistant to conversion efforts. Partly, this came out of fear of the Jesuits and that the sacrament of baptism caused death: "They thought the baptism…caused children to die."[241] As pestilence raged across New France, some Native Americans began to believe that the Jesuits were the cause of the disease and associated the sacrament of baptism with spreading it, as St. Jean de Brébeuf experienced in the last chapter. Second, this resistance emerged out of Native American's misconceptions about Christianity itself and Jesuit mistranslations.[242] For example, when Christ, translated as a *manitou,* failed in locating or apprehending fish or game, the Native Americans would abandon Christ because the Native Americans' expectations of Christianity included "such worldly shamanistic benefits as they would seek traditionally from indigenous shamanism, including animism, such as locating game and curing disease."[243] Also, as St. Charles Garnier experienced in the last section, there were Native Americans who resisted conversion because of the poor example of piety set by earlier encounters with other French individuals living in New France.

Finally, some Native Americans did not convert simply either because they lacked the desire to convert or because they associated Christianity as contrary to their customs: "Trouble arose when it became clear that Christianity was an exclusive and intolerant religion, one that branded other spiritual practices 'diabolical' and declared various normal ways of behaving

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[240] Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization,* 231.

[241] White, *The Middle Ground,* 8.

[242] White, *The Middle Ground,* 26-27.

[243] Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France,* 185.

'immoral.'"[244] These were some of the main reasons why Native Americans did not convert in large numbers to Christianity, contrary to the hopes of Jesuit missionaries. For years, the Jesuits had to content themselves with a very slow rate of Native American conversions to Catholicism: "the Jesuit mission to New France was fraught with disappointment and frustration."[245] However, this does not mean that the Jesuits failed to make an impact on the Amerindian populations they encountered in New France.

Although the number of Native American converts was small, and the majority of baptisms were administered to those who were sick and dying, the Jesuits continued in their efforts to spread Christianity to the Amerindian populace of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* Over time, the Jesuits were able to win over Catholic converts. It should be noted that indigenous conversion to Christianity in New France and the *pays d'en haut* was unique from conversion in Europe, in that "For a people without a Euro-Christian cultural background, Jesuit preaching and Christianity were understood within the context of their own traditional non-Christian culture."[246] In other words, Native Americans interpreted Catholicism within the light of their own culture and tradition. This form of Catholicism that retained its theology while being fit into and accommodating the pre-existing culture could only have emerged within the middle ground.

St. Charles Garnier's Experience with Conversion

Like his fellow Jesuits, St. Charles Garnier came to New France in order to spread the Catholic faith and save the souls of Native Americans. However, even he noted the slow pace at which conversions were taking place. In a letter

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[244] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 12.

[245] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 12.

[246] Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France,* 199.

written to his brother in 1641, St. Charles Garnier wrote that "I would, no doubt, have much more Consolation in writing to you if I had some Notable progress to announce to you that I might have made…toward the Conversion of the Savages."[247] This slow process of Native American conversion to Catholicism continued during his time in New France. In a 1647 letter to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Vincent Caraffa, St. Charles Garnier wrote that their missionary efforts will be slow: "the vineyard assigned to us by the Lord, which indeed will yield, though slowly, greater fruits from day to day. For the natural disposition of our barbarians is slow to admit the faith."[248] Although this quotation is hopeful for greater numbers of converts, and even faults the Native Americans' inherent sense of character for not converting, St. Charles Garnier admitted that the conversion rate and process was still slow, even though six years had passed since he sent that letter to his brother commenting on Native American converts. However, St. Charles Garnier did not write simply about the slow pace of conversion. He also chronicled his experiences and testimonies with those who did convert and how they reacted to their new faith within their own communities.

While living in the Huron village of St. Joseph of Teanaostriae, St. Charles Garnier encountered Hurons who had become Catholic converts.[249] Importantly,

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[247] Charles Garnier, "Letter from Father Charles Garnier to his Brother.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 20, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 89.

[248] Charles Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to the Very Reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 30, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Pageant Book, 1959), 149.

[249] Charles Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 23, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 241, 243, 245.

Garnier noticed that their conversion helped them to shift certain behaviors to align with Catholic principles, and wrote that "Another Captain, named Assiskwa, has also become a Christian…the young man has left his Captaincy in order to be Exempt from several superstitious attentions to the sick, which belong to the Captains."[250] This shows that Garnier believed that this Huron contemplated his conversion seriously and adjusted his life to conform to his new Catholic faith. In addition, St. Charles Garnier wrote of another Huron convert who became enamored with conversing about Catholicism: "Estienne makes of his Cabin a School of devotion,—not taking pleasure in speaking of Anything else to Those who come to see him."[251] While St. Charles Garnier wrote about individual experiences with the Catholic faith and how they gave up previous religious practices, he also talked about how it fit into the pre-existing Huron culture as well. This is shown in when he wrote about how the Jesuits taught the Hurons to pray the rosary. Not only did the Jesuits teach the rosary in the Huron language, but also used the rosary as a means of reminding the Hurons of the days of the week, by having the Hurons recite a decade of the rosary, beginning on Monday.[252] St. Charles Garnier wrote that by the time Sunday came, the Hurons could pray the rosary "Completely, and Thus they accustom themselves to Know sunday [*sic*], even when Hunting."[253] This shows that the Catholic Huron community was learning how to incorporate their faith into their daily lives. Although St. Charles Garnier praised these examples of Catholic conversion, he also knew that this also enticed trouble and disdain from others.

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[250] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

[251] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

[252] For instruction in the rosary, see Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

[253] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

Conversion to Catholicism in New France was not a simple matter and was not merely a change in religious identity. The change in religious affiliation to accommodate Catholic principles was difficult for many Hurons, not only because they may have been different from Huron traditions, but also because non-Catholic Hurons did not like how the Jesuits argued against them practicing their customs and rituals.[254] This led to a divide in Huron communities between those who did and did not convert to Catholicism, as Garnier recognized that their village community was not welcoming of their conversion: "The ministers of Satan have taken pleasure in exciting…many evil Tongues Against our Christians; they mock them, they threaten to kill them, or at least to drive them from the village; they rarely invite them to the feasts."[255] This meant that there were persecutions and discriminations within the Huron community. However, St. Charles Garnier remained hopeful and saw this as an opportunity for the number of Catholics to grow in this Huron community.[256] Thus, although there were Hurons who were hostile to Catholicism, this did not stop people from converting or St. Charles Garnier from spreading the Catholic faith in this Huron village. The introduction of Catholicism, the change in Huron lifestyle, the integration of Catholicism into the pre-existing Huron culture, and the negative reactions to conversion were all a part of how this religion fit into the middle ground. Thus, the middle ground had a strong religious component to it.

St. Charles Garnier came to New France to preach and spread Catholicism among the Native Americans of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* Starting in 1636, he had lived and worked in New France. Despite the slow process and rate of conversion, he continued to be a missionary amongst the

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[254] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 12.

[255] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

[256] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:243.

Native American communities that he encountered across the region. However despite his reports of Amerindian conversions, modern scholars and readers cannot be completely certain of if his reports were indicative completely of the reality of the situation in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* This is for a few reasons. First, although St. Charles Garnier reported Native American converts, their conversions could not be as sincere or as devout as he reported them to be, as their conversions might be what he wanted to believe. Second, there is the possibility of ulterior motives. The Jesuits were constantly seeking support from their readers and benefactors in France. Any reports of conversions would be a sign that their mission was having success. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to contribute to the Jesuits' New France missions. Despite all of these possibilities, there is no completely certain way to assess the validity of St. Charles Garnier's conversion narratives. However, one aspect of his life is certain. He could not continue his missionary activities forever. In 1649, he was martyred. His legacy and impact does not end with his death. Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier's death had important insights into the middle ground.

A Father's Loss

Before St. Charles Garnier could become a missionary, Ragueneau stated that his sojourn into New France was contingent upon the approval of Monsieur Garnier.[257] Although Monsieur Garnier gave ultimately his consent to this, he did so with great hesitancy and reservation, as he did not want to be separated from his son.[258] It would be hard for any parent to be separated from

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[257] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:121.

[258] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:121.

their child. Worse still, Monsieur Garnier's child was entering New France, which was an unfamiliar and hostile place. Although St. Charles Garnier himself knew of the potential dangers of this colony, he saw his venture as a means of spreading the Catholic faith to its indigenous populations: "It is true that we are here in great dangers of our lives; but the advantage is, that It is for Our Master's service for whose sake to die is worth more than a thousand lives."[259] Unfortunately, Monsieur Garnier would be separated from his son forever. St. Charles Garnier never returned to France because he was martyred on December 7th, 1649 in the Huron village and mission of St. Jean.[260] However, his death gives insight that helps showcase the middle ground.

