

**“Adopted Children of God”: Native and Jesuit Identities in New France, c. 1630-1690**

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This paper examines different understandings of the place that the natives were expected to occupy in the political and in the Christian communities at the beginning of the colonisation of New France. The French monarchy and its representatives had a specific vision of the necessary structure of the colonial world and of the role that the natives should play within it. If missionaries' own projects sometimes coincided with this perspective, their own definition of what they considered a true community and of the Christian's duties also frequently diverged from imperial designs.

Colonisation required a conscious attempt on the part of both political and religious actors to integrate the natives within their conception of the commonwealth. In order to understand how the natives were assimilated or ostracised from the colony and its European settlements, one needs to consider the language of citizenship in the early modern period. Missionaries adopted the terminology of national identity but distorted and adapted it to serve their own purpose. This paper will compare and contrast the status allocated to – and the vocabulary used to describe their relationship with – the natives in official French documents and in the writings of missionaries living amongst indigenous tribes. Colonial authorities, in particular after the reorganisation of the colony in 1663, used the language of the family to express native groups' submission to the French monarchy. Missionaries used a similar wording, but they incorporated the natives' traditions within this framework and emphasised the reciprocity of their ties with these new believers.

Cardinal Richelieu, in his charter to the Company of One Hundred Associates, created in 1627, attempted to define the place that indigenous neophytes would occupy within the French colonial world. According to the new charter, converted natives would be considered French (“*naturels et régnicoles*”).<sup>1</sup> The prevalent theory of French

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citizenship had been elaborated by Jean Bodin in the sixteenth century in his *Six Livres de la République*. Despite the great diversity of the French kingdom, all its members had one thing in common, said Bodin: they were under the authority of the same king. A citizen, for Bodin, was nothing else than a “free subject depending on the sovereignty of an other.”<sup>2</sup> Thus the natives could perfectly be considered French, as long as they accepted the role assigned to them by the French monarchy in its imperial scheme. People living in areas taken over by France in Europe would usually be assimilated as French citizens, and did not have to seek letters of naturalisation in order to obtain those privileges.<sup>3</sup> New France was considered as a conquered area but with certain peculiarities. As opposed to the usual rule in occupied lands within Europe, only those natives who accepted conversion (called “domiciled” natives) in New France were integrated into settled territory and considered French.<sup>4</sup> Other groups, such as the Iroquois in the mid-seventeenth century, were treated as foreign nations. When in conflict, the 1665 instructions to the Intendant of New France were clear: those natives who refused to submit and who “prevented the peopling of the land” were to be “entirely exterminated.”<sup>5</sup>

The relationship between the king and converted natives was frequently depicted as that of a father and his children. In the Bodinian tradition, the hierarchical structure of the commonwealth was based on the family model. The government of the house was, according to Bodin, the “true model of the government of the Republic.”<sup>6</sup> Jurists discussing naturalisation in the seventeenth century used a strong ideology of assimilation to discuss citizenship, embedded in the terminology of adoption. To become a French citizen was to be adopted as a child of the kingdom.<sup>7</sup> Naturalisation letters were also called adoption letters.<sup>8</sup>

This paternalist model was not used in the early days of trade in New France to describe the link between the Crown and native populations, as native leaders clearly understood their relationship with the French king as one of equality and alliance. As Marc Lescarbot recounted, in 1617 in Acadia, Mikmaq leader Membertou “considered himself equal to the King and his Lieutenants, and often told sieur de Poutrincourt

<sup>1</sup>“Arrêt portant règlement en faveur des habitants de la Nouvelle-France,” Archives nationales d’outre-mer, France (hereafter ANOM), COL C11A 1, f.253 v. The original orthography of any quotations in French has been respected.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Bodin, *Les six livres de la république*, fourth ed. (Paris, 1583), 68. See also 70. All translations are mine.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2004), 51, 82.

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissages: Indiens et Français dans le Pays d’en Haut, 1660–1715* (Paris, 2003), 61.

<sup>5</sup> “Instructions au Sieur Talon, Intendant, 27 mars 1665,” in *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France recueillis aux archives de la province de Québec, ou copiés à l’étranger mis en ordre et édités sous les auspices de la Législature de Québec avec table, etc.* (Québec, 1883), vol. I, 178.

