Jesus in the Wilderness: Jesuit and Protestant Competition for Wabanaki Souls in the Dawnland

by

Shannon Alicia Welch
Class of 2014

A thesis submitted to the faculty of Wesleyan University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts with Departmental Honors in History

Middletown, Connecticut April, 2014
# Contents

List of Images 3  
Acknowledgements 4  
Introduction 5  
  i. Significance 7  
  ii. Finding the Native Voice 9  
  iii. Historiography 11  
  iv. Structure 14  
Chapter One Empire: Planting English Providentialism in the Dawnland 20  
  1.1 Defining the Protestant Empire 22  
  1.2 La Gloire: French Colonial Purpose and Structure 28  
  1.3 The City on a Hill: Puritanization of English Missions 38  
  1.4 Native Motivations and Negotiating Wabanakia 43  
  1.5 Conclusion 47  
Chapter Two Societies: The Marketing of Conversion 49  
  2.1 Society of Jesus 50  
  2.2 The Apostle John Eliot 60  
  2.3 SPG and the Challenges of Anti-Popery 73  
  2.4 Conclusion 80  
Chapter Three Individual Experiences in the Dawnland 83  
  3.1 Diluting Dictates: Reality of Missionary Life 85  
  3.2 Politics of Captivity 90  
  3.3 Captivity Case Study: the Williams Family 97  
  3.4 Impact of Conversion on the Dawnland 108  
  3.5 Conversion in the Wake of King Philip’s War 115  
  3.6 Conclusion 119  
Epilogue 122  
Works Cited 128
List of Images

Figure 1: Map of Indian Peoples of the Dawnland, cartography by H. Stacy Miller Morin. Taken from *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England*, by Collin Calloway 19

Figure 2: Samuel Champlain, Des Sauvages, Paris, 1663. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library 31

Figure 3: Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Archives. 40

Figure 4: Eliot Bible, printed by Samuel Green, 1663. Courtesy of the Rauner Special Collections Library. 65

Figure 5: Seal of the Society for the Propagation for the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Courtesy of Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections. 78
Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone at the archives who helped me when I couldn’t even load a microfilm machine. From Harvard to Yale, the Mashantucket Pequot Archives to the Library of Congress, I came up with this project in your sunny reading rooms. Thank you to the Davenport Grant and White Fellowship for funding my project.

To the History Department at Wesleyan, thank you—every faculty member I have encountered, from classroom to colloquia, shaped this thesis. Thank you for the encouragement, criticism, excitement, and opportunities. I will be keeping a close eye to see what new and exciting ways History at Wes will grow. My fellow history Major Committee seniors and thesis writers, we did it! Thank you for making this an incredible community and great donut, coffee, and laughter fueled experience.

Professor Lennox, thank you for making the excellent decision to leave Canada and get to Wesleyan in the nick of time to shape my thesis. Thank you for making this the greatest experience of my undergrad career. Thank you for your support, time, and patience. Thank you for always having an open door. Thank you for the academic advice. Thank you more for the life advice. I am sure I will be using both for years to come. USA! USA!

To my family, Mom, Dad, Chris, and Gromit. Thank you for the push to start and tools to finish this project. Thank you for pretending to know where Acadia is. Thank you for constantly providing me with support and perspective. I am who I am because of you. To 19C Fountain, thank you for understanding the early mornings and the late nights, and being a great house. To 73 Home, thank you for adopting me, feeding me, and taking over Eli’s with me. You all have made this year such an incredible time. To Lizzy, David, and Andy, thank you for just about everything. I couldn’t have dreamed of accomplishing what I have at Wesleyan without your faith in me. Do you believe in miracles?
Introduction

John Eliot and Samuel Champlain had a fundamentally similar dream for the relationship between Natives and Europeans in the Dawnland. They worked in the spirit of collaboration with Natives to translate the Bible, build towns, harvest food, and form a hybrid culture in the “New World.” Whereas Champlain revered Native lifestyle for its simplicity, and hoped to form a cooperative trade-based dynamic between Acadians and Wabanaki, John Eliot had a larger religious scheme in mind. He subscribed to millennialism, believing his fellow Puritans and the Natives to be part of a group preselected by God for salvation. He believed the only way to ensure his entrance to heaven was to convert these Natives and remove them from their culture and condition into the “City on a Hill.” This salvation, however, was not guaranteed, as his Praying Towns and conversion efforts fell short of the sweeping religious movement he envisioned.

The English fundamentally understood the world to be divided between Catholic France and Protestant England, the result of a series of European conflicts and contested successions that gradually brought religious divisions to the forefront of imperialism. Protestant missionaries centered their work on attempting to drive out the influence of “popery.” And yet at the start of the eighteenth century, the region that they hoped would bring fourth a bounty of converted souls instead was filled with violence. The Abenaki burned Eliot’s translated Bibles, and targeted priests for their aggression. This thesis will explore the dynamics of this conversion failure.

The fundamental question this thesis will seek to answer is why did Protestant missionaries fail to achieve their conversion goals among the Abenaki people in
Maine in the seventeenth century? The answer to this query cannot be found in simple explanations of why neighboring French Acadians more readily established relationships (religious, military, economic, or otherwise) with Natives. The answer to this question cannot focus on just one level of control—imperial, religious, or regional—nor can it focus on the English independent of French influence. Unlike other academic work on the subject, this thesis will derive an understanding of conversion motivations, successes, and failures, by combining each of these layers as they applied to the Dawnland.

This thesis will rely on comparison between the French and English conversion projects and colonial structures because the failure of Protestant missionaries directly stemmed from anti-Catholic sentiment. To unpack this antipopery, this thesis will trace the growth of antagonism toward the French through to the manifestation of these feelings in Maine. The French had a fundamentally different colonial experience than the English; Samuel Champlain and Pierre Du Gua, Sieur de Mons established Acadia as an open colony, religiously tolerant, and focused on reclaiming marshland for agriculture rather than taking from the Wabanaki.¹ They relied heavily on Mi’kmaq, Wulstukwiuk, and Passamaquoddy economically, providing access to the fur trade in exchange for protection and sustenance. They approached these groups, part of the larger Wabanaki confederacy, from a weaker starting position, building trust without threatening sovereignty. The English by comparison began with territorial ambitions, and group of dissident Protestants interested in immediately settling and forming a permanent community.

¹ Bruce G. Trigger, *Natives and Newcomers: Canada’s "Heroic Age" Reconsidered* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 172.
In response to Catholic Jesuit success, English Puritans developed a missionary style that centered on removing Wabanaki from their culture and community. This traces back to the foundations of Protestant theology as a solution to the perceived backward nature of Catholicism. Conversion accounts use the language of anti-Catholicism, so this “enemy” must be examined. The embracing of certain key rituals made Catholicism easier to spread and therefore the dominant force among the Natives, rather than Protestantism, which relied on literacy, removal from Native communities, and demonstrated scriptural study. By analyzing Jesuit conversion experiences not only in Wabanakia but other areas of Acadia and New France, this thesis will show why the English applied their particular methodology in this region. The English of Maine had to both relax some of their strict dictates to compete with the ease of Jesuit conversion, but also tighten their rules to keep Protestantism distinguishable from Catholicism. Both could not occur simultaneously, leading to the faltering of Protestant conversion. This was not inevitable, but rather the result of a few key decisions and events that this thesis will examine.

i. Significance

Why is the failure of Protestant missionaries to gain the conversion and allegiance of the Wabanaki significant? The Wabanaki provide a vital perspective into the dynamics at play both in England and France, Port Royal and Boston, and Catholic Church and English parish. This region cannot fit into a broad discussion of the history of the Massachusetts’s Bay Colony, as the Wabanaki had the unique

---

power to play the English and French off one another to gain leverage and beneficial alliances in this borderland. It is critical to understand the motivations behind the Abenaki decision to side with the French Catholic project, to better understand the later wars that will not be addressed in full in this thesis. Similarly, while focusing on a time when the English still felt paternal benevolence towards many Natives, this conversion failure sheds light on why this relationship deteriorated so rapidly. Examining this middle ground complicates the normative understanding of English imperialism and Puritan doctrine in an important way. Settler’s fears on the borderland were relayed to Boston and on to London through accounts of captives and priests alike, and shaped imperial doctrine and colonial attitudes. This understanding is only further complicated by Wabanaki accounts, as some chose to convert and others violently rebelled. Understanding the answer to this smaller question has implications for our understanding of the development of English identity, religious doctrine, and colonial growth.

This thesis will use Wabanakia to reveal a nuanced understanding of conversion successes. In the Dawnland, all three communities, and all three levels of control (imperial, societal, and individual), converged. Protestants placed a great deal of their hopes and aspirations for religion in North America on this region. Their identity centered on an understanding of their superiority over Catholicism, a theory best tested in this area of direct contact. The implications of their inability to convert the Abenaki in the way they envisioned, and their response, are telling. And the trauma this failure inflicted on Puritans, who believed the salvation of their souls
contingent upon success, shaped the future of diplomacy between Natives and New England.

By the end of the seventeenth century Puritans simultaneously abandoned Praying Towns and reprinted the translated Bible. There was a miscommunication between imperial and religious leaders and those that lived in the region. “Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything” declared John Eliot, upon completing the translation of the first Native Bible. Yet this belief clashed with the understanding of settlers in the Dawnland. The impact of proximity to the French created a constant threat to their spiritual and physical wellbeing. In response, they clung to a newly formed English identity, based in large part in Protestantism, informed both by imperial forces and growth as well as regional differences and demands. It was these boundaries placed around Englishness that ultimately undermined conversion efforts.

**ii. Finding the Native Voice**

An Algonquin speaking tribe without any real central authority, the Abenaki occupied this region of Wabanakia, or the “Dawnland,” not as one united group but rather a plethora of smaller communities. They were geographically divided into two distinct groups, the Eastern that inhabited Maine (e.g. Penobscot, Kennebec, Androscoggin) and the Western that inhabited Vermont (e.g. Cowasuck, Sokoki).\(^3\) Furthermore, in Acadia, the Mi’kmaq, Wulstukwiuk (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy

---

also participated in the Wabanaki confederacy. This thesis will use “Abenaki” to refer to the Eastern Abenaki in Maine, and “Wabanaki” to refer to the larger political conglomerate of Native communities when they cooperated. Dispersed in largely agricultural hunting and fishing communities, the Wabanaki would seasonally regroup in larger meetings for trade. As with other Algonquin groups they inhabited wigwams and occasionally Iroquois-style long houses. It has been estimated that prior to European contact, over forty thousand Abenaki lived in the Dawnland. They experienced epidemics upon first contact, and unique population resurgence in the aftermath of many of the wars that tore apart New England, adopting refugees from violence into their communities.

The larger confederacy increasingly worked as a cohesive political unit through the seventeenth century, signing treaties and waging war with Europeans. As John G. Reid describes, the different groups that comprised the Wabanaki had fundamentally local focus, creating a decentralized confederacy, but held similar goals and strategies. Their alliance was cemented by marriage, language, and religion. They did not always move as a unit, with some Wabanaki initially allying with the English, other with the French, still others promoting neutrality. Their motivations though were consistent. They allowed for English incursion on their land as long as the benefits they received from trading partnerships compensated for the

4 John G. Reid and Emerson W. Baker, Essays on Northeastern North America, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 112.
6 Calloway, The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600-1800: War, Migration, and the Survival of an Indian People, 197; 197.
7 Reid and Baker, Essays on Northeastern North America, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, 143.
8 Ibid., 145.
loss of sovereignty. As New Englanders continued to push into their land, however, the Wabanaki resorted to violence and French alliance to defend their confederacy.\(^9\)

It is important to understand the dynamics at play before European contact in the Abenaki community, not only because the English and French hoped to co-opt their systems to spread conversion, but also because it influenced how and when the Abenaki rebelled against European control. This thesis will not focus on the wars that ravaged New England during the seventeenth century, but rather investigate the motives for rebellion of Abenaki against English imperial expansion. Furthermore, it will explore how military allegiance and conversion went hand in hand, shaping the decisions of the Wabanaki. The Wabanaki were not one united, cohesive group. Individual leaders, called sachems, such as Madockawando chose to side with the French rather than the English, not as eager and willing protectors, but cautious allies. They tentatively chose French trading promises over the “notorious English treachery.”\(^10\) These reputations paved the way for conversion, or condemned efforts.

iii. Historiography

Direct contact between English and French holdings in this unique area of North America provides the best comparative glimpse as to why the English could not see their conversion goals through to fruition. Past historiography covers these levels of influence or empires separately, but not all at once. Understanding the developments in England during the seventeenth century directly speaks to the goals of missionaries and the constraints on their work created by the new “English”

---

\(^9\) Ibid., 149.

identity. Carla Gardina Pestana examines the dual development of Protestantism and British imperialism, and the incorporation of the two identities into one united expansionist focus. She takes a broad look at the impact of the foundations of Anglicanism on English religious culture. Furthermore she examines conversion as negotiation, often filled with skepticism, rather than a concrete and unbending state. Her work presents a vital understanding of the collision of new religion and new expansionism. Linda Colley similarly takes on the task of understanding the birth of a new identity, dubbed “Britons,” out of the chaos and unrest of the seventeenth century. Her focus is on the developing outward focus of England, coupled with conflict with France, and how it pushed English leaders to draw a new line around a more inclusive “British” identity. Finally David Armitage looks at the internal contradictions these leaders and political thinkers confronted when combining ideas such as “imperium” (sovereignty) and “dominum” (property). He examines Samuel Purchas and Richard Hakluyt particularly, unpacking their travelogues for the underlying identity formation they participated in. The British identity grew to be paternalistic out of this combination, expanding to free territories from heathenism and Catholicism.