The Death of St. Charles Garnier

New France and the *pays d'en haut* was filled with violence, which spilled over into the lives of St. Charles Garnier and other Jesuit missionaries. During this time, the Hurons living in village and mission of St. Jean received information from French sources, who received it from freed Huron captives, that Iroquois forces were in the area and ready to attack. Instead of preparing defenses, St. Jean's garrison decided to leave the village in order to meet the oncoming Iroquois army outside of the village. However, the Huron force miscalculated the route that the Iroquois would take, as the Iroquois military took another path to St. Jean. This meant that St. Jean was defenseless and open to attack. On December 7th, the Iroquois struck. They set fire to buildings while killing St. Jean's inhabitants. Meanwhile, St. Charles Garnier stayed in the village, in order to give absolution to any of the Huron Christians that remained or to administer the sacrament of Baptism to children, the sick, or catechumens

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[259] Garnier, "Letter of Father Charles Garnier to Monsieur J.M.J.," 23:239.

[260] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:109, 111, 113, 115.

still in St. Jean.[261] According to Ragueneau's hagiography, while St. Charles Garnier was baptizing a Huron, "A bullet from a musket struck him, penetrating a little below the breast; another, from the same volley, tore open his stomach, lodging in the thigh, and bringing him to the ground."[262] Although Garnier survived these bullet wounds, it was not long before another Iroquois attacker came and struck him with a hatchet on both sides of his temples. Afterwards, his dead body was stripped naked.[263] The next day, two Jesuits came to the village to verify the accounts they had received from Huron villagers who had escaped the raid, only to find out that the survivors' stories were true.[264] Although St. Charles Garnier met a horrific death, his death sheds light on the middle ground.

The weapons used to kill St. Charles Garnier are representative of the middle ground. This is shown in the bullet wounds he received from the Iroquois' musket. Gunpowder technology and weaponry came with the Europeans when they began to settle and colonize North America. They would become objects of trade between the Europeans and Native Americans, as the French would trade guns with the Native Americans.[265] In addition, the Dutch would also trade

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[261] For the events leading up to St. Charles Garnier's martyrdom, see Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:107, 109, 111, 113, 115.

[262] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:113.

[263] For St. Charles Garnier's death and bodily treatment *post mortem,* see Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:115.

[264] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:115, 117, 119.

[265] White, *The Middle Ground,* 32.

weapons with the Iroquois, who would use them in their wars against the other Native Americans of New France and the *pays d'en haut*.[266] The Native Americans would come to incorporate firearms into their arsenal, which changed Amerindian military technology. Thus, the presence of muskets in St. Charles Garnier's death reflects the weapons trading that occurred between Europeans and Native Americans in the middle ground.

Analysis of St. Charles Garnier

Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier is representative of the middle ground. His commitment to distinguishing himself and his fellow Jesuit missionaries' Catholic piety apart from their French counterparts shows the fact the that Native Americans' perception of the Jesuits was influenced by earlier interactions with other French colonists in New France. This meant that the Jesuits had to overcome obstacles set both by other French individuals and Native Americans' preconceived notions about the French. In addition, his recording of the slow yet present pace of Amerindian conversion alongside Catholic accommodations to Native American culture show how Native Americans converted to a non-indigenous religion while the Jesuits tried to make Catholicism accessible and comprehensible to the local populations they encountered. Meanwhile, Garnier being wounded by musket bullets shows how Native Americans were utilizing European weapons to wage war. All of these are representative of the middle ground and St. Charles Garnier was either a witness or a part of this development. However, like St. Jean de Brébeuf, he was not perfect. St. Charles Garnier had Eurocentric views, which were present in his writings in *The Jesuit Relations,* as seen earlier in the chapter about blaming the Native Americans' inability to convert as part of their nature.

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[266] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 13.

Yet, this does not diminish the value and significance of St. Charles Garnier highlighting the existence of and being a part of the middle ground. Like St. Jean de Brébeuf, Ragueneau's hagiography mentions that St. Charles Garnier had a Huron name: "The Hurons named him Orâcha."[267] Because this was not unique to St. Charles Garnier, it can be inferred that the Hurons may have attributed names to the French individuals that they interacted with on a continual basis. However, one must maintain still a skeptical and critical analysis of his Huron name. Again, it is difficult to be certain totally of the validity of St. Charles Garnier's Huron name. Nonetheless, the fact that he has a Huron name shows that he, a French individual, has been incorporated into the local Huron community, which is a representation of the middle ground. St. Charles Garnier and Orâcha are both one and the same person who both reflect the reality of the unique Franco-Native American culture that emerged in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* St. Charles Garnier lived this both symbolically and physically. He lived in and was a part of the middle ground.

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[267] Ragueneau, "[25] CHAPTER III. OF THE CAPTURE AND DEVASTATION OF THE MISSION OF SAINT JEAN, BY THE IROQUOIS; AND OF THE DEATH OF FATHER GARNIER, WHO WAS MISSIONARY THERE.," 35:143.

Chapter IV

An Introduction to the Life of St. Isaac Jogues

St. Isaac Jogues was born in 1607 in the city of Orleans.[268] In 1636, after his ordination as a priest in the Society of Jesus, he came to New France.[269] There he lived with his fellow Jesuit missionaries in Huron villages throughout New France and the *pays d'en haut.* However, while traveling with a joint Huron and French group in the summer of 1642, a band of Iroquois soldiers ambushed them. Although some of their party had managed to escape, others were not so fortunate and were captured by the Iroquois. This included St. René Goupil, who is another member of the North American Martyrs. Both St. Isaac Jogues and another French colonist, Guillaume Couture, had the opportunity to hide and escape from the Iroquois. However, St. Isaac Jogues felt that it was his duty to remain with the captured Huron and French group to provide spiritual guidance and assistance while Couture knew that it would be shameful to abandon his party. Thus, both men would be captured alongside their companions.[270]

After killing some members of the Huron and French party and reveling in the goods they had just captured, the Iroquois led their prisoners to an encampment. There, the Iroquois subjected the prisoners to torture, such as forcing them to run in between two lines of torturers who would beat them with sticks and iron rods. After this, they were led to multiple Iroquois villages. Each

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[268] Joseph N. Tylenda, S.J., *Jesuit Saints & Martyrs: Short Biographies of the Saints, Blessed, Venerables, and Servants of God of the Society of Jesus.* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984), 370.

[269] Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:17.

[270] For the capture of St. Isaac Jogues and his group, see Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29.

village stop meant another round of torture for the prisoners, including fingers being cut off by their Iroquois captors.[271] Despite multiple rounds of torture, St. Isaac Jogues survived; however, he would not stay among the Iroquois forever. After months of enduring treatment as a slave, seeing St. René Goupil get killed before his very eyes, and being threatened with death, St. Isaac Jogues managed to escape with a group of Dutch traders.[272]

St. Isaac Jogues decided to escape for a few reasons. First, except for Couture, the rest of the French members of their party had been killed by the Iroquois or fled. Also, Couture was placed in a village away from St Isaac Jogues, which meant that their contact was limited. Even when there was contact between the two, Couture would encourage him to escape. This meant that he no longer had an obligation to serve the captured French.[273] Second, he was unable to minister the Hurons and Algonquians who were with him. This occurred not only because the Iroquois prevented St. Isaac Jogues from doing so but also because he realized that their association with him could worsen their own treatment: "the Algonquians and the Hurons were constrained to withdraw from me…for fear of sharing in the hatred and rage which the Iroquois

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[271] For St. Isaac Jogues and his companions' venture into Iroquois territory and for descriptions of their torture, see Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31: 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51.

[272] For St. Isaac Jogues' rationales for escaping and his escape, Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73.

[273] For status of captured Frenchmen who died or fled, see Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:51. For St. Isaac Jogues' contact and conversation with Couture, Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:51, 53.

felt against me."[274] This meant that for the safety of his fellow prisoners, he could not minister to them. Third, St. Isaac Jogues realized that his experience of living in New France made his knowledge an important asset for him: "I realized, moreover, that I had some acquaintance with their language; that I knew their country and their strength; that I could perhaps better procure their salvation by other ways than by remaining among them."[275] Thus, the linguistic, geographic, and cultural knowledge he had gained was too invaluable for him to lose. If he had stayed with the Iroquois, then they were going to kill him.

After having escaped onto a Dutch ship, St. Isaac Jogues made his way back to France. There, he was welcomed as a hero. His fame spread throughout France, and even the French queen requested that he meet with her.[276] However, instead of deciding to remain in France after being tortured and enslaved, St. Isaac Jogues chose to go back to New France so that he could minister to the Hurons and even the Iroquois. In an account written by Barthelemy Vimont, the superior of the New France mission, he noted that St. Isaac Jogues was "zealous to return to the Hurons, amid all those dangers, as if perils were to him securities; he certainly expects to cross the Ocean once again, in order to go to succor those poor peoples, and to finish the sacrifice already begun."[277] In 1644, St. Isaac Jogues left France and went back to New

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[274] Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:53.

[275] Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:53.

[276] For St. Isaac Jogues' journey back to France and meeting with the French Queen, see Lalemant, "CHAPTER VII. THE FATHER ESCAPES FROM THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*] AND PROCEEDS TO FRANCE THROUGH THE INTERVENTIONS OF THE DUTCH. HE RETURNS TO CANADAS [*sic*]; HAVING ARRIVED THERE, HE MAKES A JOURNEY TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*].," 31:93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107.