<sup>6</sup> Bodin, *Les six livres*, 11. See Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572–1651* (Cambridge, 1993), 26–27. This does not imply that Bodin derived the origin of political authority from the family. He maintained a distinction between the government of a sovereign over free subjects and the government of one of those subjects over domestic dependents.

<sup>7</sup> Sahlins, *Unnaturally French*, 73–74.

<sup>8</sup> See for example Jean Bacquet, *Les oeuvres de Jean Bacquet, Avocat du Roy en la Chambre du Thresor. Des Droicts dv Domaine de la Covronne de France* (Paris, 1630), vol. 1, 109.

[governor of Port-Royal] that he was his great friend, brother, companion and equal.”<sup>9</sup> In 1616, during trade agreements, Jesuit Pierre Biard explained, the natives sang that they were “the good friends, allies, associates, confederates, & partners of the King, & the French.”<sup>10</sup> But from the 1640s on, and in an even more pronounced way after the colony was brought under royal administration in 1663, French officials increasingly insisted on depicting their relationship with native leaders in terms of paternalism rather than alliance and fraternalism. In 1682, when allied tribes negotiated with Charles de Montmagny, the governor of New France, native leader Kondiaronk put his tribe under the protection of the French and agreed that his relationship with the governor had changed, as he

used to call himself your brother, but has ceased to be, as he is now your son, and you have fathered him (*tu l’as engendré*) with the protection that you gave him against his enemies, you are his father and he acknowledges you as such, he obeys you as a child obeys his father, He listens to you, he only does what you want, because he respects his father and obeys him.<sup>11</sup>

In 1695, Governor Louis de Buade de Frontenac declared to a Sioux leader that he “received him among his children, on the condition that he would only listen to the voice of his Father and that he would obey him.”<sup>12</sup> This insistence on submissive assimilation was mainly a way to further the Crown’s imperial project. Thus, for Jacques Duchesneau, intendant of New France between 1675 and 1682, it was important to behave with the natives so as to “be in all things their arbitrator and protector, and drive them into a great dependence [...] we also need to make them aware that all their happiness consists in being linked to the French [...]”<sup>13</sup>

The language of adoption was powerfully taken up by missionaries to discuss the natives’ belonging in the Catholic community. But their understanding of the community did not always coincide with the Crown’s, and they developed a reciprocal perspective on adoption which was at odds with the authoritarian vision of imperialism. Governor Frontenac complained in 1672 that the Jesuits should have been careful, “when making the savages subjects of Jesus Christ, to also make them subjects of the King.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Marc Lescarbot, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France contenant les navigations, découvertes, & habitations faites par les françois és Indes Occidentales & Nouvelle-France... 3e éd., enrichie de plusieurs choses singulières, outre la suite de l’histoire* (Paris, 1617), 589–590.

<sup>10</sup> Pierre Biard, *Relation de la Nouvelle France, de ses terres, natvrel dy Païs, & de ses Habitans, Item, Du voyage des Peres Iesuites ausdictes contrées...* (Lyon, 1616), 46. On fraternalism in New France, see Peter Cook, “Vivre comme frères: Native-French Alliances in the St Lawrence Valley, 1535–1667” (Doctoral thesis, dir. Catherine M. Desbarats, McGill University, 2008), chapter 5.

<sup>11</sup> “Paroles échangées entre Frontenac et les alliés hurons, outaouais et miamis, Août 1682,” ANOM, COL C11A 6, f. 7 v.

<sup>12</sup> “Relation de divers évènements survenus au Canada et en Acadie, 1695,” ANOM, COL C11A 13, f. 230 v. See also Jean Baptiste de la Croix Chevreières de Saint-Vallier, *Relation des missions de la Nouvelle France par M. l’Evêque de Quebec* (Paris, 1688), 174; and “Harangue de M. le Comte de Frontenac aux Iroquois,” in *Découvertes et établissements des François dans l’ouest et dans le sud de l’Amérique septentrionale, 1614-1698*, ed. Pierre Margry (Paris, 1879), vol. 1, 217-226.

<sup>13</sup> “Mémoire du Duchesneau au ministre concernant les nations indiennes qui fournissent les pelleteries et contenant une description des colonies anglaises et de l’Acadie, 13 novembre 1681,” ANOM, COL C11A 5, ff. 308 r.–v. On paternalism, see Havard, *Empire et métissages*, chapter 6, esp. 360–366.

<sup>14</sup> “Lettre de Frontenac au ministre, 2 novembre 1672,” ANOM, COL C11A 3, ff. 246 v., 247 r.