Other scholars focus on the opposite side of the Atlantic, examining the growth of this identity in colonial formation. Some like Bernard Bailyn examine the various colonies of English North America as separate but interacting entities, tracking their evolution and differentiation, while underscoring the common elements of “Englishness” promoted by the crown. Others like Kenneth M. Morrison and Bruce Trigger track the disconnect between imperial expectation and colonial
interactions. Trigger focuses on the French side, examining the impact of French colonialism on Natives in the Northeast. He deconstructs the religious, economic, and military alliance developed between the French and Natives, and attempts to debunk the traditional understanding of French and Native harmony. This is a key perspective to complicate the understanding of the French missionary project juxtaposed with the English. Morrison undertakes a similar task for the English, examining the many avenues of contact from trade to conversion between the English and Abenaki. His work sheds light on the topic by reconstructing Abenaki perspectives and motivations, and the impact of French proximity on English religious leaders and Abenaki converts.

Finally, authors like Jill Lepore, John Demos, Laura Chmielewski, and Colin Calloway use microhistory to examine the larger dynamics at play in Maine in the seventeenth century. Jill Lepore explores the trauma of war in the Northeast and how the English accounts of this time shaped not only a concept of triumph over the Natives, but also served to increase hostility between the English and their neighbors. This ties back to the formation of an English identity, drawing a boundary around those included as friends and excluded as enemies, namely Natives and French, that Linda Colley identified. Laura M. Chmielewski focuses on contact between all three groups, Abenaki, French, and English through the lens of anti-popery. She examines the fluidity of Maine’s border with Acadia, focusing on marriages, captives, and priests that crossed the boundaries. She contributes an important understanding to this thesis of the reality of Maine as an area of constant contact and exchange that threatened the contained understanding of Englishness. John Demos similarly
unpacks the captivity narrative of John Williams, examining the dynamics at play in his removal to New France, and the threat his daughter’s conversion posed to his narrative of religious triumph. Colin Calloway provides an excellent collection of primary sources from the Abenaki and provides invaluable context to understand the few and brief accounts provided.

To achieve the same level of thoroughness of these works, but combine the tiers of control and French and English perspective, this thesis narrows the field to examine Maine as a case study for the broader themes presented by these authors. It traces the larger theoretical shifts at the imperial level described by Colley, Armitage, and Pestana, insofar as they impacted the Dawnland and the Massachusetts Bay Colony, while incorporating elements of microhistory, and primary sources examining the dynamics at play with John Eliot and the SPG, which these books barely touch upon. In combining new perspectives of religious societies with the themes and work of these authors, this thesis provides a nuanced answer to understanding not only the ambitions and subsequent deterioration of Abenaki-English relationship, but also the definition of successful conversion that shaped missionary struggles in the region. But this thesis does not set out as though the transition to failure was inevitable, but rather unpacks the key moments in history that brought about this miscommunication and violence.

iv. Structure

This thesis divides the explanation of Protestant conversion decisions and tactics into three spheres of influence: the imperial decision makers, missionary
societies, and individual actors in the Dawnland. Each group had unique goals, and shaped their actions accordingly. As detailed in Chapter One, imperial decisions impacted missionary funding, which in turn dictated the actions of priests in Maine, and by extension the reaction of the Abenaki. At the imperial level, the English during this era embarked on a new project of identity formation, based on Protestantism. Following the chaotic succession of Tudor monarchs, religious upheaval, and incursion into Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the English needed a new inclusive identity to unite behind. Unlike New France and Acadia, founded for economic gain, the dissident Protestants that formed the Massachusetts Bay Colony dreamt of religious expansion and colonialism. They formed a colony that threatened the Abenaki while the French project promoted cooperation. The foundation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on rebellion necessitated drawing new boundaries between Englishness and otherness, namely Catholicism, to unite the English imperial project.

For the religious societal level, covered in Chapter Two, the definition of successful conversion, influenced by imperial demands, shaped missionary tactics. The Jesuits measured success in quantity of baptisms, not necessarily the thoroughness of indoctrination. The urgent need for alliance, and nature of Catholic ritual culture, formed a conversion strategy that centered on demonstrations of faith: baptism, confession, and communion.11 They often targeted the sick and dying or prisoners for their efforts, sometimes baptizing Natives without their knowledge.12 They pointed to a few exceptional cases, such as Catherine Tekakwitha, the Mohawk

---

Saint, and the number of baptisms they acquired, to show that their missionary project was thriving. In contrast to Catholics, Protestants attempted to indoctrinate Natives and purge them of their Native identity. Their project hinged on the written word, whether the translation of the Bible, or written confessions, captivity narratives, and “Indian Dialogues.” The radicalism of Puritanism produced a missionary culture surrounding Praying Towns, and the movement of Natives out of their societies to fully integrate with the English.

But by the end of the seventeenth century Natives had abandoned the Praying Towns, in large part because of the devastation wrought by King Philip’s War. This was not inevitable; the English truly believed that Natives could be brought to “civility” and Puritanism through study and public confession. The proximity to the French Catholics in Wabanakia caused this crumbling of relations. The competition with Jesuits for conversion coupled with the fear of losing fellow colonists to Catholic baptism hardened the resolve of English men and women in the region. As described in Chapter Three, the movement of captives throughout the region, and conversion of some Protestants to Catholicism, created an undercurrent of strong anti-popery that pervaded captive narratives and texts. They began to then take out these

14 John Eliot, *The Learned Conjectures of Reverend Mr. John Eliot Touching the Americans, of New and Notable Consideration, Written to Mr. Thorowgood* (1660).
fears and frustrations on the Abenaki and Praying Indians, sequestering their loyal Natives on Deer Island to starve and die.¹⁷

Delving deeper from the imperial level to the more personal intimate moments of conversion reveals the complexity and degree to which new faiths could either complement existing beliefs or unilaterally destroy them. These moments were traumatic to Native converts, as Protestant missionaries revealed to them the damnation they faced if they continued to live in sin.¹⁸ Protestant missionaries instilled the fear of God in Native hearts, and made themselves the only road to salvation, albeit disguised behind the interpretive power over the text of the Bible. Jesuits, on the other hand, formed a syncretic religion combining Catholic ritual and dogma with existing Native understanding of demons and ritual.¹⁹ They asked Natives to renounce alcohol and polygamy; otherwise they allowed them to retain the integrity of their belief structure, grafting Catholic beliefs on existing rituals and religious figures.²⁰

Conversion was a transaction, controlled by many of the same supply, demand, and competition factors that dictated trade relationships in the region. The Abenaki traded some of their sovereignty and cultural integrity and in exchange received baptism, alliances, and military protection. The attractiveness of this equation then reveals why they embraced Catholic conversion on the whole more

¹⁹ Daniel K. Richter, Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America (Harvard University Press, 2001), 82.
²⁰ Ibid., 83.
frequently than English, and also sheds light on the motivations of those who did join the Praying Towns. The English demanded a higher price for their conversions; at the same time they demonstrated militarily the price of siding with the French, engaging in a series of wars throughout the end of the century, decimating Native populations. Yet they also abused the Natives who converted, such as the Praying Indians of Deer Island, fueled by distrust built up over the century by the increasing violence in the region.21

None of these factors, Native, French, and English, or imperial, societal, and individual, independently explains what occurred in the Dawnland surrounding conversions. This thesis will explore the motivations behind violence, though not the intricacies of the wars that ravaged this region. While using other regions to inform and fill in gaps in the historical record, this thesis will not make expansive claims about other regions of North America and the World. Nor will it make a judgment call about the legitimacy of conversion. Success must be understood in the terms of those that attempted to convert, and failure from those that rebelled against English attempts to strip the people of the Dawnland of their identity.

Figure 1: Map of Indian Peoples of the Dawnland, cartography by H. Stacy Miller Morin. Taken from *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England*, by Collin Calloway
Chapter One

Empire: Planting English Providentialism in the Dawnland

The first and most important step in understanding the dynamics of conversion in Dawnland between the French, English, and Wabanaki, is to understand the driving force behind these European empires’ intrusion into Native territory. Whether the reasons were economic, religious, imperial, or monarchical, each nation structured their societies and treaties around very unique motivations. At the heart of the English colonial venture was the formation of the English “Protestant Empire,” a construct used to justify and differentiate English imperialism from that of the French and Spanish. The English took on a unique task, as they used colonial-fueled nationalism as a means to unite diverse and dissident groups across the British Isles. Protestantism became the glue to bind together a burgeoning empire in this moment of fragility and transition after the reign of Elizabeth I. Protestantism was a justification for expansion, to save “virgin” territory from the grasp of popery, or Catholicism. In the wake of the formation of the Church of England, religious turmoil consumed England, and the English colonies developed their own unique religiously centered identities that shaped their laws throughout the century.

The French dedicated their first explorations for the glory of the king, without needing the additional religious validation for their exploration. The founders of Acadia built their colony upon the principals of neutrality and cooperation. Recollects and later Jesuits played a critical role in settling New France as competition between England and France for territory increased. The Recollects and Jesuits were Catholic

---

23 Ibid.
orders founded as part of a reform movement during the sixteenth century, hoping to bring Catholicism to new areas of the world during the age of discovery. The Jesuits expertly moved between French and Native cultures while serving the needs and interests of both. French emphasis on economics, rather than religious identity, made their alliances with Natives possible, as they posed no direct threat to the Wabanaki in Acadia.

Heightening tensions in Europe led to the politicization of religion, changing the face of colonial rule and structure. Religion moved from the private to public sphere, as the political power of a country went hand in hand with the reach and strength of its sect of Christianity. Religion became embedded in colonial charters, economic exchanges, peace treaties, and the core identity of each colony. Though motivated by unique factors, both the English and French empires utilized religion and religious conversion to fortify alliances. To edge out their competitor, the French and English vied for the economic, spiritual, and military allegiance of the Natives, specifically the Wabanaki. They had to balance appearing to be a stronger ally than the other empire with not directly threatening the Natives. This chapter will explore the ways each empire’s presentation of religion related to colonial structure and alliance. This analysis becomes the first step in understanding imperial intent towards religion and Native alliance, and the reception or rejection of this religion by the Wabanaki. The suspicion between the English and Wabanaki over territory

---

25 “Report of the Commissioners Sent to Meet with the Kennebeck (Norridgewock) Indians to Discuss Land and Trade Disputes, Problems of Indian Drunkenness and French Attempts to Incite the Indians Against," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archive, 1720).
influenced how these Natives received missionaries, and how these Protestants approached the task of conversion.

1.1 Defining the Protestant Empire

The centrality of Protestantism to the English stemmed from a period of intense turmoil and uncertainty surrounding the succession of the children of King Henry VIII, founder of the Church of England. Converting an entire country from Catholicism to Anglicanism presented two unique challenges. The first challenge lay in the destruction and rebuilding of church structure; the second was the persistence of a Catholic minority throughout the British Isles, threatening the Protestant monarchy.\(^{26}\) This identity shift did, however, present an opportunity to reshape a larger, empire-wide identity to unite and fuel colonial ventures. Protestantism became central to the English colonial project. The definition and tenets of Protestantism did not, however, give the English the same advantages in establishing missionary structure as entrenched and formally structured Catholicism gave the French.

In this thesis, imperialism is used as a term for expansionism with political motives. While a formal British Empire solidified in 1707, as early as the seventeenth century the English embarked on missions of discovery and exploration. These early settlers were not motivated by some sense of unified “British” identity, but rather by political upheaval, overcrowding, and lack of opportunity. The identity that grew out of this age of exploration included areas outside of the geographic constraints of England. As Linda Colley argues, due to the political upheaval that followed expansion into Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, English leaders focused their efforts on

\(^{26}\) Protestant Empire, 8.
developing a new, broader, “English” identity. The forging of these new concepts of an imperialist and expansionist identity is essential to understanding the character of English colonies.

The state-driven formation of a Protestant identity was as fragmented as the beliefs of its various sects. Without the central organizing pope in Rome, Protestantism became both a uniting and a dividing force in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. As the crown passed from Protestant Edward, to Catholic Mary, and to the staunchly Protestant Elizabeth I, religious conflict between the two sects and four kingdoms that coexisted on the British Isles threatened to tear them apart. When Mary took the throne she ordered the mass trial, torture, and execution of Protestants. When Elizabeth replaced her, she completely undid her half-sister’s work by persecuting Catholics. With the implantation of Protestantism in each country, the British Isles ought to have been united under this one faith, one God. And yet this unity was not realized, leading to the somewhat disorganized implantation of the Church of England across the Atlantic. It is clear is that the centrality of England to this new Protestant imperial project fueled “British providentialism.”

Providentialism is an important concept to understand when examining the importance of Native conversion to this empire, as it described English predestination for greatness, realized through the spreading of Protestantism. Like Colley’s conception of the “Briton,” this providentialism became a unifying purpose in the face of factionalism.

The various incarnations of Protestantism sprang from all levels of society, from Martin Luther to the King of England, united only by a few key beliefs. Most groups agreed to build a faith based closely on the text of the Bible, stripped of much of the ritual and ceremony emphasized by Catholicism.  

This presents a unique set of challenges when translated into conversion. Where the intent of Catholic missionaries was the formation of a universal church, a strict sect of Protestantism, called Puritanism, created an exclusive church reserved for those committed to studying and understanding scripture.  

Taken to the extreme, these select few Protestants turned away from the church as a central authority for spiritual matters, and instead turned inward to their own understanding of the text of the Bible. The groups that moved into New England tended to be the more extreme, and viewed authority figures as contrary to the values of Christianity. From radical dissident to moderate parishioner, the religious shift proved traumatic and problematic for the English monarchy at this juncture.

Protestantism became a unifying motivator to bring dissidents in line with a central cohesive mission. While not fully realized until the eighteenth century, the roots of anti-Catholicism in forming an English identity shaped early colonial efforts. In the face of wars, rebellion, and expansion, England needed a unifying cause.  