[277] Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:73.

France and the *pays d'en haut.* There, he was able to be a missionary once more amongst the Hurons. However, more importantly, he attended a peace conference among the French, Iroquois, Hurons, and other Native Americans groups in the area, and was later "chosen as envoy to obtain the Mohawk's consent."[278] However, peace was not to be maintained.

In 1646, the Iroquois broke the peace, plunging New France and the *pays d'en haut* into warfare once again.[279] During this time, pestilence and famine were affecting greatly the Iroquois. They believed that it was St. Isaac Jogues' "sorcery" that had brought upon these calamities.[280] When he tried to go back to the Iroquois to maintain peace, he and St. Jean de la Lande, a French domestic and another member of the North American Martyrs, were captured. Shortly afterwards, the Iroquois killed both men in October of 1646.[281] This marked the end for both of these men. However, the legacy of St. Isaac Jogues does not end with his death. In fact, his life and death highlight the development of the middle ground and his active role in chronicling it throughout his lifetime.

In this chapter, I will be analyzing four themes that emerge from St. Isaac Jogues' and his authors' entries in *The Jesuit Relations.* First, I will discuss the weapons trade that existed in New France, where both the French and Dutch supplied Native Americans with firearms and iron tools, which they began to

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[278] Tylenda, S.J., *Jesuit Saints & Martyrs,* 373.

[279] Lalemant, "[I] Relation of what occurred in New France on the great River of St. Lawrence, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-seven. *To the Rev. Father Estienne Charlet, Provincial of the Society of* Jesus, *in the Province of France.*," 30:219.

[280] Lalemant, "[6] CHAPTER I. OF THE TREACHERY OF THE HURONS" 30:227, 229.

[281] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VIII. FATHER ISAAC JOGUES RETURNS FOR THE THIRD TIME TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] WHERE HE IS PUT TO DEATH," 31:117.

incorporate into their military arsenal. Second, I will explain the role of torture in New France and the *pays d'en haut* and how St. Isaac Jogues and his companions become embroiled in it. Third, I will move onto to the institution of slavery and its place in New France and how he and his group become integrated into this system. Finally, I will go into the role that the New France Jesuits played in Amerindian diplomacy and how St. Isaac Jogues became a part of Franco-Native American negotiations. This also includes how the Iroquois martyred St. Isaac Jogues and St. Jean de la Lande while they were on a diplomatic mission to visit the Iroquois. I believe that each of these for themes help show the middle ground.

It should be stated that St. Isaac Jogues' experience of New France and the *pays d'en haut* was radically different than that of either St. Jean de Brébeuf or St. Charles Garnier. This is because neither of those two priests were captured alive and forced to live in slavery with their captors. In addition, St. Isaac Jogues faced torture, saw missionaries and Native Americans killed in front of him, and survived to recount his experiences in *The Jesuit Relations.* This means that St. Isaac Jogues lived long enough to write down his own account of what had occurred while he was living amongst his Iroquois captors, which means that the sources about his capture are not limited to other Jesuits writing about him. Nevertheless, because St. Isaac Jogues was captured and lived with the Iroquois for an extended period of time, this means that there are many entries in *The Jesuit Relations* that are not written by him, or include a letter written by him, but are authored or co-authored by other Jesuits living in New France. These Jesuits include Jérôme Lalemant, St. Jean de Brébeuf, and Barthelemy Vimont. These Jesuits' sources will be used alongside accounts written by St. Isaac Jogues himself. In addition these sources give insight into the Jesuit communication network within New France, as Jesuits all throughout

the local mission system were aware of St. Isaac Jogues' capture and escape from the Iroquois. More importantly, these sources are important for understanding the middle ground, especially one missionary's experience of it.

Also, it should be stated that this chapter will present the middle ground in a different light than in earlier chapters. Up until now, the middle ground was conceived primarily as a conceptual space where cultural, religious, economic, and linguistic changes where occurring between Native Americans and the French, particularly the Jesuits, in the geographic areas of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* However, the widespread existence of the weapons trade, torture, slavery, and warfare show also that part of the reality of the middle ground was manifested physically through military competition, violence, and slavery. The absence of French power, or any resemblance of hegemonic control, created space for the middle ground to allow a high degree of violence. These preexisting forms of violence would combine with gunpowder and the presence of Europeans to form a new system of violence in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* This was a reality of the middle ground that St. Isaac Jogues and his fellow prisoners would have to encounter repeatedly.

The Weapons Trade in New France and the *Pays d'en Haut*

Violence in New France and the *pays d'en haut* existed prior to the arrival of the French. However, as the French continued their exploration and settlement of the region, they became embroiled in regional conflicts with the Iroquois and formed military alliances with Hurons, Algonquians, and other Native Americans of the area. In doing so, they also equipped their allies with gunpowder weapons, which was exactly what the governor of New France, Jacques-René de Brisay Denonville, did when: "He gave gifts of guns to the Illinois and other allies."[282] The incorporation of gunpowder technology changed

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[282] White, *The Middle Ground,* 32.

Illustration. 5: Andrew Stranahan, *St. Isaac Jogues: Martyr. First Priest in New York,* 2016, photograph, courtesy of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City.

Native American warfare, as they included them into their military arsenal and would look to the French as their suppliers. However, the French were not the only European power to trade weapons with Native Americans.

South of New France was the colony of New Netherlands, which was ruled by the Dutch. Their colony bordered the southern edges of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* Like the French, the Dutch had come to North America to seek financial fortunes through the fur trade, which meant that they had "to contact remote tribes, obtain their better furs, and encourage them to take more

pelts in the future."[283] However, unlike the French, the Dutch were not at war with the Iroquois. In fact, the Dutch traded with them frequently, with the Iroquois exchanging furs for guns, and the Jesuits even knew of this trading and its effects on the Iroquois, with Vimont writing that: "The settlement of the Dutch is near them; they go thither to carry on their trades, especially in arquebuses."[284] The supply of arquebuses and other gunpowder weapons to Native Americans only facilitated violence while changing Amerindian warfare. St. Isaac Jogues would be a witness to this when he was captured.

The Dutch Supply the Weapons and the Iroquois Use Them

St. Isaac Jogues probably knew of the great dangers that existed in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* However, he could not have known when and where he would encounter these risks and dangers. And yet, while canoeing with a Huron and French group back into Huron territory in the summer of 1642, St. Isaac Jogues and his companions were met by an Iroquois ambush, which he described in a letter: "the enemy, concealed among the grass and brushwood, rises with a great outcry, discharging at our canoes a volley of balls. The noises of their arquebuses…greatly frightened a part of our Hurons."[285] After this initial volley, some Hurons fled while others prepared for battle. Although the Hurons who remained fought back initially, after another wave of Iroquois soldiers, they either lost courage or fled. Thus, the group was taken into

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[283] Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland 1623-1639* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 19.

[284] Barthelemy Vimont, "[234] CHAPTER XII. OF INCURSIONS BY THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], AND THE CAPTIVITY OF FATHER JOGUES.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 24, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 271.

[285] Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:21.

captivity, where the Iroquois killed off some members or led others into captivity.[286] From there, the prisoners would encounter additional evidence of the Iroquois' trading with the Dutch.

When St. Isaac Jogues and his companions were led to their first stop of their torturous route, they were taken to an Iroquois encampment. There, the Iroquois celebrated their victory and capture of enemy prisoners. St. Isaac Jogues noted that this celebration included the firing of an arquebus volley: "they next fired a salute with a volley of arquebus shots, by way of congratulation for their victory."[287] This shows that even gunpowder had been included in the Iroquois' celebratory rituals of military accomplishments. They were paraded from one village to the next, where they were tortured.[288] Some of the village stops included them being placed into a single file line and beaten on both sides by their Iroquois captors. What makes this stop significant is that some of the torture tools used were made of iron, which meant that the Iroquois had traded for them: "all the youth were outside the gates, arranged in line… some with iron rods, which they easily secure on account of their vicinity to the Dutch."[289] Thus, St. Isaac Jogues and his captured group endured being beaten with iron rods, which the Iroquois procured from the Dutch.

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[286] For the capture of St. Isaac Jogues and his group, see Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29.

[287] Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:31.

[288] For their tortures, see Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51.

[289] Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:39.

St. Isaac Jogues and his companions were witnesses to the economic and military transformations that occurred in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* Trading gunpowder and iron technologies with Native Americans transformed their military arsenal and rituals. The Native Americans did not disdain these technologies, but embraced them, which became a new part of their culture. Trade with the French and the Dutch helped fuel these changes. As mentioned in this section, some of these changes affected the tools the Iroquois used to torture their prisoners. Although the tools of torture changed, the long-standing practice of it did not. St. Isaac Jogues and his group knew this personally through their multiple experiences of torture at the hands of their Iroquois captors.