Adoption into the Christian community had a strong meaning for missionaries, a meaning which implied a great involvement on the part of the “adopted,” but which was also quite flexible. This conception resonated with native practices. Adoption was a central element of Huron and Iroquois cultures, as the Jesuits were quick to recognize. Prisoners of war were, by decision of the tribal council, given to families who lost members in combat and were adopted by them. Usually, women and children were easily integrated and assimilated within the family. As for males, the family could decide to either adopt them or have the tribe torture and kill them.<sup>15</sup> This decision depended on the skills and disposition of the captive. If the prisoner behaved well, he would be treated like any other member of the clan and given the rank and titles of the warrior he replaced. He could even, after assimilation, go to war against his own nation.<sup>16</sup>

Adoption increased to unprecedented levels during the Iroquois wars. This conflict went on throughout the seventeenth century and opposed the Iroquois Confederacy, also known as the Five Nations, who were supported by the English and Dutch colonies, to the Huron and Algonquian speaking peoples (notably the Montagnais). The main reason for this confrontation was the fur trade, and the French sided against the Iroquois.<sup>17</sup> War and diseases compelled the Iroquois nations to intensively practice adoption to replenish their numbers of male hunters and warriors, sometimes adopting entire Huron villages who had surrendered.<sup>18</sup> This tradition was also a way to absorb the enemy within the Confederacy’s ranks. When important members of a tribe died, raids were also organised to take captives in compensation for the deceased, even if the attacked group was not responsible for their death.<sup>19</sup> During the Iroquois wars, the Jesuits had direct experience of this process. For example, some Iroquois warriors captured the Jesuit Giuseppe Bressani in 1644, tortured him, and gave him to a woman who had lost her grandfather to the Huron. She finally sold him to the Dutch, who sent him back to France.<sup>20</sup> The Fathers were thus aware of the frequency of the practice and used the term “naturalised” when they discussed the adoption of not only natives from other groups, but also of themselves either after capture or for acceptance within the group.<sup>21</sup> They described this custom in terms similar to the terms used to depict the French system of naturalisation.

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill, 1992), 35–37, 66–71.

<sup>16</sup> Bruce G. Trigger, *The children of Aataentsic: a History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal, 1987), 72. See also 826–831 for the practice amongst the Iroquois.

<sup>17</sup> On the wars, see George T. Hunt, *The Wars of the Iroquois: A Study in Intertribal Trade Relations* (Madison, 1978); and Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*.

<sup>18</sup> Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic*, 789, 826–27; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 65.

<sup>19</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 33–35.

<sup>20</sup> Albert Tessier, “Bressani, François-Joseph,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1966; reprinted with corrections in 1979), vol. I, 1000–1700.

<sup>21</sup> See for example: Jérôme Lalemant, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable aux missions des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus en la Nouvelle France és années mil six cent cinquante neuf & mil six cent soixante...* (Paris, 1661), 157; Jérôme Lalemant, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquables [sic] aux missions des peres la Compagnie de Jesus, en la Nouvelle France, és années 1662 & 1663...* (Paris, 1664), 51; Paul Ragueneau, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la mission des pères de la Compagnie de Jesus au pays de la Nouvelle France, depuis l'eté de l'année 1651 jusques à l'eté de l'année 1652...* (Paris, 1653), 105.

If the king did indeed grant French citizenship to converted natives, in the context of New France, adoption of French priests by native groups was a much more common and important practice. As foreigners, missionaries, in order to proselytise within a tribe, needed to be first adopted. In the early days of the missions, this system seemed problematic to some of them. In 1634, Paul le Jeune, wintering with the Montagnais, refused adoption. The Montagnais treated the French badly, he claimed, because

we do not want to ally ourselves with them as brothers, something they really desire [...] but as we are not able to hunt like them, and we do not consider this process praiseworthy, we do not want to take part in it. This is why they do not consider us as part of their nation [...] If any foreigner, whoever he may be, becomes part of their party, they will treat him as one of their own.<sup>22</sup>

But the Jesuits quickly understood that they needed to accept the ritual, as the ceremony of adoption that “naturalised” them, as they called it, into the native nation was, according to Father Claude Dablon, “a mark of great confidence amongst these Peoples,” and without it, they could not receive the help essential for their survival.<sup>23</sup> They were officially adopted during a ceremony and given an Indian name, which would be transmitted to another Father at their death.<sup>24</sup>