Thus began the project of forging an imagined history, one of a constant struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism. From the writing of John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs, containing an account of the sufferings and death of Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary* in 1593 to *The Protestant Almanack* in 1700, authors proposed a new

---

29 Pestana, *Protestant Empire*, 35.
30 Ibid., 71.
accounting of the country’s history based off a new Protestant identity.\textsuperscript{32} A long history of violence and turmoil became the story of agony for the purpose of promoting Protestantism. The English endured pain to grow closer to heaven, to rid countries of Catholic influence, and to bring Protestantism to the rest of the world, a manifestation of providentialism.\textsuperscript{33}

Written culture became critical to building this new Protestant empire. Widely distributed and read, these popular titles prescribed martyrdom and glory to Protestants, and evil and sin to Catholics.\textsuperscript{34} Reshaping violence and struggle in this religious dichotomy would later reappear in captive narratives and missionary accounts, as they mirrored this imperial language. A Protestant identity could not be concretely stated, as the many factions and dissidents could hardly agree on unifying factors except rebellion against Catholicism. Continuing war and conflict with Catholic France strengthened this rebellion and identity. Protestantism was defined by what it was not, namely Catholic and French.

Protestantism then served as a way to create a newer, more encompassing identity in this moment of exploration and expansion; the chronicling of English exploration and expansion by Samuel Purchas and Richard Hakluyt embodied the couching of expansionism in new English and Protestant terms. Both men framed English exploration as the balance between the concept of imperium and dominium, or sovereignty and property,\textsuperscript{35} seemingly contradictory ideas. The English needed to reconcile their assertions of sovereignty and freedom, with their conquering of new

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 20.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 28.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
land and peoples. In Protestant terms, providence encapsulated both concepts, as an independent church of free chosen people expanded outward to free souls from their ignorance of God. This expansion needed justification and validation, particularly during this time of turmoil, and Hakluyt and Purchas sought to legitimize expansionism through a newly formed Protestant identity. This identity did not exist concretely as a universally agreed upon set of values, but rather was imagined in the writings and promotion of imperialism.36

Purchas and Hakluyt each represented events, encounters, and peoples through the lens of a historical struggle between England and France. Purchas particularly represented a fatalistic approach to describing the history of England and Protestantism. Purchas framed history as the clashing between the true Protestant Church and the false Catholic Church.37 He attempted to reconcile his belief that success was evidence of God’s favor, with Spanish colonial accomplishments in the Americas. If the English existed in this light of divine providence that justified their imperial expansion, somehow this identity had to be created in a way that would frame Catholic growth as anti-Christian. Otherwise Catholic success would be a sign that God no longer favored the English. Purchas detailed French conversion efforts as an alliance with the Devil—the rejection of the one true God in favor of an alliance with savage forces.38 This foreshadows later rationalizations made by missionaries witnessing the failure of Protestants to convert Natives as compared to Jesuit success.

36 Ibid., 67.
38 Ibid., 752.
He described the Natives as “Idolators and Witches,” and the French as fostering this sinful behavior where it should be discouraged.\(^{39}\)

Purchas detailed the first landing of the English in Roanoke, through the building of Jamestown, as the movement forward of Protestant progress and English industry. He described the good as God’s validation of the English cause, and the bad, such as the struggles of Jamestown, as biblical trials. The mass deaths in early colonies were as the great flood to early humanity—the purging of the wicked by God to make room for the sacred.\(^{40}\) The English were no strangers to hardship, plague, and overcrowding—this motivated much of their colonial expansion. Suffering became framed in Protestant terms as it continued in North America with bouts of scurvy decimating early efforts.\(^{41}\) In this way expansion into these lands solidified the roots between the Protestant Reformation and the glory fated by God for the English. Expansion outward was movement closer to scripture and God. English providentialism was then inexorably tied to Protestant providentialism. Purchas detailed the Natives in religious terms, as heathens ready for conversion. In this way taking property (dominium) became coupled with sovereignty (imperium), the freeing of these lands for the saving grace of Protestant conversion.

As historian David Armitage writes, during this era of identity construction, “colonial fact was replaced by imperial fiction;” imperial expectations and needs did not match with the experienced reality.\(^{42}\) There was a fundamental break in communication between the Protestant Empire the crown hoped to achieve and the

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 751.
\(^{40}\) Ibid.
unity and strength of its foundation. The colonies that grew out of this empire were not direct descendants of the Church of England, but rather a group of dissidents, undergoing the project of puritanization in North America. Where the tales of Purchas and Hakluyt created a mythic unified empire and purpose, the colonies existed with these missions in mind, but no particular direction to carry them out. Dissident groups moved from rebels to founders of these colonies, and had to adapt to form colonial structure. Pressured by violence and increasing wars in Europe, Puritan dissidents adapted and diluted their principles to function as a separate colony, part of an anti-Catholic Protestant Empire.

1.2 La Gloire: French Colonial Purpose and Structure

The French colonial project developed very differently from that of the English; the religious Catholic element existed on the periphery while trade and economic gain were at its core. From the commissioning of Cartier’s exploration to the governing of the colonies, the French directed their efforts entirely toward glory for king and patrie. Unlike the English, the French monarchy did not need to reconcile new beliefs and concepts of independence and property: they carried out the project of expansion for La Gloire, or the glory of the monarch, not empire. This was evident not only in the set up of the colonies but also the accounts of Samuel Champlain, an early French explorer, and others, as they formulated colonial policies.

43 Pestana, Protestant Empire, 87.
of cooperation with Natives., unlike the English practices that will be described later in this chapter.

Jacques Cartier, in his first exploration of what would later become New France, represented this need to glorify the crown through acquiring wealth. The French purse was in dire straits, and most exploration efforts needed to prove to be low cost and risk, with high reward. Cartier navigated the St. Lawrence in 1534 and 1535 respectively, attempting to find mineral riches. Local Native tribes alluded to a land of riches and natural abundance, always further inland, directing him away from their lands.45 He collaborated with local Iroquois, led by Donnaconna, in search of gold and jewels, until turning on the leader and kidnapping him, taking him back to France to tell his story of potential riches and wealth to the crown.46 Despite an epidemic of scurvy, and tensions with the Iroquois, Cartier saw promise in establishing a French stronghold on the St. Lawrence to support expeditions in search of riches such as the Spanish found in Peru.47 Bringing Donnaconna back to royal court served to further this end: just like Hakluyt, Purchas, and English explorers such as John Smith, Cartier needed to balance the peril and promise of the new land. He highlighted the promise for French glory, rather than Catholic interests, to entice the monarchy to invest.

French contact with Natives in New France evolved from one of reliance for survival to an economic partnership. Because of the brutal nature of Canadian winters, the French became heavily reliant on Native support through medicine and food. This alliance did not come easily as, from the very start, Cartier seemed

45 Trigger, Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered, 131.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid., 133.
ignorant of the preexisting dynamics on the continent. He faced heavy resistance from the St. Lawrence Iroquois, and the gradual lessening of interest in conquest by the crown as explorations failed to yield a profit.\textsuperscript{48} Not until the entrepreneurial efforts of explorers like Etienne Bellenger brought to light the potential of the fur trade was there renewed interest in colonial efforts.\textsuperscript{49} This new prolonged contact facilitated diseases and changes in trade relationships, altering the landscape of indigenous Canada. Mi’kmaq and Kennebec struggled to act as the exclusive dealer for French goods in the region of Wabanakia.\textsuperscript{50} The steady flow of goods and knowledge not only ensured the survival of French colonies, but also brought Natives and Europeans in closer contact.

Champlain worked diligently in the colonies to establish alliances with the Natives through trade, emphasizing the economic nature of the colonial experiment. In his letters and journal, Samuel Champlain detailed his dream for French colonies in North America as a collaborative effort between French and Natives. During his ten weeks in and around Tadoussac in 1603, Champlain observed the lives and customs of the Montagnais, and detailed their beliefs, traditions, and way of life.\textsuperscript{51} He published these observations in \textit{Des Sauvages}, in part as a means to attract investors and colonists to Quebec. He successfully ignited the crown’s interest in economic growth and new colonial prospects. The crown promised exclusive trading rights to wealthy investors, recruiting the help of Pierre Du Gua, Sieur de Mons, a Huguenot,

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 125.  
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 136.  
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 138.  
\textsuperscript{51} Conrad Heidenreich, \textit{Samuel De Champlain before 1604 : Des Sauvages and Other Documents Related to the Period} (Montreal, QC, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 51.
leading to the proliferation of diverse colonies in Canada, united by their economic, rather than religious, drive. Unlike English explorers, religious and military men in their own right, these first Canadians were investors and traders.

*Des Sauvages* contained religious language, not in terms of antithesis to Protestantism, but rather to humanize the Montagnais and emphasize their potential to help the French. Champlain described the innocence of the “sauvages,” constructing an Eden in which these uncivilized people existed to aid French trade. Champlain fundamentally honored the souls of the Natives he described, as people with faith and culture, but no civility. In an interview with one Native, Champlain asked “what ceremony they used in praying to their God. He told me that they did not…You see why I believe that they have no law among them…they live like brute beasts. And I believe that they would quickly be brought round to being good Christians if their lands were colonized.” In describing the Natives as able and willing trade companions, Champlain also recognized the importance of religion in solidifying alliance. He depicted them as willing and eager to receive the king’s aid, recounting a speech by the sachem Anadabijou of the Montagnais; “he said that he was quite content that his said Majesty would

---

52 Trigger, *Natives and Newcomers: Canada’s “Heroic Age” Reconsidered*, 172.
54 Ibid., 281.
populate their land and make war on their enemies, and that there was no nation in the world for which they would wish more good than the French.”

Just like Purchas, Champlain portrayed Natives as eager and ready for European colonization; unlike Purchas, Champlain did not need to focus on forming a religious mission for the colonial project. Trade and geographic mapping drove his narrative. The crown focused on catching up with the Spanish colonies and out-competing the English. Champlain believed the Abenaki could serve as traders, rather than a crop of new Catholics. Champlain set the foundation for a collaborative approach to colonial Native relations, without the pressure to convert. Unlike the English, struggling to adopt and implement a Protestant identity, Champlain painted the picture of economic bounty and potential for monarchical glory through riches.

To push the French crown to invest in colonies, not just trade posts, Champlain capitalized on the benefits of “civilizing” the Natives. With the royal purse in crisis as a result of a series of European wars, Champlain’s voyages needed to prove to be low cost and high reward, thus he connected attachment to the Natives with successful trade and potential mineral wealth. He described being welcomed with open arms by Natives, greeted with tabagie and feasting. Champlain was enamored with the culture of the Montagnais, portraying their women as beautiful, men as proud, and lifestyle as simple and pure. This may all point to a personal infatuation with exploration and Native alliance, but he used these remarks towards a colonial end. He described in 1603 the area around the Montagnais’ settlement at

55 Ibid., 259.
57 Ibid., 132.
58 Ibid., 134.
Tadoussac, “if this soil were cultivated it would be as good as ours.” He searched for the perfect site for his colony, and sold the project as a successful one, able to self-sustain. In reality, he was heavily reliant on the aid of the Montagnais, a bond that would soon be tested by his mission.

As the French began to colonize, the dynamic between French and Natives changed, as Natives recognized their intent to remain and establish a permanent settlement. With each successive wave of arrivals from France, the Natives noticed subtle changes, as more weapons, men, and women began to pour into the region. These changes, coupled with bouts of fighting between the Natives and the English, created tension that quickly turned into violence. Despite attempts to quell these uprisings, by 1605 Sieur de Mons and Champlain had to retreat from their attempts to build a colony on Cape Cod, successfully turned away by the Nauset Indians. The failure to replicate their relationship with the Montagnais on Cape Cod reveals the depth to which successful alliances were based on the relative weakness of the French colony. While they offered trade and access to European goods, the first attempts by Champlain to settle did not threaten Native interests. Settlement, looting, tilling, and harvesting, all raised alarms in the Nauset community, and they rebelled, successfully pushing away the French.

Acadia became the next best chance for Native and French cooperation for two key reasons: it was founded on principles of equality, and sought to reclaim land rather than take it from Natives. In 1603 de Mons became the lieutenant general of

---

59 Ibid., 138.
60 Ibid., 191.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
Acadia, the land on either side of the modern day Bay of Fundy. He set out with the king’s blessing to build a colony “on condition of establishing there the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, permitting each person to practice his own religion.” The spirit of humanism and coexistence in Acadia extended to their attitudes towards Natives despite how brutish they perceived them to be. Champlain and de Mons hoped to convert Natives to Christianity to better their condition, and bring to them laws and morals. Sieur de Mons was a Protestant and designed this colony to reflect the cooperation between the Catholic Champlain and himself (though there remains some doubt about the level of devotion Champlain had to his faith). Acadia was a firmly Catholic colony but with an element of toleration, emphasizing the conversion of Natives to Christianity over a particularly Catholic dogma. The result of these efforts was a colony built on neutrality, focused on forming a self-sustaining agricultural project, draining marshland for farmland, and largely keeping to itself. It took decades to develop this system and community, but Natives then did not feel threatened and more readily interacted and cooperated with the colony.

Membertou, the sachem of the Mi’kmaq, became a particularly important figure in the strengthening of French-Native religious alliances. The Mi’kmaq, an Algonquin speaking people, occupied land that overlapped with the new Acadian settlement. At this time Charles de Biencourt de Poutrincourt served as the lieutenant

---

63 Ibid., 152.
64 Guy Binot, Pierre Dugua De Mons, Gentilhomme Royannais, Premier Colonisateur Du Canada, Lieutenant Général De La Nouvelle-France De 1603 À 1612 (Royan, 2004), 68.
65 Fisher, Champlain’s Dream, 154.
66 Ibid., 156.
governor and leader of Acadia. Membertou acted as a mentor to Poutrincourt, who lived among the Mi’kmaq during the winter to learn survival techniques. In 1610 when the crown pulled funding for the Acadian colony, Membertou kept the settlement in good order and care, awaiting French return. Marc Lescarbot, a French explorer, resident of Port Royal, and friend of Poutrincourt, formed a particularly close alliance with Membertou. Together they explored Maine, fighting with the Abenaki in small skirmishes. Membertou became the first French Christian convert, renouncing his position as a shaman and giving up his polygamist practices.\(^68\)

Whether as part of a strategic move to gain alliance, or a true change of heart, Membertou’s friendship and conversion was a sign to the French that economic prosperity and cohabitation could be achieved in the colonies, affirmed by religious conversion.