Torture in New France and the *Pays d'en Haut*

Torture was nothing new to the Native Americans living in this region and was an integral part of its military culture and ritual. Torture was used often by conquering parties on their captives, as a form of subjugation and humiliation before the captives' death. In addition, torture itself came out of the slave culture that existed in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* Before slaves could become incorporated into their captors' village, they were first tortured.[290] Ritualistic torture was part of slavery in the region because "Indians designed their rituals of enslavement to demonstrate their mastery over weaker enemies and to secure the allegiance and passivity of those they would keep alive as slaves."[291] Thus, St. Isaac Jogues and his companions' torture came out of the preexisting torture culture that had existed in New France and the *pays d'en haut* prior to their arrival. In addition, for the Jesuit missionaries themselves, torture was not a

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[290] For the role of torture in symbolically representing subjugation and humiliation, and life and death, see Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 35-46.

[291] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 35.

complete surprise, not only because they knew about the Native Americans' use of torture, but also because of their Catholic faith and hagiography.

As Catholics, the Jesuits would have known of the hagiographies of martyred saints of the early Catholic Church. Torture would have been used as a means to show that saint's holiness and courage, even in the face of extreme pain, as they gave their own lives for the Catholic faith rather than apostatize. Thus, they would be familiar with Catholic literature that featured torture as an integral theme. The Jesuits saw that the widespread suffering and torture in New France could be used as means to spread Catholicism, not only amongst the Native Americans, but also their readers back in Europe.[292] Therefore, the Jesuits penned torture accounts in *The Jesuit Relations.*

Torture accounts in *The Jesuit Relations* were meant to be didactic. These texts were to show both the martyrs' holiness in the face of torture and to prove to European readers that the Native Americans, especially Amerindian martyrs killed at the hands of enemies, were capable of converting to Catholicism: "the captive was clearly no mere captured wild man superficially imitating the actions of friendly Jesuits…but a devoted Christian following in the footsteps of Christ."[293] This shows that "the texts must not be read solely as accounts of traditional cruelty of Amerindian groups toward captured enemies."[294] However, although the Jesuits tried to show the inherent humanity of Native Americans in these writings, this does not mean that their goal was accomplished: "it cannot be said that the priests portrayed their would-be converts as exemplars of humanity at its best."[295] In many of the texts, the

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[292] True, *Masters and Students,* 95-96.

[293] True, *Masters and Students,* 95.

[294] True, *Masters and Students,* 99.

[295] True, *Masters and Students,* 91.

Jesuits go into great detail about the cruelty of Amerindian torture and use specific language to describe the torturers themselves. For example, in St. Jean de Brébeuf's hagiography, Regnaut uses the words "butchers" and "barbarians" to describe the torturers.[296] Although the possibility that the Jesuits sensationalized cruelty and violence exists, they did not create these accounts from their own imaginations. Amerindian torture was utterly dehumanizing: "After being beaten and marked, slaves were undressed and forced to sing…This was the final metaphorical act of stripping slaves' former identities from them, preparing them for death or the forced subjugation that would follow."[297] The existence and brutality of torture in New France and the *pays d'en haut* shows that the Jesuits, even if they overemphasized violence and did not present Native Americans in a positive manner, knew of this reality.

Nonetheless, the Jesuits included this type of language, as well as the cruel violence of torture itself, as a means to prove to European audiences that the Native Americans were capable of being converted to the Catholic faith: "Torture was often not…included as a sign of the absence of civilization or humanity among Amerindians, but rather as proof that it was possible to induce them to embrace Christianity in an informed and enduring way."[298] However, equally important to the didactic nature of torture texts was that the Jesuits and the martyrs themselves could share in the sufferings of Christ's Passion and give their lives for Christ and the Catholic Church, which is evident in how St. Isaac Jogues' viewed his torture: "This made me render thanks to my Savior Jesus Christ, because, on that day of gladness and joy, he was making us share his

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[296] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:31.

[297] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 44.

[298] True, *Masters and Students,* 84.

sufferings, and admitting us to participation in his crosses."[299] Although I mentioned this earlier, I want to make it clear that the Jesuits' preoccupation with torture should not be seen as a form of masochism but as a means to see their own suffering in light if Christ's Passion.[300] Thus, the New France Jesuits should not be seen as people who had masochistic desires. This shows that the Jesuits themselves knew of the possibility of torture that existed in New France and the *pays d'en haut* and that they made use of it in their accounts in *The Jesuit Relations.*

With the role of torture in Native American and Jesuit life more adequately explained, an analysis of St. Isaac Jogues' experience with it can begin. Ultimately, it will show that his and his companions' sufferings are a part of the middle ground, where both Native American and Jesuit interests in torture came together.

St. Isaac Jogues and Torture

After being captured by the Iroquois, St. Isaac Jogues and his group were paraded from one Iroquois settlement to the next, where they were forced to endure additional rounds of beatings and torture. In addition to running in between two lines of Iroquois armed with iron rods and sticks, their torture took many forms. St. Isaac Jogues was burned, had fingers cut off, starved, exposed quasi-naked for three days in the rain, and had sticks or thorns thrusted into his wounds, among other tortures. His fellow companions suffered similar fates.[301]

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[299] Lalemant, "[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:37, 39.

[300] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 13.

[301] For their tortures, see Lalemant, " [56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.," 31:31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51.

For the Iroquois, who were already at war with the Hurons and the French, their torture can be seen in light of the strained, antagonistic relationships they had with them: “It also may have been encouraged by the tensions that were produced by the constant threat of death that all Iroquoian peoples faced as a result of endemic warfare.”[302] In addition, torture and disfigurement was a means to show the captors’ total power and control over their prisoners’ lives and to remind them of their subordination: “The resulting scarring and disfiguration were considered ‘the marks of their captivity.’”[303] And yet, St. Isaac Jogues continued to brace the pain and see his own suffering as an opportunity to preach and save the souls of the Iroquois: “we offered ourselves with great courage to his fatherly goodness, in order to be victims sacrificed to his good pleasure…lovingly zealous for the salvation of these peoples.”[304] Thus, for the Jesuits, their suffering could be seen as a potential opportunity to save Iroquois’ souls. Indeed, their accounts are meant to show that the Iroquois not only can be converted but also are in need of conversion so that they can turn away from cruelly torturing, including cannibalizing, others, which even St. Jean de Brébeuf discussed in *The Jesuit Relations*: “but we hope, with the assistance of Heaven, that the knowledge of the true God will entirely banish from this Country such barbarity.”[305] For St. Isaac Jogues and his companions their pain would coincide with both the Iroquois’ torture culture and with the Jesuits’ preoccupation with martyrdom. Only in the confines of the middle ground could such a unique juxtaposition exist.

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[302] Trigger, *The Huron,* 63.

[303] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 43.

[304] Lalemant, “[56] CHAPTER IV. HOW FATHER ISAAC JOGUES WAS TAKEN BY THE HIROQUOIS, [*sic*] AND WHAT HE SUFFERED ON HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THEIR COUNTRY.,” 31:41.

[305] Brébeuf, “CHAPTER VI. OF THE POLITY OF THE HURONS, AND THEIR GOV-ERNMENT [sic].,” 10:229.

After the Iroquois were finished finally with torturing their prisoners, they led St. Isaac Jogues' group to their next fate: slavery. Their role as Iroquois slaves would force them into their next encounter with the middle ground.

The Role of Slavery in New France and the *Pays d'en Haut*

Just as torture was an ingrained aspect of Native American life for those living in New France and the *pays d'en haut*, so was slavery. The French did not introduce slavery to North America. It already existed prior to their arrival. Even though the type of slavery in New France and the *pays d'en haut* was different from the slavery utilized in the transatlantic slave trade, slaves in this region were still denigrated to the status of tools and dogs: "In short, they became a form of property, described with the same words used to identify other personally owned objects like tools, food, clothing, or weapons."[306] In addition to being used as tools, slaves were used as replacements for deceased members of a family, while simultaneously not being integrated fully into their owners' household or their new village, as "Adopted slaves, then, were bound to a household of fictive kin…but constantly aware that they were not actual relatives…Like dogs, their linguistic equivalents, adopted slaves were thus part of the household but never really part of the family."[307] Thus, the captors made it explicitly clear that slaves, though living in the midst of the village and with their adopted family, would also have a subordinate and peripheral existence. Although slaves could be adopted into a family, this still did not guarantee their protection or safety, as slaves "lived under the perpetual threat of violence and murder."[308] This shows that life as a slave in New France and the *pays d'en haut* was filled with constant fear and death. St. Isaac Jogues, St. René Goupil, and

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[306] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 51.

[307] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 49.

[308] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 59.

their cohort found themselves entering into lives of slavery after enduring days of torture at the hands of their Iroquois captors. This was also another situation that showed that they were living in the midst of the middle ground.