For the natives as well as for the Jesuits, adoption was a spiritual process as much as a social and political one. This framework was repeatedly used by missionaries to describe conversion and baptism: Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot, on his arrival among a tribe of the upper Iroquois in 1656, “adopted the people of Oiogoën as his children.”<sup>25</sup> If the Fathers “adopted” the tribes in which they were to work, native converts were considered, as was repeated frequently in the Jesuits’ *Relations*, “adopted children” of God (*celuy dont ils étoient Les enfans Adoptifs; ses enfans adoptés*).<sup>26</sup> In French, the term

<sup>22</sup> Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, en l'année 1634 envoyée au R. Père provincial de la Compagnie de Jésus...* (Paris, 1635), 122.

<sup>23</sup> The quotation is from Claude Dablon, in Jean de Quen, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la mission des peres de la Compagnie de Jesus, au pays de la Nouvelle France, és années 1655 & 1656...* (Paris, 1657), 65. On “naturalisation” and survival, see for example Pierre Millet, “Lettre a Quelques Missionnaires du Canada, Onneiôt, July 6, 1691,” in Reuben Gold Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents. Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610—1791* (hereafter *JR*) (Cleveland, 1896), vol. LXIV, 92; Jérôme Lalemant in Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France en l'année 1639...* (Paris, 1640), 12.

<sup>24</sup> James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York, 1985), 83–85. On naming and adoption, see for example: Chrestien Le Clercq, *Premier établissement de la foy dans la Nouvelle-France: contenant la publication de l'Evangile, l'histoire des colonies françoises, & les fameuses découvertes depuis le fleuve de Saint Laurent...* (Paris, 1691), vol. I, 128–29; Chrestien Le Clercq, *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspésie qui contient les moeurs & la religion des sauvages gaspésiens Porte-Croix...* (Paris, 1691), 132; Jérôme Lalemant, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable és missions des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus, en la Nouvelle France, es années 1647. & 1648...* (Paris, 1649), 60; Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France en l'année 1637...* (Paris, 1638), 211; Lalemant in Le Jeune, *Relation de 1639*, 13–14. The native name of governor Montmagny, Onontio, was also transmitted to the following governors up until 1760: Havard, *Empire et métissages*, 215–216.

<sup>25</sup> Dablon, in de Quen, *Relation de 1655 & 1656*, 57.

<sup>26</sup> Jacques Marquette, in Claude Dablon, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable aux missions*

“adoption” was commonly used to mean the “action making men the children of God.”<sup>27</sup> For the Fathers, the notions of adoption and naturalisation were more than simple metaphors, and related to the idea that Catholicism would be transmitted as a series of habits internalized to the point when they became a second nature. Similarly, when someone became a “naturalised” citizen, he adopted this civic identity as a second nature, by habit.<sup>28</sup> Thus foreigners living in France were considered, as claimed for example jurist Jean Bacquet, “habituated in this Kingdom.”<sup>29</sup> Through the same process, by practice, people could become “naturalised Christians,” which was also an expression recurrently used by missionaries.<sup>30</sup>

The Fathers clearly understood that in Huron and Iroquois cultures, naming was considered to be a form of resurrection of the dead, and that, by being adopted, an individual was taking on the qualities and social functions of the deceased, and they accepted this practice of requickening.<sup>31</sup> Father Joseph Poncet, captured by the Iroquois in 1652, recounted, “then I realised that I was given in return for a dead man, for whom these women were renewing the last mourning, resuscitating the deceased in my person, according to their custom.” Once the decision was made to adopt the captive, he was treated like a member of the family.<sup>32</sup> This ritual was a sign, according to Jesuit Barthélémy Vimont, that “the desire for immortality reigns in the minds of the savages as well as in the minds of the most civilized nations.”<sup>33</sup> As Jean de Brébeuf explained in

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*des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus en la Nouvelle France, les années [sic] 1672 et 1673* (Nouvelle York, 1861), 148; Jacques Gravier, “Lettre au R. P. Jacques Bruyas, Supérieur de la Mission, en forme de Journal de la Mission de l’Immaculée Conception de N. D. aux Illinois, [Peoria,] February 15, 1694,” in *JR*, vol. LXIV, 166.