Membertou’s conversion became particularly critical as the existence of Acadia as a colony was in limbo, lacking both investors and direction. On his deathbed, Membertou changed his mind, deciding he wanted to be buried with his ancestors rather than on Christian ground. The Jesuits adamantly pleaded with the sachem to accept burial among the French, and he relented, completing his role as a dutiful convert.\(^69\) The story of Membertou emphasized the fragility of these early Acadian settlement efforts, as well as their dependency on Natives. Membertou’s conversion also reveals the depth to which the weak state of French colonies and emphasis on trade incentivized close alliances between Acadians and Natives.

\(^{68}\) Ibid.

\(^{69}\) Ibid.
Finally, he helped shape a new purpose of a colony, transitioning to a stronger Catholic mission centered on Native conversion.

Champlain attempted to train these Native families as farmers, treating the Montagnais as members of his colony.\textsuperscript{70} This put him in direct opposition with French traders, who viewed the colony as an economic institution, requiring Natives to act as trappers and hunters, not farmers.\textsuperscript{71} The disconnect between the needs of trader, missionary, and governor made for a slow start to conversion efforts for the French. There were two fundamentally different understandings of the relationship of the colony to France; the first, that New France should serve as a supplier of economic goods, the second, New France would be a model of French society growing into its own self sustaining entity.

The religious presence of Catholics in the colonies and their view of missionary work and worship, shifted over the course of the sixteenth century. The first Catholic missionaries in the colony were the Recollects, a reform group of Catholic Friars that emphasized withdrawing from communities to focus on prayer and worship. These Catholic missionaries allied with Champlain in trying to convert the Montagnais not only spiritually, but also culturally. The Recollects sought to overhaul Native identity as part of forming this permanent Catholic society across the Atlantic. The Recollects sent very few missionaries to Canada, and those who arrived refused to live among the Huron and Montagnais they encountered, preferring to pressure them to learn French. Thus their attempts to communicate the tenets of

\textsuperscript{70} Trigger, \textit{Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered}, 199.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
Catholicism were lost on the Natives.\textsuperscript{72} Similarly, Champlain’s emphasis on changing the Montagnais’ customs by introducing European agricultural infrastructure hindered the success of conversions by threatening Native life, as shown by the violence on Cape Cod described earlier.

When the Company of One-Hundred Associates took over the governing of the colony of New France, including Acadia, priests and nobility set colonial policy alongside fur traders.\textsuperscript{73} As King Louis XIII and his advisor became more and more invested in Catholicism, religious influence spilled over into the movement from a fortified trading colony to a French settlement complete with religious infrastructure, based no longer on the Recollects but rather the Jesuits. The Jesuits, founded upon the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, adhered to a far more outwardly focused set of spiritual practices, emphasizing evangelization, teaching, and travel, unlike the Recollects. The Jesuits maintained a strong presence in the Company, but understood that despite the new Catholic fervor, relations with the crown and with local Natives remained rooted in trade and economics.\textsuperscript{74}

Jesuits operated more effectively than their Recollect predecessors both within Native communities and in collaboration with French traders to convert Natives. The Jesuits reconciled the interests of the French empire in trade with respecting the integrity of Native culture. This balance laid the groundwork for successful missionary work. Though imposing their religion upon Natives to solidify alliance, missionaries and colonial organizers did so by infiltrating but not threatening existing institutions. The Jesuits took advantage of their position between the two cultures:

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 201.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 321.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 332.
they collaborated with both the French and the Montagnais, but were equally critical of both for their moral shortcomings.75 Because of the French emphasis on economic, not religious, interests, Jesuits moved freely among the Natives, constructing their own strategies both to convert them and to maintain French trading interests.

1.3 The City on a Hill: Puritanization of English Missions

English missionaries did not have the luxury of moving outside of colonial structure. Without the strength of a unified missionary presence and strategy in North America, the Protestant conversion project suffered. The English could not successfully transplant the Church of England intact to their Atlantic colonies.76 Rather than using the colonies as outposts for religious conversion, New England became an escape for extreme factions of the Protestant community to create their own “City on a Hill.”77 Despite the image created by the accounts of Purchas and Hakluyt, Protestantism, dissident in nature as a revolt against Catholicism and Anglicanism, produced a diversity of distinct opinions about religion and the future of the Anglican Church in the colonies. Puritanism was driven by the dual dreams of escaping persecution and creating religious exclusivity, two opposite goals.78 This paradox, and the challenge of a religion driven not by the institution of the Church but rather individual faith, erected barriers between imperial expectations and colonial implementation.

75 Ibid., 202.
76 Pestana, Protestant Empire, 8.
77 Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837, 28.
78 Pestana, Protestant Empire, 8.
In response to the rapid expansion of Spanish Catholicism in South America, many Protestant sects individually felt the need to expand their following through colonial growth and conversion. While united in anti-Catholic tendencies, the diversity of beliefs that existed in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales soon became mirrored in the mosaic of colonies across the Atlantic. From Virginia to Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, each English colony took shape with unique focuses and aims. John Winthrop founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony not just as a religious experiment but also with the goal of forming a thriving colony based on these ideals. But their intent was not purely ideological; they hoped to become imbedded in the trade and agricultural practices of the region. The difficulties these leaders faced in implementing their dream in the land occupied by the Abenaki directly relates to the threat they posed to Abenaki survival, as imperial ambitions clashed with the reality of Native life.

The Puritans founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony as part of the growth of anti-Catholic fervor, rebelling against the formalism of Catholicism and even Anglican worship so far as it resembled Catholic mass. Without these formalized and uniformly accepted constructs, however, missionary work suffered from divisive influence of individualism. Puritans believed they formed a small community of true faithful servants of God, predestined for salvation, demonstrating this fact daily through their devotions. In a colony supposedly comprised of a community of

79 Ibid., 73.
81 Pestana, Protestant Empire, 73.
saved, visible saints, everyone was their own religious authority. Rather than one central figure or missionary group, every Puritan was a leader and missionary. The radicalism of the Puritan faith in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, as described by John Winthrop, put pressure on each colonist to act as a member of “the City on a Hill.”\textsuperscript{83} In this way each colonist was a missionary, attempting to demonstrate daily through their act of civilizing and converting Natives, their own status as “visible saints.”\textsuperscript{84} They also were accountable for ensuring the religious purity of their neighbors in the community. This ethos shaped their interactions and accounts later transcribed for wide distribution as part of English written culture.

The ambition of these religious and colonial pluralities and their structuring of colonies mirrored the balancing of imperium and dominium described by Purchas and Hakluyt. Colonial leaders like John Winthrop and William Bradford wanted to establish sovereign, independent communities promoting their own agenda. To gain any support from the crown, however, they had to contribute to the larger project of the Protestant empire. As stated in the Massachusetts Bay Colony Charter, the aim of this colony was “to win and invite the

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 183.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 341.
Natives of the country to the knowledge of the only true God and Savior of Mankind. This goal, and placement of religion at the core of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, put Protestant conversion directly at odds with imperial ambition and colonial structure.

Membership to the Puritan Church and citizenship became one and the same, as Puritans moved from a group of dissenters to colonial leaders. The Massachusetts Bay Colony benefitted from the English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell’s interregnum, as their uniquely Puritan church-state was left to its own devices. Reform spread to all aspects of Church life, forming various sects even within Puritanism. Cohesion then became critical, just as it was for the larger imperial project. Surrounded by Natives and in close proximity to French colonies, the Puritans relied on tight knit communities to maintain their order and mission. Dissenters like Ann Hutchinson, who questioned the new Puritan government, were quickly expelled to protect the fragile colony. The persecuted Puritans became the persecutors, banishing competitors. Whereas at its founding the colony promised to be a home for dissidents, there was no room in governing structure for these differing opinions.

Religious figures in this colony, unlike the Company of One Hundred Associates, put religious law above all else. These strict policies had devastating consequences on attempts to form treaties with the Abenaki. Simultaneously intolerant and radical, the Puritan leaders set about designing a colony blessed by God

---

86 “Petition Submitted to the General Court by Several Inhabitants of the Province Requesting That the Laws against Anabaptists Continue in Force So That They Will Be Prevented from Entering the Colony,” in *Felt Collection* (Massachusetts State Archive, 1646).
to restore his community of visible saints.\textsuperscript{87} The colony became a hybrid of English societal divisions with “clerical intelligentsia,”\textsuperscript{88} both to entice people of upper classes to move to the new colony, and to maintain Puritan integrity. Puritan law centered on maintaining the moral purity of the colony. If a child disobeyed his parents, it was considered a capital offense.\textsuperscript{89} Keeping the family unit pure and unified was critical, something quite difficult to accomplish in the border region of Wabanakia where captives moved in and out of English families regularly. This increased threat to the salvation of the community manifested in tightening laws that regulated faith and life.\textsuperscript{90}

It was during this transition and puritanization around 1640 that missionary work among Natives began. By this time Catholic Spanish and French conversion infrastructure was firmly engrained in New France and New Spain. The Puritans built their missionary policies and strategies with this head start in mind. From the outset the Puritans had to compete with Catholic influence over Natives in northern New England. Puritans believed that Natives needed to adopt European customs and culture in order to convert, and thus they formed Praying Towns to remove them from their “rudimentary” state.\textsuperscript{91} Puritan missionaries noted that Native life was steeped in spirituality and religion, and replacing this with Protestantism required the utter rejection of their old ways.\textsuperscript{92} The empire readily took up this cause, sending funds and support, as religion solidified trade and military alliance. These leaders

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item[87]\textit{Bailyn, The Barbarous Years: The Conflict of Civilizations 1600-1675}, 457.
  \item[88]\textit{Ibid.}, 371.
  \item[89]\textit{Pestana, Protestant Empire}, 98.
  \item[90]\textit{Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture}, 23.
  \item[91]\textit{Lepore, The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity}, 36.
  \item[92]\textit{Pestana, Protestant Empire}, 92.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
misunderstood one fundamental factor that would shape the fate of the Protestant mission project; forcing Natives to reject their customs was not conducive to alliance. The Jesuits understood this concept.

1.4 Native Motivations and Negotiating Wabanakia

Conversion became essential to imperialism. Converted Natives could serve as a lifeline for the colonies, supplying a steady stream of goods, warriors, and allies, as Membertou did in Acadia. The Natives, however, did not see it this way. Europeans were repeatedly baffled, as Natives swapped alliances and allegiances, or violated treaties. The Wabanaki particularly were in a powerful negotiating position; their military strength and strategic location allowed them to play one colony off the other.  

As the three groups converged, however, cultural differences and ambitions grew into violent conflicts. The foundations and needs of expansionism particularly for the English could not translate into the necessary conversions and alliances.

The misunderstandings that caused outbreaks of violence and war in Wabanakia greatly impacted the strength of conversion missions in the area. The Wabanaki were a powerful confederacy, able to hold captives for ransom, raid villages, and hinder colonial trade enough to warrant special attention by the Massachusetts Bay Colony.  

The colonial government, however, struggled to maintain order among its own colonists on the borderlands of Maine. Hammering out compromises for redresses of violence and crime was difficult as both groups had different understandings of law and order. These agreements were only further

---

94 Ibid.
complicated as colonists ignored them and continued to expand into Wabanaki land. Wabanaki society and culture existed in nearly every way as a counterpoint to the Puritans. Where the Massachusetts Bay Colony emphasized authoritarianism and strict religious adherence, the Wabanaki valued personal freedom and consensus. These differences led to cultural and diplomatic misunderstandings. Misunderstandings over law and land disputes often resulted in war.  

The French colonial structure aided French religious and colonial leaders not only in trade but also conversion. Gaining access and peace with the Wabanaki required infiltrating but not threatening their society and sovereignty. French Acadia particularly served the interests of the Wabanaki well. Situated between New France and New England, Acadians maintained a sense of neutrality as their land passed between French and English hands in the push for territorial expansion. The very boundaries of Acadia remained in dispute throughout the seventeenth century. Acadians were mainly farmers, existing in isolated communities largely neglected by French colonial leaders. They drained marshland to create farmland rather than take territory from the Natives. They traded readily with French, Wabanaki, and English merchants. Many became coureurs des bois, moving freely among, and even marrying the Wabanaki. By respecting and often living under Wabanaki law and customs, the French gained an understanding of Native life that aided them in treaty making.

This reliance was complicated by violence and wars spurred by conflicts on the European continent, and trade reliance soon evolved into military alliance.

---

95 Ibid.  
96 Ibid., 119.  
97 Ibid.
after the English began to raid and threaten Acadia did the French rely on Wabanaki military strength to defend them. French passivity toward the Natives did not guarantee Wabanaki loyalty.\textsuperscript{98} The Wabanaki understood the dynamic between the French and the English, as demonstrated by their tendency to ally with the stronger power to avoid their wrath. Neutrality for the Wabanaki was impossible, located as they were between Acadia and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Wabanaki then, to maintain their autonomy, had to balance siding with the weaker of the two empires, the French that left their culture largely untouched, with not inciting the anger of the powerful English.

During military conflicts between the Wabanaki and English in the early 1690s the Wabanaki alliance with the French began to weaken. At the start of King William’s War in 1688, the Wabanaki solidified their allegiance with the French, signed originally in 1675 with military aid, successfully turning away English attempts to take over Acadia. But as much as this alliance benefitted the French, it served only to promise violence for the Abenaki. The English began to raid the lands of the Penobscot and Kennebec Abenaki, destroying food stores, farmland, and homes.\textsuperscript{99} The agreements between Acadians and Wabanaki no longer benefitted the Abenaki, as they clearly incited the wrath of the English, against whom the French provided no protection. Facing a depleted food supply and threats of more raids, the Abenaki began to negotiate with the English.\textsuperscript{100} Again the trade off for the Abenaki

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 126.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 127.
between acquiring a nonthreatening ally and thereby a powerful enemy impacted their treaties. ¹⁰¹

Wabanaki support was gained and lost on two factors: strength and disinterest. For an alliance to exist, the Wabanaki needed to receive economic and military benefits. But trust demanded that Wabanaki sovereignty, both cultural and territorial, be respected. The Wabanaki enforced this well into the eighteenth century, frequently breaking alliances with the English when colonists violated treaties and invaded Abenaki lands. Missionaries too became embroiled in this conflict, as their efforts to rid the Wabanaki of their Native identity inspired outrage. Agricultural interests and Puritan foundations established by imperial ambitions and governmental ideals, clashed with the need to ally with the Abenaki against the French. In the land between Boston and Port Royal, compromises needed to be made.