St. Isaac Jogues as a Slave

If being tortured was only the first trial of pain while living amongst the Iroquois, then St. Isaac Jogues and his group would encounter their next ordeal: slavery. Although his companions were selected to be adoptive kin for Iroquois families, St. Isaac Jogues remained an unattached captive among his captors.[309] In other words, St. Isaac Jogues was not chosen as a replacement for a dead Iroquois like his other prisoners and did not belong to a particular family. This meant that he lived under constant threat of death, which his hagiographer, Jérôme Lalemant, chronicled in *The Jesuit Relations*: "but when they retain some public prisoner, like the Father, without giving him to any individual, this poor man is every day within two finger-lengths of death…In such condition was the Father."[310] Also, St. René Goupil lived as an unattached prisoner among the Iroquois.[311] Because prisoners who were not the property of a family could be killed at any moment, this made their deaths all the more sudden, which is what happened to St. René Goupil. In his hagiography of St. Isaac Jogues, Lalemant recorded his death. He wrote that after St. René Goupil made the sign of the cross on the forehead of an Iroquois child, the child's relatives plotted his

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[309] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:53.

[310] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:53.

[311] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:53.

death.[312] One day, St. Isaac Jogues and St. René Goupil went outside of their village to pray. Later, two Iroquois men told the pair that they had to return to the village. As the pair was entering the village gate, St. René Goupil met his fate right next to St. Isaac Jogues.[313] St. Isaac Jogues wrote about this event in his own hagiography of St. René Goupil: "one of those two Iroquois draws a hatchet…and deals a blow with it on the head of René, who was before him… They dealt him two other blows with the hatchet, on the head, and despatched [*sic*] him,—but not until I had fist given him absolution."[314] St. René Goupil was martyred on September 29th, 1642. Although St. Isaac Jogues' life was spared, St. René Goupil's death shows the constant threat of death that slaves—including enslaved Jesuits—faced in New France and the *pays d'en haut.*

After St. René Goupil's martyrdom, St. Isaac Jogues continued to live as a prisoner with the Iroquois. As time went on, he accepted his status as a slave and that he could killed for his Catholic faith.[315] However, he was able to use this role as a slave to navigate himself away from danger and possible death. Lalemant recorded an event where an Iroquois asked St. Isaac Jogues to accompany him into the adjacent village. However, St. Isaac Jogues was suspicious of the Iroquois' intentions and Lalemant wrote that St. Isaac Jogues

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[312] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:55.

[313] For the events leading up to St. René Goupil's death and his actual death, see Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:55.

[314] Isaac Jogues, "Account of René Goupil (donné), by Father Isaac Jogues.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* vol. 28, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Pageant Book, 1959), 127, 129.

[315] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:59.

replied to the Iroquois' request in this way: "'I am not my own master; if those to whom I belong, or who keep me, send me, I will accompany thee.'"[316] Although he was able to escape death at this instance, he was threatened continually by other Iroquois. When St. Isaac Jogues refused to give up his clothing to an Iroquois, Lalemant wrote that the Iroquois became furious: "That wicked man, who considered it a great slight to be denied, in anything whatsoever, by a dog, —this rank he assigned to the Father,—took the resolution to put him to death."[317] Despite this death threat, St. Isaac Jogues survived another day in Iroquois captivity by maintaining courage in the face of his attacker. By learning how to navigate Iroquois society as a slave and adapting to his current living situation, St. Isaac Jogues was able to steer himself away from potential death. However, his ordeals as an Iroquois slave were not over yet.

After living as an unattached captive among the Iroquois, St. Isaac Jogues was eventually assigned to live with Iroquois families, where he would be forced to serve them and perform menial duties.[318] Lalemant describes these duties in Jogues' role in his captors' hunting party: "As they did not account him fit for hunting, they gave him a woman's occupation,—that is, to cut and bring the wood to keep up the cabin fire."[319] This is significant because emasculating male captives and giving them "feminine" roles and tasks was a part of

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[316] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:59.

[317] Lalemant, "CHAPTER V. GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISSAC JOGUES AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER," 31:61.

[318] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VI. THE FATHER IS GIVEN AS SERVANT TO SOME HUNTERS. HE SUFFERS, HE IS CONSOLED; HE EXERCISES HIS ZEAL IN HIS JOURNEYS," 31:71.

[319] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VI. THE FATHER IS GIVEN AS SERVANT TO SOME HUNTERS. HE SUFFERS, HE IS CONSOLED; HE EXERCISES HIS ZEAL IN HIS JOURNEYS," 31:71.

Amerindian slavery in New France and the *pays d'en haut*: "slaves generally played the roles assigned to women and children, enhancing the burden of shame born by male slaves, who would have understood the emasculating symbolism."[320] In the case of St. Isaac Jogues, this meant procuring firewood for the hunting party and not being allowed to participate in the actual hunting itself. After this, he had to transport the hunted meat back to the village and carry corn from the village to the hunters. Later, he would serve on other food procuring expeditions and menial tasks within the Iroquois village.[321] This shows that St. Isaac Jogues was immersed fully as a slave in Iroquois society.

Although St. Isaac Jogues would live amongst the Iroquois as a slave and endure ordeals of great pain and suffering, this would not be the end of his life. After reflecting on his current living situation and the fact that he could not minister to either his French or Amerindian captives, he escaped with a group of Dutch traders. From North America, he would eventually make his way back to France. Although he could have decided to remain in France, where he was welcomed and lived as a hero, St. Isaac Jogues did what many (even for modern day readers) would consider extraordinary: he chose to return voluntarily back to New France so that he could continue in his mission to save the souls of Native Americans.[322] However, he would take on a more diplomatic role in addition to his priestly duties. Although he was not the only Jesuit missionary who would have to serve as a diplomat to Native American groups, it became a more common function for Jesuits to take on, especially in the middle ground.

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[320] Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance,* 59.

[321] For St. Isaac Jogues' tasks, see Lalemant, "CHAPTER VI. THE FATHER IS GIVEN AS SERVANT TO SOME HUNTERS. HE SUFFERS, HE IS CONSOLED; HE EXERCISES HIS ZEAL IN HIS JOURNEYS," 31:79, 81, 83.

[322] Vimont, "[283] CHAPTER XIV. OF THE DELIVERANCE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES, AND HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE.," 25:73.

Jesuits and Diplomacy in the Middle Ground

When the Jesuits came to New France, they expected to establish missions, save the souls of its indigenous populations, and maybe even die for the Catholic Church. However, they probably did not expect to become diplomats nor would they have wanted this role. Yet, this was the reality that the Jesuits found themselves in, as well as French traders, as time went on in New France: "The traders obtained their furs and the Jesuits their converts, but they also became the mediators of a regional Algonquian alliance."[323] This reality turned missionaries into emissaries. The Jesuits had to perform roles that they may not have trained for but were forced into, such as learning to cooperate with Native American leaders: "French agents of the alliance — the priests, officers, and traders — could, however, only act with the cooperation of Algonquian leaders."[324] It was to this context that St. Isaac Jogues returned when he came back to New France in 1644. Through this, he reentered into the middle ground for a second—and final—time.

St. Isaac Jogues, Diplomacy, and Martyrdom

After being tortured by the Iroquois, it would reasonable and plausible to believe that St. Isaac Jogues may never have wanted to enter into Iroquois territory. However, not only did he enter willingly into Iroquois territory, but also came with a French and Amerindian delegation to help negotiate peace among the Iroquois, French, and other Native Americans of the region.[325] Their meeting was a relative success, and peace was established among the inhabitants of

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[323] White, *The Middle Ground,* 23.

[324] White, *The Middle Ground,* 36-37.

[325] Tylenda, S.J., *Jesuit Saints & Martyrs,* 373.

New France and the *pays d'en haut* in 1644.[326] It should be noted that lasting peace in New France and the *pays d'en haut* came during the 1660s "when, one by one, the Five Nations came to terms with the French and their native allies."[327] Yet, the peace of the 1660s left France holding "the balance of power, but it was a precarious balance, and they could only keep the Iroquois at peace by keeping them 'in a state of fear.'"[328] However, the 1660s did not exist yet, and the peace that St. Isaac Jogues helped to establish in 1645 remained, at least for the time being. Although Jogues was present at this successful negotiation, this does not mean that his role as a diplomat or his involvement with the Iroquois was finished.

After the peace treaty, the New France governor sent St. Isaac Jogues to the Mohawks to continue to help maintain the peace, which Lalemant noted that "Father Isaac Jogues…has among his orders to do all in his power to incline to peace all the upper Iroquois whom he shall see in the villages."[329] St. Isaac Jogues' ambassadorial presence in Iroquois villages was a part of maintaining the current peace among the groups of New France and the *pays d'en haut,* and Lalemant recorded this in *The Jesuit Relations*: "It was very fortunate that Father Isaac Jogues happened to be in this settlement, for he maintained their kindly feeling and their desire to continue the peace."[330] Thus, St. Isaac Jogues'

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[326] Barthelemy Vimont, "[115] CHAPTER XI. OF THE LAST MEETING HELD FOR PEACE.," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791*, vol. 27, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 303, 305, https://archive.org/stream/jesuits27jesuuoft#page/247/mode/2up.

[327] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 13.

[328] Eccles, *Canada under Louis XIV,* 44.

[329] Lalemant, "[118] CHAPTER VIII. OF THE SETTLEMENT OF VILLE-MARIE, IN THE ISLAND OF MONTREAL.," 29:181.