<sup>27</sup> “Acte faisant des hommes les enfants de Dieu”: *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*, available on <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/>, date accessed: 23/08/2012, s.v. “Adoption.” The frequent reference to “children of God” is an allusion to the Bible (Vulgate), Romans, 8:21. Consequently, the expression “freedom of the children of God” was frequently used. See for example: Ragueneau, *Relation de 1651 et 1652*, 133; Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus remarquable aux missions des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus, en la Nouvelle France, es années 1660 & 1661...* (Paris, 1662), 173; François Le Mercier, *Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus remarquable aux missions des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus, en la Nouvelle France, aux années mil six cent soixante cinq & mil six cent soixante six...* (Paris, 1667), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Sahlins, *Unnaturally French*, 68.

<sup>29</sup> “Habitué en ce royaume,” “Habitué en pays étranger”: see for example Bacquet, *Les oeuvres*, vol. 1, 3, 4, 25, 124, 151, 163–169, 172, 183, 186, 190, 210. See also, for the use of the term regarding New France: “Acte pour l’établissement de la Compagnie,” and “Arrêt du Conseil d’Etat qui ordonne à M. Talon de faire des Règlements de Police,” in *Édits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d’État du roi concernant le Canada* (Québec, 1854), vol. I, 10, 72; and “Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instructions au Sieur Comte de Frontenac..., 7 avril 1672,” in *Nouvelle-France, documents historiques: Correspondance échangée entre les autorités françaises et les gouverneurs et intendants* (Québec, 1893), vol. 1, 10.

<sup>30</sup> Biard, *Relation de la Nouvelle France*, 104–105. See also Pierre Biard, “Lettre au T.R.P. Claude Acquaviva, Port-Royal, 11 Juin 1611,” in *Première mission des Jésuites au Canada: Lettres et documents inédits*, ed. Auguste Garayon (Paris, 1864), 75. On the idea of habituation, see Catherine Ballériaux, “Reformation Strategies: Conversion, Civility, and Utopia in Missionary Writings about the New World, c. 1610-1690,” (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2012), chapter 3.

<sup>31</sup> On requickening, see Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 32–33.

<sup>32</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 68–69; Joseph Poncet, in François Le Mercier, *Relation de ce qui s’est passé en la mission des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus, au pays de la Nouvelle France, depuis l’été de l’année 1652 jusques à l’été de l’année 1653...* (Paris, 1654), 69–70.

<sup>33</sup> Barthélémy Vimont, *Relation de ce qui s’est passé en la Nouvelle France, en années 1643 & 1644...* (Paris, 1645), 249.

1636, “when a man of quality among them is removed by death, they resuscitate him & bring him back to life” by “reviving his name as soon as they can.”<sup>34</sup>

The Jesuits perceived the naming ceremony and baptism as somewhat equivalent. Thierry Beschefer explained about his arrival in a Huron village in 1666:

I have changed my language and my name, and at present I am called Ondessonk, which means a bird of prey. This is the name that the Hurons have given me, and which was borne by Father Isaac Jogues, who was killed by the Iroquois, after having been cruelly tortured. Pray God that he may make me inherit his virtues, as I have his name. My baptism took place on the feast of St. Francis Xavier, after I had myself baptized 2 savages.<sup>35</sup>

By the 1640s, then, missionaries understood that they did not have the upper hand in New France, and that, if they wanted to survive and make converts, they would have to some extent adopt the natives’ rituals and traditions.

The Jesuits’ vocabulary of kinship within the family of God did not rely on national but on religious allegiances. Algonquian convert Ignace Amiskouapeou explained in 1639,

some of my people accuse me of becoming French, of abandoning my nation, & I answer, that I am not French, nor savage, but that I want to be God’s child. All the French or their Captains could not save my soul, I do not believe in them, but in the one who created them.<sup>36</sup>

For the Jesuits, the real bonds between people lay in the Christian, rather than the French, community. The Crown attempted to further its imperial design by incorporating the natives into the French nation. For missionaries, inclusion into the Christian community did not necessarily imply this espousal of French identity. Indeed, they favoured the segregation of native converted groups on the grounds that French settlers would have a nefarious influence on their neophytes.<sup>37</sup>

The Jesuits’ segregationist policy did not coincide with Louis XIV’s – and Jean-Baptiste Colbert’s – imperial vision. The colony was put under royal administration in 1663, and new policies were established.<sup>38</sup> The Jesuits, because they were seeking a degree of accommodation with native customs, antagonised the court in their missionary work. The king was determined to reinforce the Gallican position and claimed that the Jesuits had “acquired an authority that goes beyond their office, which should only be

<sup>34</sup> Jean de Brébeuf, in Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France en l'année 1636...* (Paris, 1637), 193. On the notion of resurrection, or reincarnation in the ritual of name-giving, see also Alexander von Gernet, “Saving the Souls: Reincarnation Beliefs of the Seventeenth-Century Huron,” in *Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief Among North American Indians and Inuit*, ed. Antonia Mills and Richard Slobodin (Toronto, 1994), esp. 47–48.