Missionaries, as they lived the closest to the Natives, played a critical role in negotiating these interests. They moved in and out of nations in ways that, with increasing violence and conflict, many other colonists could not, serving to sway alliances. Oftentimes missionary outposts pushed to the very edge of disputed borders to solidify imperial claims. Jesuits served not only as part of the governing of New France, but also moved independent of the colony, given the freedom to establish their own policies and interests and translate them to the Abenaki. The Jesuits appeared to the Natives as separate from the colony, able to operate independently of Paris and London. The puritanization of everyday life and law in the Massachusetts

¹⁰¹ "Original and Attested Copy of a Treaty between the English and the Eastern Indians. Included Are Agreements with the Indians That No Alliances Will Be Made with the French; Submission to the Massachus," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archives, 1693).
Bay Colony led the Abenaki to perceive Protestant missionaries and their push to anglicize Native life very differently.

1.5 Conclusion

The emphasis of the Protestant Empire on establishing a religious society across the Atlantic to benefit the solidifying of Protestantism in England, translated into the transactions and treatment of Abenaki in Wabanakia. The disconnect between Purchas’s description of a potential Protestant bounty of souls in North America, and the dynamics of Abenaki allegiance, resulted in misunderstanding and violence. The pattern of religious diversity in England repeated itself in the colonies, further fracturing the line of authority from empire to individual. Imperial ambitions collided with Puritan hopes and frontier reality. The myth of a Protestant unified empire working towards the furthering of an enlightened Christian ideal through missionary effort met with the stubbornness of Puritanism. Staunch Puritanism was the result of discord and lack of a unified Protestant authority in England. These complicating factors resulted in turmoil and lack of direction for Dawnland, as the English possessed colonial strength, but lacked control of individual colonists far from the central leadership in Boston. This lack of control translated into distrust between colonists and the Wabanaki.

These imperial pressures, differences, and strategies informed the receptiveness of Abenaki to conversion. The interlinking of military and economic alliance with notions of conversion ensured that the actions and ambitions of colonial officials impacted missionary efforts. But where, in many other areas of the colonies,
Protestantism and Catholicism were readily received, the Abenaki resistance to conversion, particularly by Protestant missionaries, requires a deeper understanding of missionary tactics and their basis in the divide between Protestantism and Catholicism.

The clashing of expansionist visions in the seventeenth century proved to both help and hinder conversion. The English developed their own providential schema, dividing the world into Catholic and Protestant elements to unify a diverse array of interests under one banner. The French monarchy was struggling economically and first ventured into colonialism to gain wealth. Champlain and the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony had opposite views for their colonies: one of inclusivity and one of exclusivity. But these dreams clashed not only with the reality of the landscape of Wabanakia, but also with the needs of empire in many cases. The ability of the Jesuits and Protestants to navigate this terrain, then, became a great test of whether the mission projects were able to overcome these obstacles and help empire, or fall to the same struggles.
Chapter Two

Societies: The Marketing of Conversion

As the French and English clashed in Europe and North America their religious counterparts, the Protestants and Catholics, established their own institutional framework to maintain order and convert Natives in the North America. The Society of Jesus and the Puritans (later under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, or SPG) each served the dual interests of the empire that funded their colonial endeavors and their own needs for power and influence. This two-fold purpose manifested in two very different strategies and definitions for an effective conversion project. For the Jesuits, the importance of maintaining Native cultural identity permeated their entire method of observing and co-opting Native religion. For the Protestants, first in early Puritan efforts and later the fully institutionalized SPG, the hallmark of their method of conversion was total removal of Natives from their “heathenish” ways into Euro-Christian society.

Understanding the role of institutional interests in success and failure of conversion requires an understanding of the obligations and ambitions of these groups in formulating their dogmas and dictates. Success in this chapter refers to the completion of conversion from formulation to implementation, as envisioned by the institutions. Each Society provided “proof” of what a successful conversion looked like, and from this proof comes a picture of what they saw as missionary triumph and failure.

This chapter argues that the reliance of Protestant missionaries on written text and Praying Towns did not generate the outpouring of confession and conversion that
they desired, as a result of two undermining factors, namely the Jesuit project, and the terrain of Wabanakia. Jesuit missionary work easily translated to Native culture, making conversion more accessible and wide spread. Catholicism’s reliance on ritual aided Jesuit efforts, as symbolism could cross language and cultural barriers. Protestants, on the other hand, emphasized written text, as Puritanism particularly relied on self-realized faith. The Puritan ideal of a group of visible saints led to the formation of Praying Towns, the translation of the Bible, and the transcription of Native confessions. But these efforts were unsustainable in the face of the violence and decentralized dynamics of the Dawnland. The Puritans could not officially adopt any of the successful Catholic tactics, as their identity was predicated on anti-popery.

Converting Natives was not an easy task, and more often than not Protestant accounts written in the latter end of the century described despair as Natives burned Bibles and shunned Praying Towns. Yet as the seventeenth century waned and the eighteenth century began, the institutions pushing for conversion only grew stronger. How these leaders sold the success of their conversion efforts, and failures, reveals not only the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism, but also how the relationship between each empire and the surrounding Natives, including the Abenaki, shifted over the turn of the century.

2.1 Society of Jesus

Unlike their predecessors, the Recollects, Jesuits understood the importance of meeting Natives halfway for conversion.102 Catholics, unlike Protestant missionaries, had a long history of global conversion efforts that shaped their strategy. From South

---

America to Japan, the Jesuits formulated unique strategies of separating themselves from the reputation of European colonizers and moving within indigenous societies, for example the formation of *reducciones* plantations in South America.\(^{103}\) The Jesuits lived among tribes of Iroquois and Algonquin peoples alike, learning their customs and language before introducing Catholic ritual and beliefs to their future converts. Natives accepted their presence because of their cooperation with French traders and economic benefits gained from conversion.

The Jesuits ultimately compromised on many of the tenets of Catholicism, creating a hybrid religion that incorporated an understanding of Native societal structure with Catholic ritual. They co-opted many of the stories from Native faith to reinforce the validity of Christian tradition, making the Native and Catholic God one and the same. Many of their rituals mirrored those already existing in Native society.\(^{104}\) They overlooked points of confusion amongst the Natives. This is not to say the Jesuits converted Natives with ease: they battled the stigma of disease and struggled with the conflict between Native tribes. But their method of respecting the integrity of Native culture, combined with the lack of French imperial ambition toward Native land, made their conversion efforts largely successful.

Published as a series of accounts of the lives and customs of the Huron, Montagnais, Mohawk, Iroquois, and others, the *Jesuit Relations* described not only what the Jesuits observed among the Natives, but their method of converting them. These pieces were written in two different styles, both ethnographic catalogs of

\(^{103}\) Ibid., 125.

\(^{104}\) Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, 86.
customs and personal tales of the missionary experience. Missionaries directed these anthropological studies toward not only their fellow Catholics as evidence of the power of God’s work among these people, but also towards raising funds for the missionary project. To this end, they read as a combination of the fantastical curiosity and a paternal description of Native potential to be good Catholics.

The most unique component of the Jesuit Relations is their accounting of Native religious beliefs. They captured the core of animism, or Native religion, in their accounts, and began to warp this belief towards the “truth” of Catholicism. Paul Le Jeune, a Jesuit missionary, particularly depicted Natives in a Catholic light, as people “burdened” by the savagery their environment, but ripe for conversion. For example, in his account of the Montagnais, written in 1634, Le Jeune described similarities between their belief in a purging flood and the Bible. The flood Le Jeune referred to is from the Book of Genesis, in which God summoned a great flood to purge the earth of evil men. “It appears that they have some tradition of the great universal deluge,” Le Jeune notes, “which happened in the time of Noah, but they have burdened this truth with a great many irrelevant fables.” Similarly in his description of the Huron, Father Jean De Brebeuf pulled allusions to Adam from their version of a creation story. These fables contained animistic elements of the Native flood story such as otters, lynxes, and muskrats, among others. Le Jeune dismissed these fantastic accounts for their difference from Catholicism, and focused rather on the similar elements, as though once animism was stripped away, nothing

106 Ibid., 15.
107 Ibid., 29.
108 Ibid., 30.
differentiated the Jesuit from the Montagnais fundamentally. This sentiment would late be echoed by John Eliot’s millennialism, discussed in this chapter.

Le Jeune, in his accounts, emphasized optimism about the potential for Catholic conversion. “I believe souls are all made from the same stock,” wrote Le Jeune, “and that they do not differ substantially…education and instruction alone are lacking. Their soul is naturally fertile soil…loaded down with all the evils that a land abandoned since the birth of the world can produce.”

Le Jeune clearly wanted to convey to potential investors the readiness of the Montagnais to receive Catholicism. His description illuminates the root of Jesuit missionary work; despite the fact the Montagnais’ environment constrained their moral development, they did not need to be removed from their culture to convert. The Jesuits moved within Native communities, observing Native culture, before developing unique tactics for conversion, such as convincing Natives that their “flood” story and the “flood” of Genesis were one and the same.

Taking a step back from these descriptions of Native life and culture, understanding the voice of these peoples in this ethnographic work becomes increasingly challenging. As the Jesuit Relations were intended to recruit sponsors and gain favor from the imperial project, the reverence for Native culture as described might be the result of shaping the character of Natives to further the needs of the Society of Jesus. Whether these stories accurately described a mutual respect and learning between two distinctly different cultures, or simply a description of the Jesuit agenda for colonial and spiritual life, can never be fully understood. Le Jeune often described these Natives with an astounding reverence, detailing how they were free

109 Ibid., 33.
from evil and anger, naïve and uncorrupted.\textsuperscript{110} This was a commentary on the lives of colonists in New France and Europeans, whom Jesuits viewed as living in sin, corrupted by politics. In many circumstances, the Jesuits attempted to keep the colonists separate from converted Natives as, with religion not at the core of the colony, many residents of New France tended to live “in sin” by Jesuit accounts.\textsuperscript{111} These accounts were not free from political influence, and where agenda ends and factual description begins is unclear. What they do concretely show is the Jesuits’ willingness to rely on ritual to convey religion, and the Jesuit belief that Natives did not need to become French in demeanor to receive baptism.

One of the fundamental differences between the theory of conversion put forth by the Society of Jesus and the later approach to conversion by the Protestants was in their definition of a successful conversion. Evidence of this judgment existed in what aspects of Catholicism they chose to highlight as transposed onto Native identity. Consistently each Jesuit account emphasized baptism and communion, ritual sacraments and the foundation of Catholicism in their eyes.\textsuperscript{112} The emphasis on ritual shaped the Jesuit conversion scheme in two ways: rituals, as demonstrations of belief, were easily translatable despite cultural and linguistic differences; and, as larger group activities, rituals emphasized quantity of converts. Baptism, communion, marriage, and burial were some of the foundational sacraments of Catholicism. By receiving these sacraments, Natives committed to a new identity as Christians, or catechumen (a term used by Jesuits to identify the hybrid identity as Native and Christian), participating in ritual, not intellectual conversion. For the Jesuits this

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{111} Greer, \textit{Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits}, 5.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 53.
commitment signaled a successful, reportable conversion. Natives learned the stories of the life of Jesus and methods of prayer, such as symbolically crossing themselves.\textsuperscript{113} A convert to Catholicism then incorporated Catholic rituals into their Native beliefs.

This emphasis did present its own unique set of challenges as these conversions tended not to stick; Natives received baptism and quickly returned to their own ritual culture.\textsuperscript{114} The Jesuits came up with unique strategies to combat this challenge, focusing their baptism efforts on the dying.\textsuperscript{115} In one instance, Father Jean de Lamberville, despite the resistance of the parents of a dying Iroquois child, baptized him with a sponge in the sleeve of his robe, never revealing to the tribe the child now belonged to God.\textsuperscript{116} Lamberville served among the Onondaga, an Iroquois tribe, working in the dual role of a missionary and diplomat between the French and Natives.\textsuperscript{117} In this story, and other accounts of baptizing the dead, dying, or condemned to die, clearly the harvest of souls as the Jesuits envisioned in North America was just that: the bringing of as many converts as possible to baptism. The stealthy rather than public way he brought the dying infant to Catholicism indicates that demonstrating conversion to Natives was not as important as being able to report, through the \textit{Jesuit Relations}, the successful rescuing of one more soul for God.

One major obstacle Jesuits confronted was rapid spreading epidemics, but diseases simultaneously offered opportunities and challenges. Diseases destroyed

\begin{footnotes}
\item[113] Ibid., 51.
\item[114] Ibid., 53.
\item[115] Ibid., 6.
\item[116] "Relation of 1679."
\end{footnotes}
populations of their converts and many communities blamed the Jesuits for bringing sickness.¹¹⁸ Natives threatened to drive out missionaries as disease followed their arrival. Missionaries lived in constant peril, as Natives waivered between reverence and outrage at their care. Jérôme Lalemant experienced the latter among the Huron in 1640, as his efforts to baptize the dying were interpreted as a sign of malicious intent by the Jesuits. “No doubt, [the Huron] said, we must have a secret understanding with the disease,” he wrote, “since we alone were all full of life…no doubt we carried misery with us, since, wherever we set foot, either death or disease followed.”¹¹⁹ For every account of the rejection of Jesuit attempts to baptize and heal there is another of the positive impact European healing practices brought to missionary efforts.