[330] Lalemant, "[118] CHAPTER VIII. OF THE SETTLEMENT OF VILLE-MARIE, IN THE ISLAND OF MONTREAL.," 29:149, 151.

ventures into the Iroquois' territory had political agenda. Although peace existed for a short period of time, it would not be long before violence would break out, enveloping all of the groups of New France and the *pays d'en haut* into warfare once again.

In 1646, the Iroquois shattered the peace of New France and began another stage of war in the region.[331] Two of the victims of this reemerging violence were St. Isaac Jogues and St. Jean de la Lande. Prior to their reentry into the Iroquois' domain, famine and plague had struck the local Iroquois populace.[332] Like other Native American groups struck with these issues, the Iroquois sought an answer for why their populations had been affected by these two calamities. Once again, they blamed the Jesuits for bringing these catastrophes upon them, as the Iroquois believed St. Isaac Jogues "had left the Demon among them, and that all our discourses and all our instructions aimed only to exterminate them."[333] In other words, the Iroquois believed that St. Isaac Jogues' "demon" was the cause of their pestilence and famine. Thus, they plotted his death.

When St. Isaac Jogues and St. Jean de la Lande made a voyage to the Mohawk mission, as means of preaching and facilitating diplomatic peace, they were captured, stripped and placed into captivity.[334] On October 18th, 1646;

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[331] Lalemant, "[l] Relation of what occurred in New France on the great River of St. Lawrence, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-seven. *To the Rev. Father Estienne Charlet, Provincial of the Society of* Jesus, *in the Province of France.*" 30:219

[332] Lalemant, "[6] CHAPTER I. OF THE TREACHERY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*].," 30:229.

[333] Lalemant, "[6] CHAPTER I. OF THE TREACHERY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*].," 30:229.

[334] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VIII. FATHER ISAAC JGUES RETURNS FOR THE THIRD TIME TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], WHERE HE IS PUT TO DEATH.," 31:117.

when St. Isaac Jogues entered an Iroquois' dwelling, there was an attacker waiting for him, and Lalemant included a Dutch letter that chronicled the event that followed after St. Isaac Jogues had entered into the room: "'There was a traitor with his hatchet behind the door, who, on entering, split open his head; then immediately he cut it off, and set it on the palings.'"[335] Lalemant wrote that the St. Jean de la Lande was killed early the next morning in the same manner.[336] Although their deaths did not include torture and were brief in comparison to the deaths of some of the other North American Martyrs, St. Isaac Jogues' and St. Jean de la Lande's martyrdoms were representative of the middle ground.

These two individuals came to New France with a religious agenda to save the souls of Native Americans. However, they had to incorporate political diplomacy into their livelihoods. This combination of ambassadorship with being a missionary was a unique role that the Jesuits and their domestics had to play in New France and the *pays d'en haut.* It would be one that could exist only within the confines of the middle ground.

Analysis of St. Isaac Jogues

Jogues' experiences with encountering the effects of the Euro-Amerindian weapons trade, enduring Native American torture, living as a slave, and facilitating peaceful, diplomatic relations among the groups of New France show not only the middle ground but also his tangible, concrete actions that helped to create it. Like the other two saints featured in this history distinction thesis and honors capstone project, St. Isaac Jogues had a Huron name that he

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[335] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VIII. FATHER ISAAC JGUES RETURNS FOR THE THIRD TIME TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], WHERE HE IS PUT TO DEATH.," 31:117.

[336] Lalemant, "CHAPTER VIII. FATHER ISAAC JGUES RETURNS FOR THE THIRD TIME TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HIROQUOIS [*sic*], WHERE HE IS PUT TO DEATH.," 31:117.

used when communicating with them, which I mentioned in Chapter II. Similarly, his Huron name raises the same questions and objections that apply for the other two members of the North American Martyrs. However, if there is still any doubt to whether or not St. Isaac Jogues' life helped to showcase the middle ground, then I would point to one key piece of evidence. St. Isaac Jogues voluntarily and willingly came back to New France after surviving the intense hardships of torture and slavery. If St. Isaac Jogues was simply another Eurocentric missionary, then his painful experiences would have confirmed Europeans' attitudes about the lack of humanity and civility of Native Americans, which would give him a rationale for never returning back to North America. However, not only did he return to New France and the *pays d'en haut,* but also chose to foster peace with the Iroquois and head a mission with the Mohawks. This shows the signs of an individual who is invested in the region and knowledgeable of how it operates. Thus, this shows that St. Isaac Jogues highlighted the development of the middle ground.

Conclusion

Justification of Choices

Although *The Jesuit Relations* include accounts and entries from numerous Jesuit missionaries, including the superiors of the New France mission, I chose the North American Martyrs, and my particular case studies within this group, for a few reasons. First, because the North American Martyrs have been canonized as saints in the Catholic Church, this makes them more well-known to a wider audience. Indeed, I had heard about St. Jean de Brébeuf and his martyrdom when I was in high school, as there is a stained-glass image of him in my Jesuit high school's chapel. Therefore, I had chosen this group partly because I had known a little information about them. However, even though they might be known to a Catholic audience, this does not mean that great academic attention has been placed on them.

Second, I chose the North American Martyrs specifically because there has not been sufficient academic research done on them, as I stated in the introduction. By writing this honors capstone and history distinction thesis project, my goal was to bring these missionaries back to the academic forefront of New France, Jesuit, Native American and colonial historiographies, among other historical topics.

Third, I chose my case studies of St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Charles Garnier, and St. Isaac Jogues specifically because of their numerous accounts and entries in *The Jesuit Relations.* Each of these men wrote about their own personal experiences of living in North America and sent numerous letters to people, such as individuals in France, as well as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus in Rome. In addition, there is also a plethora of sources written about these Jesuits from other contemporary New France Jesuit missionaries.

These take the forms of letters, reports, and hagiographies. Although these writings were not penned by the saints in focus themselves, they nonetheless provide valuable insight into their lives, actions, and experiences in New France.

Finally, *The Jesuit Relations* themselves are easily accessible, both in print and in online versions. In terms of print, Syracuse University's Bird Library has numerous copies of *The Jesuit Relations.* Using the Greer edition of *The Jesuit Relations* allowed me to identify key entries that I would use in this project[337] Also, Greer's introduction helped to place New France, the Jesuit missionaries, and *The Jesuit Relations* within a broader historical context, which helped structure the first chapter of this project. However, of the versions of *The Jesuit Relations* available, the most complete is the Reuben Gold Thwaites' edition. Although this edition is from the late nineteenth century, with later editions of the Thwaites' version created during the twentieth century, its completeness makes it vastly superior in comparison to other volumes that are merely selections of works from within the larger canon of *The Jesuit Relations.*[338] In addition, online versions of the Thwaites edition make them even more accessible, as I was able to research these sources without being in Syracuse University's Bird Library. For example, I was able to complete my primary source research of *The Jesuit Relations* over the course of the previous

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[337] *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America,* ed. Allan Greer, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000).

[338] *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* 14, vols., ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1897-1899); *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* 1, vol., ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898) https://archive.org/stream/jesuits27jesuuoft#page/247/mode/2up; *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791,* 4, vols., ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Pageant Book, 1959).

summer while staying in my relatives' house. Being able to access these writings easily was definitely a major factor in choosing this research topic.

Each of these reasons are why I chose my particular topic, the North American Martyrs, and their texts in *The Jesuit Relations* for my joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis. However, this does not mean that my research did not encounter difficulties or limitations as time progressed.

Limitations in My Research

One limitation I encountered is the fact that I relied on English translations of *The Jesuit Relations.* The Jesuit missionaries' accounts were written mostly in French. Although using English translations of primary sources is acceptable at an undergraduate level, I know that fluency in the primary sources' original language is considered the best option when it comes to researching on a historical topic in one's non-native language. This is especially true, as the meanings of unique linguistic emphases, phrases, and parlance might be "lost" in translation. Therefore, my own lack of fluency with the French language has prevented me from being able to comprehend these texts more fully.