<sup>35</sup> Thierry Beschefer, “Lettre du 4 Octobre 1666,” in *JR*, vol. L, 170.

<sup>36</sup> Le Jeune, *Relation de 1639*, 93–94.

<sup>37</sup> Ballériaux, “Reformation Strategies,” chapter 6.

<sup>38</sup> On the new policy reinforcing royal authority, see Gilles Havard et Cécile Vidal, *Histoire de l'Amérique française* (Paris, 2008), 100–102, 161–163.

concerned with consciences.” In 1665, the royal intendant, Jean Talon, was informed that it was

absolutely necessary to keep a just balance between temporal authority, which resides in the person of the King and his representatives, and spiritual authority, which resides in the person of the Holy Bishop and the Jesuits, in such manner, nevertheless, that the latter be inferior to the former.<sup>39</sup>

Missionaries became increasingly critical of European settlers by the late seventeenth century, notably regarding the sale of liquor to the natives for trading purposes. But the disagreement between the Jesuits and French officials was not limited to the problem of alcohol. The French monarchy, by the 1660s, rejected the Jesuits’ general policy of accommodation (in the flying missions) and segregation (on the reservations). Colbert expected that, by “mixing the natives with the French, over time, as they will have but one law and one master, they will thus become one people and one blood (*un mesme peuple et un mesme sang*).”<sup>40</sup> Thus, the official policy became increasingly assimilationist. In his instructions to the new intendant in 1668, Colbert complained:

It seems that so far, the maxim of the Jesuits has not been to bring the indigenes of this country to live in community with the French, either by giving them common lands and dwellings, or by the education of their children and by marriages. Their reason was, that they thought they could uphold with more purity the principles and sanctity of our religion by maintaining the way of life of the converted savages rather than by bringing them together with the French. As it is very easy to see how this principle is far removed from any good policy, as much for religion as for the State, we have to gently change their attitude, and use all the temporal authority that we have to attract the savages amongst the French, which can be done by marriages and education of their children.<sup>41</sup>

In order to “moderate the assiduousness of the Jesuits to maintain a perhaps too great authority,” said the king, and return to conversion practices that would better suit the absolutist purposes of the Crown, the Recollects were sent again to New France in 1673.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, they tended to favour assimilation. For Chrestien le Clercq, “to humanise

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<sup>39</sup> “Instructions au Sieur Talon, Intendant, 27 mars 1665,” *Collection de manuscrits*, vol. I, 176.

<sup>40</sup> “Lettre de Colbert à Talon, 5 avril 1667,” is also available in ANOM, COL C11A 2, quotation on f. 297 r.

<sup>41</sup> “Instructions pour M. de Bouteroue, s’en allant intendant de la justice, police et finances en Canada, 5 avril 1668,” in Jean Baptiste Colbert, *Lettres, instructions et mémoires de Colbert, publiés d’après les ordres de l’empereur*, ed. Pierre Clément (Paris, 1865), vol. III, part 2, 404.

<sup>42</sup> “Memoire succinct des principaux points des intentions du Roy sur le pays de Canada que sa Majesté veut estre mis ez mains du S. Talon... 17 mai 1669,” in ANOM, COL C11A 3, f. 47 r. On this, see Joseph Cossette, “Jean Talon, champion au Canada du gallicanisme royal, 1665–1672: d’après sa correspondance avec la Cour de France,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1957): 327–352, esp. 345. See also “Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’intructions au Sieur Comte de Frontenac que sa Majesté a choisy pour Gouverneur et Lieutenant Général pour sa Majesté en Canada, 7 Avril 1672,” in *Nouvelle France, documents historiques*, 13.