Disease did, with luck, deliver a powerful message, as in some cases those who identified as Christian (the Jesuits and their few converts) survived, while others perished. Epidemics similarly opened the window for Jesuits to baptize the dying, to increase their reported conversion totals. In these instances, deaths served to reinforce the power of God to save and smite, and pushed more to convert to survive. As François le Mercier wrote from his time among the Huron in 1638, “our most common occupation was that of physician, with the object of increasingly discrediting their sorcerers and their imaginary treatments.”¹²⁰ Epidemics then resulted in not only the weakening and restructuring of communities, making them vulnerable to missionary intrusion, but also helped Jesuits undermine existing power dynamics, showing themselves to be more powerful than Native holy men.

¹¹⁸ The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America, 84.
¹¹⁹ Ibid., 93.
¹²⁰ Ibid., 89.
This becomes particularly clear through the accounts of the life of Tekakwitha, a Mohawk woman and Catholic convert who became a symbol of successful conversion. The two Jesuits who related the account of her life and death, Claude Chauchetière and Pierre Cholenec, painted a portrait for European audiences of a young woman who, like any revered Christian martyr, suffered persecution and died for her faith.121 A Mohawk orphan among the conquering Iroquois, Tekakwitha, baptized as Catherine, died in 1680 of one of the many diseases Europeans brought with them to Canada.122 Upon her death, her “sickly” appearance was cleansed and she glowed with a “saintly aura,” in other words, her skin became lighter, more like that of a white European.123 These Jesuits spoke of their “Mohawk Saint” with particular reverence, detailing that, through her acts of penance and prayer, she overcame her savage nature and “behaved like a well-bred French child.”124 While clearly viewing the French Euro-Christian way as purer and more civil, in the same breath the missionaries valued Native innocence over European corruption. Reconciling these two opposing sentiments sheds light on the evolution of the project these members of the Society of Jesus confronted.

Though not entirely understood by these missionaries, one of the great push factors for Natives to convert to Catholicism during this time period was the political fracturing and reforming that accelerated in the wake of the first waves of French colonialism. Though constantly in flux, Native community identities underwent

121 Richter, Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America, 83.
122 Greer, Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits, viii.
124 Ibid., 13.
increasingly rapid alliance breaking, remaking, and tribal absorption.\textsuperscript{125} This left a gap for Jesuit missionaries to enter tribes and convert prisoners of war, orphans like Catherine, and insert their agenda into the remaking of tribal order.\textsuperscript{126} The method of stealthy conversion and emphasis on ritual, then, makes perfect sense in an environment where the Native communities were decentralized and fluid.

As they became embedded in the fabric of the tribe, members of the Society of Jesus became convinced that Natives needed the guidance of Europeans to live a more civil life free from “devil worship.” They achieved this good life and therefore successful conversion through the incorporation of purifying sacraments.\textsuperscript{127} Their European perspective, however, influenced their interpretation of the success of the project of the Society of Jesus. For example, in the death of Catherine, the Jesuits interpreted the mourning enthusiasm of the Iroquois as religious fervor, the recognition by these “savages” of her saintliness.\textsuperscript{128} This public display of dismay was not, however, evidence of Catherine’s ability to sway the hearts of her captors, but rather the traditional style in which Iroquois of that area mourned the loss of a community member.\textsuperscript{129} In this way, the demonstrable aspect of ritualized Catholicism became the litmus test for an effective convert, but only so far as European observers, not Native converts, recognized the ritual.

Though Jesuits worked mainly among the Iroquois, their experience influenced their interactions with the Wabanaki. Moreover an understanding of the Wabanaki community in comparison to the Iroquois serves as a predictor where

\begin{thebibliography}{129}
\bibitem{125} Greer, \textit{Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits}, 51.
\bibitem{126} Richter, \textit{Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America}, 88.
\bibitem{127} Greer, \textit{Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits}, 6.
\bibitem{128} Ibid., 16.
\bibitem{129} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
sources are scarce and unreliable. The Wabanaki lived in a decentralized society, a conglomerate of many different smaller groups, including a subset labeled the Abenaki. They were divided in what religion they ended up converting to. The Iroquois, by comparison, appeared to be a more cohesive group, speaking with one voice to their European contacts, making them effective treaty makers and a powerful military threat to European interests. They also took more captives, Native and European alike, and integrated them into their communities. The Jesuits could easily use this captive class as an entry point into Iroquois communities, and make agreements with their leaders to allow missionary access. These same leaders, however, could turn the entire community against them. The fractured nature of the Wabanaki people allowed the Jesuits to move with ease between communities, and if one group soured to their work, they could move to the other without making a powerful unified enemy.

Understanding how the Society of Jesus approached conversion among the Huron, Iroquois, and Mohawk sheds light on why their work would be better received by a group like the Abenaki. While emphasizing demonstration of faith and abandonment of devil worshiping ritual, the Society of Jesus fundamentally focused on converting Natives to the use of Catholic ritual and acceptance of Catholic sacraments. They left room for interpretation, as what may have in fact been standard Native cultural practice often paralleled Catholic ritual and therefore counted towards their harvest of souls. The reliance of Catholicism on ritual, combined with the Jesuits

130 Day, "Western Abenaki," 151.
132 Ibid., 5.
tendency to move within the Native community, rather than remove their converts from their culture and surroundings, made success in the environment and turmoil of Wabanakia much more likely. The Society of Jesus gave to their missionaries the freedom to adapt their conversion strategy that also allowed for increased success among the decentralized Wabanaki. Certain groups like the Franciscans and Recollects incentivized Natives to move out of their communities, but the Abenaki by and large refused this offer. Jesuits posed little threat to the powerful Wabanaki; furthermore, their standard of success largely left many Native “converts” untouched by European influence. Catholic conversion did not threaten the sovereignty of tribes in the Dawnland, unlike the Protestant missions.

2.2 The Apostle John Eliot

Protestant missionary efforts in New England and particularly Wabanakia did not commence in an institutionalized, imperial way until the emergence of groups such as the SPG in 1702. Prior to 1702, religious leaders, such as John Eliot, shaped Puritan dictates and missionary projects, including a system of “Praying Towns,” and the translation of the Bible into Native language. The evolution and development of these systems of conversion emphasized reliance on written text, removal of Natives from their traditional environment, and public displays of scriptural knowledge, the opposite of the strategies of the Society of Jesus. The roots of the formation of these unique strategies and the undertaking of a missionary endeavor in the first place lay in vehement anti-popery and the tenets of Puritanism. These same foundational
principles, however, built tensions between the English and their surrounding Native communities.

Puritans developed a conversion methodology of four stages that moved Natives out of their communities and into the body of the church. These stages were civilizing, protestant instruction, spiritual conversion, and church membership. The linkage of civility and conversion echoed the reflection of Jesuit missionaries on the need for Natives to abandon their “devil worship” for Catholic ritual. The fundamental separating principle between the Jesuit understanding of civilizing and Protestant undertaking was the Protestant project required a greater degree of Native submission. Intellectual, more than ritual, incorporation of Christianity created a “civilized” convert for Puritan leaders. This manifested in a host of different modifications to Native culture, the biggest of which was literacy. To study scripture Natives had to move away from oral tradition and ritual into the practice of reading. Natives were first stripped of their former culture and then reborn in the church, a process significantly more involved than simple baptism and receiving sacrament.

The Puritan missionaries did not have to undertake a missionary project: in many areas, sheer force of numbers and ravages of diseases combined with territorial ambition to push Natives off their land and out of the path of the English. Conversions, however, proved an effective way of politically breaking, restructuring, and assuring alliance with Natives in the far reaches of the colony. A series of Native sachems acquiesced and signed treaties with the Massachusetts Bay Colony for mutual defense and exclusive trading rights in 1644 as part of the efforts of Roger

---

Williams and Samuel Gorton to control “Narragansett Country.” Missionary work became a way to ensure the continued loyalty of these Natives. Outside of the central authority at Boston, colonial officials needed missions to act as governmental outposts among the Natives. By converting sachems, missionaries such as John Eliot were able to gain a foothold in tribes like the Neponset and Nonantum, and extend the influence of the English well into Wabanaki territory.

Another motivation for missionary work was strong anti-popery, shaping the way preachers approached instilling the Gospel in Natives. Protestantism required two things from conversion efforts: study of scripture over ritual, and the public declaration of faith. Puritanism rebelled against the formalism of Catholicism, viewing their use of ornate symbolism and church hierarchy as barriers between Christians and scripture. True Protestantism then relied on constant study and reading of scripture and the invocation of God’s teachings in everyday life. Natives needed to be placed in an environment in which they could be taught the tenets of Christianity: humility, piety, charity, and obedience among others. To then demonstrate their conversion, Natives participated in public declarations of faith, delivering sermons about their past sins as savages, and turning toward God. These were published and disseminated throughout the Protestant Empire, similar to the publication of the Jesuit

---

134 Ibid., 22.
135 Ibid.
136 "A Further Accompt on the Progresse of the Gospel Amonst the Indians in New England and of the Measured Effectually to Advance the Same Set Forth in Certaine Letters Sent from Thence Declairing a Purpose of Printing the Scriptures in the Indian Tongue into Which They Are Already Translated.," 3.
137 Eliot, The Learned Conjectures of Reverend Mr. John Eliot Touching the Americans, of New and Notable Consideration, Written to Mr. Thorowgood.
Relations. But whereas Jesuit accounts related baptism and participation of Natives in Catholic ritual sacraments, Puritan accounts purported to speak with a Native’s voice quoting scripture and preaching about their new salvation through Protestantism.

To teach Christian principles, values, and the study of scripture, Eliot and his fellow missionaries removed Natives into Praying Towns and focused on children as students to effectively instill Puritan values in Native communities. The end goal of this indoctrination was teaching English language and culture. These converts in turn would teach their children, and their children’s children, transitioning Christian Natives out of Native culture. As accounted by one Mr. Wilson who visited a Praying Town, “the Indians have built after the English Manner high and large…dressed in English apparel (as most if not all of them are).” He described the “Indian school master” instructing children in both English and their Native tongue in the way of “Christian virtue.” This focus on children, later used by the SPG, concentrated on the idea of innocence as innate to humans, only corrupted by

138 "A Further Accompt on the Progresse of the Gospel Amonst the Indians in New England and of the Measured Effectually to Advance the Same Set Forth in Certaine Letters Sent from Thence Declairing a Purpose of Printing the Scriptures in the Indian Tongue into Which They Are Already Translated.," 2.
139 Cotton Mather, India Christiana: A Discourse, Delivered Unto the Commissioners, for the Propagation of the Gospel among the American Indians: Which Is Accompanied with Several Instruments Relating to the Glorious Design of Propagating Our Holy Religion, in the Easter (Boston, MA1721), 20.
141 Ibid. 17
environment and teachings.\textsuperscript{142} To become a successfully converted Protestant, these Natives needed to first “read [scripture] distinctly and exactly, then learn it perfectly by Heart.”\textsuperscript{143} The expectation of total surrender of children to this school of Puritanism worked in areas where Natives felt the immediate threat of English violence.

Targeting children served a secondary purpose, breaking apart Native communities to destroy barriers between groups. As the Native sachem “Iohn, Prince of the Massaquessets” declared “I must die, the God of the English is much angry with me, and will destroy me…yet my Child shall live with the English and learn to know their God when I am dead.”\textsuperscript{144} This account, relayed by a Protestant missionary, emphasized the identity purging that Natives underwent to enter the Christian community of Praying Towns. The child came alone, as an orphan, to be indoctrinated. Conversion supposedly ended rivalries, prevented sickness, and created a community of saved Natives.\textsuperscript{145} Experience Mayhew published a lengthy account of the Wampanoag who underwent conversion on Martha’s Vineyard. He relayed the experience of young converts, many of whom died before they were twenty-five, describing them as pious, studious, and repentant. In his account these children served as model Christians for their parents, forsaking all their culture and language to adopt

\textsuperscript{142} A Collection of Papers Printed by Order of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 35.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
English practices. The importance of children mirrored the strategies of English conquerors in Ireland, removing Irish children to English schools as a form of violence and trauma to their community and culture. Rather than promote a hybrid middle ground between Puritanism and Native culture, the only trappings that remained for these children of their old lives was their language, and Puritan missionaries even sought to transition them away from this.

Figure 4: Eliot Bible, printed by Samuel Green, 1663. Courtesy of the Rauner Special Collections Library.

John Eliot paved the way for the implementation of Puritan conversion among a plethora of tribes, not only for his mastery of the Algonquin language, but also for

---

147 Pestana, *Protestant Empire*, 64.
his published accounts of missionary efforts. He became widely known as “the Apostle,”\textsuperscript{148} for his work among the Massachusetts Indians, publishing “Mamusse Wunneetupanamatwe Up-Biblum God” or the translation of the Bible into their language (Figure 4). His translation efforts made him perhaps the most effective Protestant missionary; while organizing fourteen Praying Towns and reorganizing the Natick people, among others, Eliot received a certain amount of respect from them for his ability to communicate (despite his limited linguistic range, as only the Massachusetts and Wampanoag understood it). Future generations of Protestant missionaries reflected on the life of John Eliot as that of an Apostle in the New Jerusalem, revering his ability to share with the Natives the work of God in their own tongue. Like the biblical story of Pentecost, missionaries described Eliot as blessed with the ability to speak the Word of God in a new tongue, a gift given to him by God. In many ways Eliot met the Natives halfway, in the style of the Jesuits, by trying to alter Native behavior while living among them, as few other Puritan missionaries did, as this blended Englishness and Native identity, threatening the purity of the former.

Eliot and many of his colleagues subscribed to millennialism, and this perhaps explains why he dedicated his life to the conversion of these Natives. Part of millennialism, as understood by Eliot, posited that there exists a lost tribe of Israel, a group of Gentiles descended from Noah that moved east after the great flood and

were lost to history. Eliot believed Natives to be this lost tribe descended from Jokan, son of Noah, and that the Native language was similar to Hebrew. Viewed in this way, Eliot perceived Puritans and Natives to be kindred in “language and spirit.” By this logic, his Natives were merely children of God that had lapsed into a state of nature, and needed to be brought back. He quoted Deuteronomy as evidence; “the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other, and there thou shalt serve other gods.” Millennialism fundamentally understood that after a period of one thousand years of suffering, mankind would come to judgment and the chosen, understood by the English to only include English Protestants, would be rewarded while the wicked were punished. The integrity of English Protestant identity was linked to eternal salvation. Eliot believed that as Natives fell in the spectrum of those who could have inherited God’s salvation, his efforts as a Protestant had to be directed towards saving these people for the coming of God.