Another limitation is the overabundance of evidence that I collected. Although I collected extensive notes and evidence for the North American Martyrs' encounters in and with the middle ground, I was not able to use all of them. There were plenty of quotations and examples from any of the case studies and selected writings that I could have used as evidence. In addition, there were also plenty of other sources that Jesuits wrote that may have included the works of the North American Martyrs, which I may have missed when I was researching potential documents to use for this project. However, if I provided every piece of evidence that I found, then this project would be at least

twice as long! Thus, I had to use the most pertinent and explicit examples that I could find in *The Jesuit Relations.*

Finally, a limitation I encountered was the use of an online version of the Thwaites' edition of *The Jesuit Relations.* Although I mentioned that the significance of having easy, online access to *The Jesuit Relations* was crucial to my primary source research, this does not mean that it was without any issues. Indeed, it could be very problematic. For example, the online version, provided by Creighton University, even mentions that these pages were not professionally uploaded or proofread.[339] As I researched these texts over the summer, I did encounter errors throughout some of the volumes. Also, because the Thwaites' edition of *The Jesuit Relations* has the texts' original printed language on even-numbered pages and the English translation on the odd-numbered pages, this made identifying a quote's page number in the digital version extremely difficult. There have been numerous times where I have had to verify a quote's page number through a physical copy of the Thwaites' edition. Although I was eventually able to adapt and work around these difficulties, this shows that I encountered limitations in using the digital version of *The Jesuit Relations.*

The existence of limitations does not negate the significance of this project's research nor does it mean that this project should be abandoned. Rather, they serve as calls to action for additional researchers and scholars to address the issues encountered in earlier research done on a particular topic. For example, future scholars may use pieces of evidence that I was not able to utilize in their analysis. In addition, they might be able to comprehend *The Jesuit Relations* in their original language's text. Also, future researchers may also find

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[339] "The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents 1610 to 1791: Table of Contents," The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents 1610 to 1791, Creighton University, updated April 26, 2018, http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/.

ways to create better and clearer online versions of the Thwaites edition, which would aid the next set of New France, Jesuit, Native American, and colonial historians and scholars. Ultimately, these research suggestions provide an excellent transition into the next section: *What is the importance of this research?*

What This All Means

First, this project seeks to expand on Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. This book introduced both historians and the general public to the existence of the middle ground.[340] White's contributions to this particular section of history are invaluable and this project could not have been completed without it. However, as time progresses, the information in any field must continue to be expanded upon and refined. This is true of the historiography of the middle ground. For example, White begins his book in 1650. However, the events, writings, and deaths of the North American Martyrs occurred prior to 1650. By researching their entries and accounts in *The Jesuit Relations,* this project hopes to push the "starting" date of the middle ground farther back in time. This shows that the development of the middle ground was even longer than previously imagined, which can lead to future research to discover how far back its evolution goes.

Second, the middle ground itself is representative of the increasing presence of globalization occurring throughout the early modern world. Although many laypeople think of globalization as a recent trend, it has existed for centuries, even without information or flight technologies. The encounter between the French, including Jesuit missionaries, and Native Americans in New France and the *pays d'en haut* is only one example of globalized encounters.

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[340] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVI.

Throughout the world, Europeans were interacting with non-Europeans on a continual and increased basis. For example, various European powers, such as the English, French, and Portuguese, established trading posts throughout the Indian subcontinent during the early modern period. In addition to a continual and growing presence between Europe and the rest of the world, this example shows a burgeoning economic and political interconnectedness that emerged among Europeans and non-Europeans. These themes can be extended to the middle ground, especially in the formation of military alliances between Native Americans and Europeans.[341] The world was becoming more connected, and cross-cultural and transcontinental encounters were helping to facilitate this growing interconnectedness. The development of the middle ground is only a part of this larger paradigm shift during the early modern era.

Third, this project has huge importance for the general public's understanding of French colonization in North America. For example, when I was growing up and learning about the French presence in North America alongside other European colonial powers, I would see that the textbook's map of North America identified that huge swathes of land were "French." That is, these lands were considered to be under the "control" of the French. However, given the research of this area and period, it is safe to say that the French did not have hegemonic power over its North American colonies, particularly in New France and in the *pays d'en haut,* where they had to work with Native Americans to survive.[342] Because of this, I believe that the youth's education of the French colonial presence in North America must be rewritten to be reflective of the reality of French colonization more accurately in light of the research done on the middle ground.

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[341] White, *The Middle Ground,* 29.

[342] White, *The Middle Ground,* XXVI.

Fourth, I believe that it is important to remind the general public that the French were not like the Spanish or the English in their relations with Native Americans. Although the French were still Eurocentric in their views towards Native Americans and exacerbated preexisting issues such as warfare and slavery, their experience and relationship with Native Americans were vastly different from other European colonizers. Without an *encomienda* system or an insatiable desire for farming land, the French were unable to and did not need to subjugate New France Native Americans under their complete control.[343] This allowed for a very nuanced experience of Franco-Amerindian relations, which shows that they differed from their fellow colonizers. In doing so, this will be a reminder for the general public not to generalize European colonization processes, especially in early modern North America.

Finally, I think it is equally important to remind the general public that Native American life prior to the arrival of the European colonizers was not perfect by any means. Many have a tendency to see pre-Columbian North America as a serene paradise where Native Americans were able to live out their cultures and traditions before Europeans came and ruined everything, and the "potency of this imagery…cannot be overstated, as Europeans drew liberally on it to represent the New World and its inhabitants, in the context of a nostalgic longing for the past and a simpler life."[344] To be clear, it is true that the richness of Amerindian traditions, customs, and histories must be celebrated and focused on and that the arrival of European colonizers did change the Native Americans' ways of living. However, pre-Columbian North America was not the Garden of Eden. Warfare, slavery, and torture among other realities, existed in

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[343] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 10.

[344] Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History,* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1999), 17, http://www.iheal.univ-paris3.fr/sites/www.iheal.univ-paris3.fr/files/krech%20III%20%20intro%20epilogue1%20%20%20201301081833581 02.pdf.

North America *prior* to the presence of the French, Spanish, Dutch, and English colonizers. Although Europeans may have exacerbated these realities and tensions, they by no means created them entirely out of nothing. In addition, there were plenty of indigenous peoples who collaborated with colonial forces or benefitted from their presence, and example of this is that the Iroquois benefitted from trading with the Dutch for gunpowder weapons.[345] Native Americans did not simply draw a clean dividing line between "us" indigenous peoples and "them" Europeans. Although cultural divisions existed, the reality of the situation was much more complex than is imagined normally.

Although I could continue this list of the importance of this research, I want to highlight one final point of significance about the Jesuits and the middle ground. However, this one area merits its own section, which will lead into the final analysis of this project as a whole, and its conclusion.

What We Can Learn From St. Catherine Tekakwitha

In 1680, a Mohawk woman by the name of Catherine, or Kateri, Tekakwitha died in the village of Kahnawake, a community of Mohawk Catholic converts. Although this woman could have died in obscurity, her fame spread throughout New France. Miracles were attributed subsequently to her, and people began to have a prayerful devotion towards her. This was no ordinary woman. Indeed, she lived a life that in many ways differed from other Native Americans of her time and today, as Catherine Tekakwitha was not only a Mohawk woman but also a Catholic convert. Over time, the miracles and devotion towards her warranted not only her own hagiographies but also her own canonization in 2012. Thus, she is now known as St. Catherine Tekakwitha.[346]

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[345] Greer, "Introduction: Native North America and the French Jesuits," 13.

[346] For the life and death of St. Catherine Tekakwitha, see Greer, *Mohawk Saint.*

Illustration. 6: *St. Kateri Tekakwitha,* painting, courtesy of Catholic Online, Bakersfield, https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=154.

However, although Mohawks like St. Catherine Tekakwitha lived close to the French, traded with them, and became Catholic, this does not mean that they "lost" their Amerindian identity and "became" European.[347] For instance, even though this group of Mohawks would incorporate metal knives and pots into everyday usage, which they procured from the French, they would still live very similarly to their ancestors: "Cultivation generally followed time-honored traditions. Signs of trade with the French could be seen everywhere at Kahnawake, in the broadcloth shirts people wore and in the metal tools they wielded."[348] Even their Catholic faith, which people like St. Catherine Tekakwitha

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[347] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 108.

[348] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 98.

chose willingly, did not eradicate their former ways of life or their sense of being Mohawk: “What made the Catholicism of Kahnawake distinctively Iroquoian was not just the admixture of indigenous rituals and beliefs; it was the way in which the Indians made Christianity their own.”[349] Therefore, I believe it is important to remember that “Native cultures were not fixed and timeless edifices, ready to crumble on first exposure to Europe’s transatlantic thrust. Rather, they were historically evolving societies that had known centuries of change.”[350] In other words, even though the lives of the Mohawks of Kahnawake, or the other Native American groups mentioned in this project, were altered drastically after the arrival of European colonizers, this does not mean that every semblance of their previous identity and culture prior to European contact was immediately wiped out from existence: “Inevitably their culture changed in the process, but it was neither eradicated nor replaced by a foreign culture.”[351] Also, it is equally important to remember that the Europeans themselves were changed in their encounters with Native Americans: “But, then, Europeans in America were also transformed through contact with native societies.”[352] Change was not simply one-sided.

Thus, both scholars and laypeople, including myself, need to remember this statement when studying the middle ground and its development: “Our understanding of these processes is badly skewed if we think in terms of a zero-sum ‘contest of cultures,’ with Indian civilization falling victim to a triumphant Euro-American culture.”[353] Therefore, the legacy of St. Catherine Tekakwitha and

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[349] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 110.

[350] Greer, *Mohawk Saint*, 31.

[351] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 31.

[352] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 31.

[353] Greer, *Mohawk Saint,* 31.

the village of Kahnawake is that they represent a unique world that was continuing to be created after the deaths of the North American Martyrs, and that it could only have existed through mutual Franco-Amerindian interactions, in a space known as the middle ground.