[the natives] it was necessary that the French mingle with them, and to accustom them to live among us.”<sup>43</sup>

Yet this change in policy and the reinforcement of assimilation practices did not have the expected results, and soon some officials came to conclusions similar to the Jesuits'. In 1685, the Marquis de Denonville, governor general of New France, complained to the Marquis de Seignelay (son of Colbert and Secretary of State for the Navy),

it has been claimed for a long time that bringing the Savages to our habitations would be the best way to accustom those people to live like us and learn our religion, I realise, my Lord, that the contrary happened as, rather than accustoming them to our laws, I can ascertain that they transmit to us their worst traits and only take what is bad and vicious in us.<sup>44</sup>

Despite this claim, the Crown, when possible, maintained a strategy of assimilation. Its increasing authority over colonial matters was accompanied by a tendency to unify the disparate elements composing the monarchy and to consider the natives as obedient subjects, assimilated to French subjects in the service of the monarchy.<sup>45</sup> This program was particularly difficult to implement in frontier areas among nomadic tribes. In this context, the Crown maintained a policy of treaties rather than assimilation, as these nations, according to Governor Vaudreuil in 1711, “are not yet sufficiently dependent on us to get them to change their customs and mores.”<sup>46</sup> But, as we have seen, the wording used in treaties with non-assimilated nations also evolved from one of alliance to one of dependence or outright destruction. The Jesuits continued to advocate segregation and remained successful on frontier missions, but increasingly lost influence in eighteenth-century New France because of their willingness to maintain their missions isolated from French settlements.

This paper has addressed the language used by French officials and missionaries to describe the natives inclusion into the community in seventeenth-century New France. There often existed a significant difference between the ideal place that the monarchy allocated to the natives in the political community and the actual place that missionaries attributed to their converts in the political and religious spheres (which were often believed to be one and the same thing). The antagonist goals of segregation and assimilation were also existent in other colonial areas. Not only Catholic missionaries in French and Spanish possessions, but also Calvinists in New England tended to perceive European settlers as threats to their missions and to support the isolation of their converts from European settlements.<sup>47</sup> Likewise, the monarchical willingness to reinforce its authority over colonial matters and to promote its imperial designs by encouraging assimilation was not the sole preserve of the French Crown. In New Spain and Peru, intensified regalism (increased authority of the monarchy over ecclesiastical affairs) in

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<sup>43</sup> Le Clercq, *Premier établissement de la foy*, 96.

<sup>44</sup> “Lettre de Denonville au Ministre, 13 novembre 1685,” in ANOM, COL C11A 7, fo. 90 v.

<sup>45</sup> Gilles Havard, “‘Les forcer à devenir cytoyens’: État, Sauvages et citoyenneté en Nouvelle-France (XVIIe– XVIIIe siècle),” *Annales HSS*, 5 (September–October 2009): 1017–1018.

<sup>46</sup> “Lettre Vaudreuil à Nicholson, 14 janvier 1711,” ANOM, COL C11A 31, quotation on f. 122 v.

<sup>47</sup> Ballériaux, “Reformation Strategies,” chapter 6.

the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries implied an insistence on the assimilation of the subjects of empire to Castilian culture, and an extended direct authority by royal officials over mission Indians.<sup>48</sup> A similar pattern emerged in New England. After the revocation of the charter in 1684, as in New France and Spanish colonies, when after the intervention of the monarchy, Frenchification and Castilianisation were thought to be the best way to convert the natives, missionary strategies changed to a new focus on Anglicisation.<sup>49</sup> In all colonies, political submission progressively became prevalent over religious inclusion. These patterns show that imperialism could be translated into a multiplicity of diverging practices, which need to be studied in their specificity. They also reveal that colonial processes played an important role in shaping or re-shaping ideas about the role of the subject in the community in the early modern period.

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<sup>48</sup> Magnus Mörner, "The Expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and Spanish America in 1767 in Light of Eighteenth-Century Regalism," *The Americas*, 23, 2 (1966): 157, 159.

<sup>49</sup> On the use of the term "franciser" in French in the late seventeenth century, notably by Frontenac, see Havard, "Les forcer à devenir citoyens," 985–1018; and Saliha Belmessous, "Être français en Nouvelle-France: Identité française et identité coloniale aux dix-septième et dix-huitième siècles," *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 507–540, esp. 510–511. On the comparison between French, Spanish and English missionary strategies and their relationship to the Crowns' goals, see Ballériaux, "Reformation Strategies," chapters 6 and 7.