Eliot understood the importance of the written word to both propagating Puritan culture, and distinguishing Protestantism from Catholicism. Unlike the Jesuit reliance on ritual, Eliot in his Indian Dialogues stated “You must be much conversant in the Word of God, and though you cannot yet reade the Word, yet you must get the help of others, and learn the word of God by heart.” In this series of “partly

149 Cogley, John Eliot’s Mission to the Indians before King Philip’s War, 87.
150 Eliot, The Learned Conjectures of Reverend Mr. John Eliot Touching the Americans, of New and Notable Consideration, Written to Mr. Thorowgood.
151 Ibid.
152 Cogley, John Eliot’s Mission to the Indians before King Philip’s War, 88.
153 Eliot, Indian Dialogues: For Their Instruction in That Great Service of Christ, in Calling Home Their Country-Men to the Knowledge of God, and of Themselves, and of Jesus Christ, 35.
historical…and partly instructive”\textsuperscript{154} imagined discourses between Eliot’s Praying Indians and their “kinsmen,” the Natives explain why others should join them in forsaking Native custom, learning English, and studying scripture. Eliot created characters of Praying Indians that encouraged their fellow Natives to, despite all the difficulties and trials facing them, learn English and move into towns like Natick to receive the lessons of the Apostle. Eliot’s Indians discussed their moments of revelation about past sins and future salvation, and about how thankful Natives ought to be for the translation of the Bible into their own tongue so they can know and love God, a first step to being saved from hell.\textsuperscript{155} In this way, baptism was not the key moment in a missionary’s work, and the abandonment of Native religion did not guarantee successful conversion. Rather Eliot concentrated on these times when Natives studied, received, and took to heart the readings of scripture and their message of repentance.

These texts are unique because they served as testimony for imperial readers about the success of the Praying Towns. Success to Puritans was demonstrated by the strict adherence by Natives to Protestant, not Catholic, dictates. Eliot wrote in the voice of a Native, though, as quoted above, he admitted he invented most of the dialogue. Over the course the \textit{Indian Dialogues} Natives professed their new love for piety and English rule.\textsuperscript{156} At one point the Native narrator declared “the book of God is no invention of English men…yet we have great cause to be thankful to the English, and to thank God for them…they heard of us, and of our Country, and of our nakedness, ignorance of God…God put it into their hearts to desire to come hither

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., 8.
and teach us the good knowledge of God.”\textsuperscript{157} The Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Figure 3) mimicked this description, as a half-naked Native called to the English in the drawing “come over and help us.” The Native’s kinsmen replied that this is a trick, merely the narrator serving as a mouthpiece for English land ambitions (ironic as Eliot used every character as a mouthpiece for English agenda). The narrator responded that the English purchased land, graciously gifting some to loyal Christian Natives, and that God’s word translated to Native tongue was the greatest gift of all: salvation.\textsuperscript{158}

Through this exchange Eliot showed his English audience—these Dialogues were never translated into Massachusetts—the gratitude of his students for the interference of the English,\textsuperscript{159} and their true awareness of the treasure of scripture. One of the fundamental sources of miscommunication between imperial leaders and settlers occurred at the religious level, as missionaries like John Eliot misrepresented the reality of mission work. As Eliot wrote, “I have travailed many miles, and among many Indians, and never came yet unto that place where I found not some ready and glad to heare the word of God preached unto them.”\textsuperscript{160} He went on the describe the challenges the Natick community faced in the wake of English encroachment to Abenaki land, but he fundamentally stuck to the refrain that the missionary process was, in large part, welcomed by the Natives.\textsuperscript{161} To get support, funding, and respect, \textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{160} John Eliot, ”Mr. Eliot's Letter,” (Houghton Library, December 8, 1652).
\textsuperscript{161} ”Mr. Eliot's Letter, Printed in the Book of the Corporation for Promoting the Gospel among the Natives,” (Houghton Library, April 28, 1652).
he had to convey the exaggerated eagerness and ease with which Natives received his teachings.

Protestant conversion relied on public testimony of Natives, to their tribesman and fellow Puritans, about their realization of faith. While the Indian Dialogues were imaginary, a series of sermons published by the “Corporation for spreading the Gospel among the poor Indians in New England” and delivered by Praying Indians at Natick revealed the trauma of conversion experienced by these Natives. A Native named Nishokhou, preaching upon the same flood story the Jesuits used as a point of commonality between their faith and that of the Natives, spoke about the importance of cleansing all his past sins and ways to welcome God deep into his heart. Unlike Jesuit missionaries walking around surreptitiously baptizing Native babies, Protestant conversion required Natives to testify to their conversion, to embrace God’s will and forsake of all Native traditions. Not only did they have to learn to read, they also had to articulate all of this to their enemies, allies, and European neighbors. Unlike the misinterpreting of Native mourning practices as zeal for Christianity, there was no mistaking a Protestant convert, as they had to attest to their own visible sainthood.

Eliot also published Tears of Repentance, though, unlike the Indian Dialogues, he did not entirely fabricate its contents, but instead edited them heavily. These confessions of the Praying Indians at Natick conveyed to an even greater degree the impact of confession on Natives, traumatizing them with fear of hell and sin. These sins were not limited to polygamy and worshipping idols, even keeping

---

162 "A Further Accompt on the Progresse of the Gospel Amonst the Indians in New England and of the Measured Effectually to Advance the Same Set Forth in Certaine Letters Sent from Thence Declairing a Purpose of Printing the Scriptures in the Indian Tongue into Which They Are Already Translated.," 10.
163 Ibid. 14
long hair proved to be a great enough sin to bring one Native to tears: “I heard that Word, that it is a shame for a man to wear long hair…therefore I cut it off, and grieved for this sin, and prayed for pardon.”164 Tears of Repentance revealed the extreme to which Protestants demanded Natives change their lives, appearances, and customs, to convert. Not only did they need to learn to read, as this young Native described doing to gain God’s mercy, they had to purge themselves of any vestiges of non-European identity.165 There remains to this day controversy about the extent to which Eliot truly supervised the translation of the Bible, as opposed to outsourcing to Native translators, and his Indian Dialogues are clearly fabricated.166 But through corroborating literature and Tears of Repentance it is clear that Protestant missionary work took on the unique task of transforming Natives into confessed Praying Indians. The reverence for Eliot’s work also revealed the extent to which Protestants saw him as a success and a model for future efforts.

While Jesuits and Protestants both relied on these written accounts to imperial leaders about conversions, their tactics differed greatly in their treatment of Native communities. Both groups were greatly concerned with demonstrating fruitful missionary projects to maintain funding and, in the case of the Jesuits, a religious monopoly. Both strove to understand Native religion and culture. But the Protestants used this knowledge to strip Natives of their original identity and rebuild them. Removing Natives into Praying Towns ensured that converts were visible and isolated. Whereas Jesuit converts could be anyone from a sachem to a slave, to an

164 Richter, Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America. 114  
165 Ibid. 113  
166 Eliot, Indian Dialogues: For Their Instruction in That Great Service of Christ, in Calling Home Their Country-Men to the Knowledge of God, and of Themselves, and of Jesus Christ.
unknowing dying soul, Protestant converts tended to be from damaged communities vying for English protection. Praying Towns promised citizenship and opportunity for survival for these groups, and they paid the price of their lands and culture to gain it.167 The English also manipulated these groups, creating new “sachems” that served as figureheads, Praying Indians put in power by the English and given the authority to sign over lands that did not belong to them, ensuring English growth. 168 Like the French, English settlement and conversion efforts worked in tandem to remove Natives from their land and into baptism. Whereas Eliot, like Champlain, had grand plans of Native cooperation and conversion, these towns served a practical purpose for English governmental leaders looking to expand.

Puritan beliefs and expectations converged on the Dawnland and often clashed with the reality of the role of Natives in the Protestant project. Missionaries demonstrated their position as visible saints, part of the chosen few already designated by God as heaven-bound, by working with the Natives.169 Very few texts, however, understood Natives to be a part of this predestined family, except Eliot’s millennialism. Natives were often identified after conversion not by tribe, but by teacher, referred to as “Eliot’s” or “Wheelock’s” Indians.170 Natives studied the Bible in their own language, gave “testimony” and preached on scripture, and yet the end result of this process of conversion was subservience to the English. Whereas Natives

167 Cogley, John Eliot’s Mission to the Indians before King Philip’s War, 27.
168 Ibid., 204.
in Canada, once converted, earned French citizenship and the rights and privileges that accompanied it. English-allied Natives did not receive the same treatment from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. While promised protection, Natives rarely saw these benefits, serving rather as warriors in the struggle between France and England, hoping to choose the winning side and avoid decimation.

The end result of these early Protestant projects was the success of some, such as those of Eliot, who valued the Natives as kindred Christians fallen from grace, and rejection of others by Natives who understood conversion as a threat to their culture. Protestant leaders like Eliot began to confront the problem of stagnation. Despite his efforts, the number of converts to Protestantism and the population of Praying Towns remained remarkably small. Two factors surfaced as both causes and effects of Eliot’s mission. First, the reliance on written word meant slower conversion than the baptism of the Jesuits. Second, the need to remove Natives from their environment made the English a greater threat to Native interests. Evidence shows that Natives forfeited their autonomy only when the added pressures of disease and encroachment by the English forced alliance and acceptance of missionaries. But in the Dawnland a new option, alliance with the French, arose. As the century wore on, the added pressure of French influence only pushed the Protestant missionaries to further extremes.

2.3 SPG and the Challenges of Anti-Popery

In 1702 a new institution, the SPG, emerged to tackle the task of converting Natives in the wake of a series of wars that left Wabanaki land torn into pieces.

Conflict back in Europe spilled over into New France and New England in a series of wars, with the Wabanaki in between, trying to use these conflicts to their advantage. The SPG struggled to balance maintaining religious colonial towns, converting Natives, combating Jesuit influence, and gaining funds from investors back in England. The period of John Eliot’s experimentation with Praying Towns ended with their destruction in 1675, after King Phillip’s War ravaged not only the physical landscape of Maine, but also the trust and alliances that bound Protestants and Natives together.\textsuperscript{173} The SPG stepped in to serve the needs of this new missionary era. As missionary work became gradually standardized through edicts from the SPG, missionaries were confined to stricter behavior that hindered their ability to connect with and convert the Abenaki. SPG’s ties to local and imperial government standards, as well as the dictates of increasingly Puritan dogma, caused complete failure of the Protestant missionaries to compete with the Jesuits for Native converts.

During King Philip’s War the Abenaki joined the Wampanoag people against the English, and in the aftermath of the loss, the English tortured, enslaved, and dispersed them.\textsuperscript{174} Religion played a role in understanding the dynamics of the conflict, and why, after this bloody confrontation, missionary projects remained popular. During the war, when battles turned in favor of the Wampanoag and their allies, the English perceived the Natives as agents of God’s punishment, inflicting suffering upon them for their sins. Days of prayer and fasting became regular occurrences; preachers filled their sermons with warnings of even greater violence to

\textsuperscript{174} Ibid. 5
Natives began to target religious symbols in their attacks, burning religious texts, even at one point torturing one Goodman Write by cutting him open and putting “his Bible in his Belly.”

While the military events that led to English victory are unessential to understanding the dynamics of conversion that followed, King Philip’s War as a whole left the region traumatized and divided. But the English won, solidifying their divine mission. The reprinting of the Eliot Bible in 1685, and the formation of a chartered SPG in 1702, came from an understanding that victory in King Philip’s War was a sign of God’s blessing on their project. The English demanded more of Native alliances, both in land and missionary presence, as imperial ambitions only grew with the victory. Yet colonists viewed the Natives with increasing hostility, and the Abenaki returned this sentiment. Expecting the Abenaki to receive SPG missionaries, and forfeit their land and cultural autonomy proved counter productive.

Unlike the Jesuit missionaries, or even John Eliot and the first series of local missionary corporations, the SPG created overarching guidelines that applied to every area of the colonies, from the Caribbean to Canada. While the Jesuits studied the Natives they lived among, and then developed tools to translate Native culture, values, and traditions into Native conversion, missionaries of the SPG were bound by specific instructions widely published and distributed. The organization of the SPG represented the first English imperial level institutionalization of missionary work as

---

175 Ibid. 103
176 Ibid. 105
177 Ibid. 99
178 A Collection of Papers Printed by Order of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1.
179 Ibid.
a business in New England. The SPG issued a series of governing statutes that covered every topic from specific prayers, to directions for schoolmasters, qualifications for missionaries, and behavioral expectations. According to this handbook, the Society was “empower’d to Ask, Receive, and dispose of such Monies as shall be contributed by charitable, devout, and zealous Christians towards carrying on so great and pious a Design.” In this way the society was a business, receiving requests from towns and missionaries and relaying them to investors in England.

This need for increased investing came at the price of expectation: investors expected the SPG converts and missionaries to adhere strictly to the Protestant way, and to show this adherence through detailed accounts. Missionaries were expected to demonstrate perfectly pious behavior, no matter their surrounding. Whether by abstaining or alcohol or refusing to dwell with Natives that had not adopted Puritanism, missionaries served as model Puritans in the middle of these communities. Missionaries had to continue their diligent study of scripture and instruct Natives to take up the practice. The SPG centered their cause around a new urgency to protect both Natives and English from Catholic influence. “Our said Plantations, Colonies and Factories are wholly Destitute and Unprovided of a Maintenance for Ministers, and the Publick Worship of God…many of our Loving Subjects do want the Administration of God’s Word…for want of…Ministers to instruct our Loving Subjects in the Principles of true Religion, divers Romanish

180 Ibid., 50.
183 Ibid., 14.
Priests and Jesuits are more encouraged.”¹⁸⁴ Their mission needed more funds, more men, to counter the continued success of Jesuits at converting Natives and a handful of captives, discussed in the next chapter.