What This Teaches Us about the Jesuits: A Final Analysis

This project has touched on a particular moment in the historical development and role of the Society of Jesus in its early modern missionary zeal to save souls. After doing months of extensive secondary and primary source research and actually writing this project, I believe, and I hope my readers will come to see this as well, that the Jesuits of New France and the North American Martyrs were part of the middle ground. Their writings show the transformative effect that the middle ground had for everyone who was living in it, including themselves. Although these Jesuits may have had Eurocentric attitudes towards indigenous peoples, their lives would be changed profoundly through their interactions with them. Learning new languages, chronicling Native American culture and customs, and, in the case of St. Isaac Jogues, returning back to New France and negotiating peace among warring groups are all signs that the North American Martyrs were just as changed by the Native Americans as they changed the Native Americans they encountered. If the Jesuit missionaries were completely Eurocentric people who did not care for Native American lives, then there would not be a written Huron language or any of the ethnographic information we have today about early modern Native Americans of New France and the *pays d'en haut.* The lives of the North American Martyrs show that one cannot label these missionaries, as well as others, as utterly Eurocentric. The cross-cultural encounters and learning mentioned throughout *The Jesuit Relations* cannot be discarded.

This project also changes our understanding of the relationship between the Jesuits and globalization, as it has put Jesuit missionaries, and the North American Martyrs in particular, into the spotlight of early modern globalization. This project has shown that the intercultural encounters between Jesuit missionaries and Native Americans went both ways. The growing awareness between both parties' cultures shows that they were pulling one another into an international and multicultural network that connected continents. Either knowingly or unknowingly, the Jesuits brought globalization with them into New France and the *pays d'en haut.* For example, events that occurred in Rome, such as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus' decision on choosing the next superior of the New France mission, had effects on the missionary structure of New France.[354] In turn, this could shape how the Jesuit missionaries interacted with Native Americans. Therefore, Jesuit-Amerindian relations could be affected by ecclesiastical policy decisions thousands of miles away from their homes.

In addition, the multiple entries and accounts of Amerindian culture in *The Jesuit Relations* reveal that information of other peoples was being transported back to Europe, which would have increased ethnographic knowledge and a greater understanding of non-European cultures, as well as making their readers more aware of the world outside of Europe. The Jesuits' international information network, as exemplified by *The Jesuit Relations,* added to the Jesuits' role in creating early modern globalization. I believe that both of these examples show that the Jesuits themselves were not so much destroying local, indigenous cultures and replacing them with European ones, as they were

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[354] Brébeuf, "Letter of Jean de Brébeuf to the Very Reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.," 32:59, 61, 63, 65.

incorporating them into a globalized framework. Thus, I think that the Jesuits are examples of early modern globalizers.

Given the globalized nature of the Jesuits during this period, it would be plausible to assume that Jesuits in other parts of the world practiced cultural accommodation. I believe that this is correct and that arguments can be made that the Jesuits practiced similar cultural accommodation techniques to the ones that the North American Martyrs utilized.[355] To begin, I think it is important to say that their fellow Jesuit contemporaries lived and learned alongside Native Americans too, as their hagiographers lived in Amerindian communities too, e.g. Regnaut who lived in a village near the location of St. Jean de Brébeuf's death.[356] This shows that other Jesuits in New France were also living with Amerindian groups and writing ethnographic accounts. In other words, the North American Martyrs were not the only New France missionaries engaging in these types of interactions with Native Americans. This means that other New France Jesuits lived in the middle ground, as well.

On a global scale, the examples of Jesuits accommodating themselves to diverse cultures are myriad. For instance, one only has to look at the Matteo Ricci, a famous Jesuit missionary who went to Ming China in 1583, dressed as a Confucian scholar to see this. Also, St. José de Anchieta, a sixteenth-century Portuguese Jesuit living in Brazil, learned the Tupi language and compiled a Tupi dictionary.[357] All of these examples show how early modern Jesuits accommodated themselves into the local environment through learning that region's vernacular language or by presenting themselves in a comprehensible

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[355] This is the main theme for Abe, *The Jesuit Mission to New France.*

[356] Regnaut, "A veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed death of Father Jean de Brebœf [*sic*] and of Father Gabriel L'Alemant, In New france, [*sic*] in the country of the hurons, [*sic*] by the Iroquois, enemies of the Faith.," 34:25.

[357] Tylenda, S.J., *Jesuit Saints & Martyrs*, 165-166.

way by dressing in a familiar style to their intended audiences, as they all searched for ways to adapt themselves to the cultures that they came into contact with on a continual basis. Again, all of this was done in an attempt to help save the souls of the indigenous peoples they encountered.

However, despite other Jesuits practicing similar forms of cultural accommodation elsewhere in the world, this does not diminish the significance or the uniqueness of the North American Martyrs. Although these previous examples show that the North American Martyrs' conversion tactics were not necessarily unique to them and were part of a larger missionary strategy employed by other New France and early modern Jesuits, the North American Martyrs are still unique because of their geographic, political, cultural, and social contexts. Life in New France and the *pays d'en haut* was not the same as living in Ming China or Portuguese Brazil.

Using the Chinese example, Europeans only had nominal relations with China until the nineteenth century, and even then, theirs was not a relationship defined by direct, military conquest. Also, the Ming dynasty had hegemonic control over China by the time Europeans had entered into China during the sixteenth century. Chinese civilization had been established for centuries, even predating the French, and its written language, literature, and religious traditions were more entrenched in Chinese culture than what the Jesuits experienced in New France.[358] In addition, a written Chinese language existed prior to the arrival of Matteo Ricci. Finally, Jesuits enjoyed a special presence as scholars and educators within the imperial capital of the Ming Court: "Many magistrates and scholars arriving in the capital visited the Jesuit compound to see its books,

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[358] J.J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought,* (London: Routledge, 1997), 40-41.

Illustration. 7: *Matteo Ricci*, illustration, courtesy of Boston College, Boston, http://ricci.bc.edu/people/matteo-ricci-0.html.

clocks, and astronomical instruments."[359] This sentiment continued under the patronage of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing dynasty, as he "admired the Jesuits for their scientific knowledge and their upright morality."[360] These examples show the immense access the Jesuits had to the imperial Chinese government.

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[359] R. Po-chia Hsia, *Matteo Ricci & the Catholic Mission to China: A Short History with Documents.* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016), 34.

[360] Hsia, *Matteo Ricci & the Catholic Mission to China,* 37.

In comparison, the North American Martyrs entered into a world that was becoming increasingly under the influence of European socioeconomic and political affairs and that had no undisputed, hegemonic power ruling over the North American Great Lakes region. Also, the North American Martyrs had to learn multiple oral languages that had no written form prior to their arrival. It was only later that they created a written Huron language, for example. Meanwhile, the Jesuits were not received warmly in New France and in the *pays d'en haut,* as Native Americans saw them as sorcerers and carriers of pestilence. Also, at least at the moment of writing, there is no evidence of a middle ground existing in Ming China during the time of Matteo Ricci or the Jesuits' tenure of living in imperial China. Although Ricci may have immersed himself into Chinese culture and the Ming Chinese traded with the Portuguese at Macao, there has yet to be a defined middle ground-like space where the Chinese and Europeans had continual and repeated intercultural encounters or where a unique Euro-Chinese culture was formed. Therefore, given these constraints, the North American Martyrs are still unique in that they had to work within specific cultural, social, and political confines that were not present for Jesuits like Matteo Ricci.

Returning to why I chose my three case studies, I made these decisions because they are three clear examples of the middle ground itself, in all its political, social, economic, military, and cultural complexities. Although they may not be unique in their missionary tactics, their actions and writings depict the existence of the middle ground prior to 1650. The value of the North American Martyrs' contributions to the middle ground should not be reduced because they employed similar missionary strategies that other New France and international Jesuits used elsewhere during the early modern period. Also, their value is not diminished simply because other New France Jesuits were part of the middle ground too. This just goes to show how pervasive and encompassing

the middle ground was and how invested the Jesuits were in its development, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Ultimately, the significance of the North American Martyrs, and my specific case studies, is that they were missionaries whose lives and interactions with Native Americans reflected a broader Jesuit conversion strategy. They rearranged it to become usable in the middle ground, a cultural, political, economic, social, and military space that did not exist elsewhere for other Jesuit missionaries during this time, which makes them unique.

Concluding Thoughts

In life, many occurrences and issues cannot be reduced to simply being either one way or the other. They both require a more nuanced and complex understanding of the world. This includes the interpretation of history and historical figures. For the Jesuit missionaries in particular, they were not simply religiously rabid individuals who forced non-European peoples to convert at any cost. To be sure, there were missionaries who did not view indigenous peoples and their culture in a favorable light. However, to see them as solely Eurocentric would be a mistake and a tragic reduction of the reality of the actual historical situation. Seeing the Jesuit missionaries in New France as participants in the middle ground and as forces who helped to shape it gives both scholars and laypeople a more refined and detailed understanding of early modern cross-cultural interactions in North America. These understandings of the complexities of history can be applied to other historical epochs and events. Ultimately, this project seeks to remind the general public that there is more to history than what one learns in passing or even in the classroom and that research can change the way one views something. I hope that my readers have taken this much from reading this joint honors capstone and history distinction thesis.

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