One key difference between the Jesuit and Protestant missions was the need for greater funds by the latter to support the production of missionary texts, both translated and in English, as well as maintaining missionary towns; another difference came in the evolution of the definition of a successful conversion. In the instructions published by the Puritan missionary leaders, they included a chart to report, in this progression, the “number of inhabitants, No. of Baptized, No. of the adult persons baptized, No. of actual communicants of the Church of England, No. of those who profess themselves of the Church of England, No. of dissenters of all sorts, No. of heathens and infidels.”¹⁸⁵ Rather than just reporting baptisms, they differentiated degree of belief and included a section for doubt in the faith of not only Native converts, but English parishioners as well. The SPG understood the importance of books, detailing what catechisms missionaries should use in their work. But they also created rules that monopolized the flow of religious literature into Maine, declaring that missionaries had to keep a careful catalogue of their Books and only use those sanctioned by the SPG.¹⁸⁶ The wariness of popery made leaders distrustful even of their own missionaries.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 2.
The SPG, due to the publicity they received, had to serve religious as well as political ends. Much like the *Jesuit Relations*, the accounts of the SPG related the customs and beliefs of Natives, and their receptiveness to Christianity. Unlike the *Jesuit Relations* and Eliot’s *Indian Dialogues*, the papers of the SPG revealed their political agenda as tools of the English Empire. John Eliot, as one of the foundational members of missionary work, had the freedom to believe some more radical forms of Puritanism and millennialism, supposing that God spoke the Native language. By 1704 Puritan leaders discouraged this syncretism. Like the *Jesuit Relations*, the SPG could not make the project sound unsuccessful and therefore lose political standing, nor could they express the conversion process to be easy and therefore not in need of funding. While the SPG fed off Eliot’s work, they needed to advance more distinctly the needs of the royal government. For example, they advocated selecting only those priests loyal to the

---

*Figure 5: Seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Courtesy of the Yale Divinity School Special Collections*

---

English crown.¹⁸⁸ During the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Parliament overthrew King James II for his policies of religious tolerance, and ties to France. Fear of French influence and Catholicism brought about revolution and a new era of intolerance.¹⁸⁹ Because of this turmoil, new English leaders required an even higher degree of demonstrated loyalty to the imperial project and Protestantism.

The use of public space and teaching civility increased during this period not only among Natives, but fellow colonists as well. These Puritan leaders clearly had a vision of Natives as children of God, reminiscent of Eliot’s millennialism, in need of civilizing and conversion. Unlike earlier sources, however, the records of the SPG reflect a growing dissatisfaction with the behavior of the children of God who lived within the English colonies. The growing threat of Protestant colonists turning toward Catholicism or away from strict adherence to the church preoccupied the SPG as much as converting Natives.¹⁹⁰ This was particularly a fear in Maine, which lay beyond the control of Boston and London. The greatest evil in the minds of missionaries was losing a fellow Puritan to Catholicism.¹⁹¹ The letters of a Reverend G. Delius in Bedford, New York reflected the dual draw of converting Natives and serving towns, as he pleaded for more missionary presence as he and a single other

¹⁸⁹ "General Court Vote Directing That Inquiry Be Made in the Province in Order to Insure That They Are Protestant, Suggesting That They Be Required to Take an Oath Of," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archives, 1692).
¹⁹⁰ "Petition Submitted to the General Court by James Gouge, on Behalf of the Town of Wells (Me), Seeking Aid for the Building of a Meeting House and the Support of a Minister, Their Houses Having Been Des," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archives, 1700).
priest had been tasked to serve three parishes.\textsuperscript{192} He reported the lapse of many of his parish member’s piety and requested funds and texts to rekindle their Puritan faith.

The result was increasingly vehement anti-popery as failure to gain Native support became gradually blamed on the blasphemous tactics of the Jesuits. The English again used this moment to reinvent their history, a balancing act of propaganda mixed with facts. Understanding the Protestant project to be a failure requires examining it in light of French attempts to convert during this period, and the Abenaki serve this purpose well as a case study. The SPG understood that the Society of Jesus had a forty-year head start in organized mission work. While Eliot’s efforts of the mid-seventeenth century proved moderately successful as judged by his ability to establish fourteen Praying Towns, the SPG records reflect increasing despair at the tendency of Natives to destroy Eliot’s Bibles.\textsuperscript{193} The SPG resorted to pointing out the shortcuts the Jesuit missionaries took in conversion, claiming they allowed Natives to maintain polygamist relationships and heathenish practices. The SPG self-identified as anti-Catholic, but as such, could not adopt any of the practices that allowed the Jesuits to be successful in conversion.

2.4 Conclusion

Many scholars understand the difference between the Jesuit mission and SPG efforts to be the foundation of the first on accepting Native identity and the second on

\textsuperscript{192} "Mr Pritchard to the Secretary," in Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel microform (Lamont, Harvard University Archives, 1704).

\textsuperscript{193} William Hubbard, A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England from the First Planting Thereof in the Year 1607 to This Present Year 1677, but Chiefly of the Late Troubles in the Two Last Years, 1675 and 1676 to Which Is Added a Discourse About the Warre with the Pequods (Boston1677), 25.
replacing and transforming it.\textsuperscript{194} While across the continent this serves as a strong starting point for distinguishing between the two, in Wabanakia specifically the fundamental reliance on written text hurt the English. The Protestants were unwilling to waiver because, by defining their very essence in opposition to Catholicism, they built themselves an unsustainable niche. If Protestantism was the intellectual answer to Catholicism, then Natives had to learn to understand scripture in their own terms and their own language. The Abenaki then had to self-teach these principles and take them to heart, replacing their Native identity in order to convert. The English relied on the Puritan way of studying text and then demonstrating piety. This two-stage process—or four in the mind of John Eliot—could not translate into Abenaki conversion. Despite the translation of the Bible, combining political interests and the insistence on strict Puritanism in the wake of growing anti-Popery led to a failure to convert missionary tactics into results.

Furthermore the terrain of Wabanakia combined with the tensions between the three groups on this land led to miscommunication between imperial and societal edicts with everyday life. The lived reality of the land was very different from the accounts published by the SPG. Conversions were lost in translation. Unlike many previously examined cases, such as the Huron, Montagnais, and Massachusetts, the Wabanaki occupied a space that lent itself to shifting alliances between the French and English depending on the balance of power at the time, but never fully embracing one over the other. This shifting allegiance could work within the Jesuit missionary framework, as they allowed Natives to maintain their cultural identity and autonomy,

but not for the English, who tried to remove Natives from their culture and land into English society. The Abenaki saw no advantage to replacing their sovereignty with the confines of a Praying Town, as the English treated even Praying Indians as second-class citizens. Protestant methodology was incompatible with a region in which the Abenaki actually held better negotiating position. Despite being threatened by disease and the influence of European-introduced alcohol, the Abenaki could play the French and English empires off one another, trading alliances and goods with both sides and the Europeans vied for their loyalty, and souls.

Fundamentally each of the two groups had two different definitions and strategies for successful conversion. For the Jesuits, quantity of converts mattered for a colony so small and rooted in trade as Acadia and Quebec. To achieve this they converted the dead and dying, many who never knew their souls were “saved.” Protestants gained strict adherents, but at gunpoint, as disease, territorial threats, and political restructuring prompted Natives to sacrifice their culture. The Abenaki rebelled against this. Successful conversion, then, is relative, as one empire gained more allies, and the other more faithful adherents. The test of success and failure for Protestants comes from accounts of those who lived in this region of Wabanakia, where these pressures the English relied upon did not exist to the same extent as the rest of the English holdings. Stripping away these factors by examining the Abenaki and those colonists, both French and English that interacted with them Protestant shortcomings become apparent.

195 Chmielewski, The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier, 22.
Chapter Three

Individual Experiences in the Dawnland

To truly understand the inability of Protestant missionary work to take root in Wabanakia as they envisioned it, one must first understand the composition of colonial culture of the region, not as societal and imperial sources painted it, but as it was lived. Maine was not the same as the center of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, despite being treated by laws and edicts as such. It is important to note that colonists in Maine tended not to adhere strictly to Puritanism, a fact that troubled leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony throughout the era. Most households did not own a Bible; many were as illiterate as the surrounding Natives missionaries hoped to convert.\textsuperscript{196} Those who moved into this area tended to be discontent with the running of the colonies of New England. They were often poorer families, or rebels against the strict Puritan government structure, making them naturally inclined to subversion. This was not an exemplary community of visible saints.\textsuperscript{197} Much like Acadia, Maine represented a unique area of colonial life, largely left unguided by laws and governors, but still influenced by imperial language. These two groups, the French and English, however much the religious societies would have preferred, were not wholly separate, running parallel courses. In fact the development of each group largely influenced the growth of the other.\textsuperscript{198}

Understanding dynamics between Native tribes lends itself to comprehending missionaries’ struggles to shape broad religious dictates to meet the needs of this region. The consistent and persistent threat of Iroquois violence against the Abenaki

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 32. \\
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid., 8. \\
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid., 10.
and other converts shaped a somewhat tentative alliance between Protestant and Jesuit missionaries that came not from societal agreements, but rather individual actions of priests.\textsuperscript{199} Where the empires and religious societies bent on influencing this region sought to divide the land and peoples between two opposing sides, those who lived in the Dawnland understood the borders of colony and religion to be much more fluid and unstable. Through the stories of missionaries, captives, and Native converts, the priorities of these residents of Maine become clear. The disconnect between their understanding of the region and that of the empire reveals the weakness of the Protestant missionary project.

This chapter argues that the conditions in Wabanakia brought forth both a strengthening of resolve and a test of faith. The conditions of the Dawnland acted as an equalizer between Protestants and Catholics; Protestants could not rely on written culture and scriptural study with colonists primarily focused on survival, and the Jesuits lost much of the advantage of their head start as English military strength attracted the Abenaki to them for alliance. Increasingly priests bent staunch Puritan dictates to adapt to life on the outskirts of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. But by doing so, they lost what defined them as English and Protestant. This was the greatest fear of missionaries and colonists alike who saw losing the practices that made them English as movement toward popery.\textsuperscript{200} The English, like captives John Williams and Hannah Swarton, fought to keep and demonstrate their piety, despite living among Catholics, and yet their accounts convey the language of fear of Jesuits and Natives.

\textsuperscript{199} Ibid., 22.  
\textsuperscript{200} Ibid.
The unstable conditions generated increasing hostility on what the empire saw as the front lines of the conversion effort.

This chapter explores the stories of priests, captives, and Abenaki figures in the Dawnland to explain the building tension between Protestant and Native peoples that undermined missionary efforts. The English conveyed increased anti-papery, as the fluid conditions of Maine created greater fear of French influence and Native violence. Wabanaki actions point to a similar increased mistrust and unwillingness to cooperate. Overall, accounts of Dawnland residents convey in equal measure distrust, fear, respect, and futility, as the imperial and societal expectations placed on this land served to increase divisions rather than generate conversions.

3.1 Diluting Dictates: Reality of Missionary Life

Despite direct opposition between Catholic and Protestant mission tactics, the demands of life in the Dawnland and close contact between missionaries made both groups increasingly similar by the end of the seventeenth century. Through sermons and accounts written to heads of the SPG and English colonies, missionaries expressed the difficulties of applying Protestantism to chaotic life in Maine. Settlers in the area of Wabanakia understood the threat of Catholicism and Native violence, but few prioritized piety over survival, compromising in ways that shocked religious leaders. Individually, these actors used their own judgment to apply missionary tactics where they benefitted from strict adherence, and loosen dictates of Puritanism and Catholicism when situations demanded flexibility. Examining priests’ change in attitude over time, and the internal contradictions in their accounts provide, shows
that for both Catholics and Protestants compromise, alliance, and exchange shaped religious culture as much as the religious societies, despite the loyalty they expressed to their colonial project.

The greatest fear for pious Protestants in the Dawnland was losing parishioners to popery, a fear that stemmed from the close proximity of their settlements to Catholics. With intermixing between three distinct groups, the French presented a unique threat to Protestants, as they could move among them undetected (appearing like any other European physically), planning to subvert Puritan ways.201 This blending and fluidity in many ways made anti-Catholic sentiment in Maine more extreme than that of centrally located colonial areas such as Boston. Just as fear of Native violence on the outskirts of the colonies was greater for its proximity to Native communities, fear of a subversive Catholic element threatening the souls of colonists and converts alike ruled the language used by missionaries in Maine. Preachers urged diligence, emphasizing continued study of scripture, conversion of Natives, and rejection of any and all efforts by the French to enter English contested territory. Similarly, they required of their followers a high level of demonstrated piety, despite the scarcity of printed text and general demands of daily life.202

This fear of “romanish tendencies,” however, was met in equal measure by cooperation and temporary alliance, as the demands of life in Maine crossed even this vast ideological gap in times of mutual emergency. Priests tended not to follow the form of SPG missionary dictates. Many lived piously and studiously reading

scripture, to set an example for their followers. But most came up against the ingrained success of Jesuits, such as Sebastian Rale among the Abenaki, and had to adapt and adopt many of their practices in order to compete. But by fundamentally adopting Catholic strategies, missions became stripped of their Protestant tenets, as Puritanism relied on the purity of faith from Catholic influence. An internal struggle developed for priests and missionaries as they attempted to maintain their own spiritual standing, the health of their community, and acquire converts.

Certain priests and religious figures broke through the strict boundaries imposed by empires and societies to cope with arising crises. The Iroquois presented the greatest threat to both the Catholic and Protestant missionary project during this era. Father Druillettes, a French Catholic leader among the Abenaki, recognized the importance of eliminating the constant threat of Iroquois retaliation to solidify a strong missionary presence. The Iroquois (comprised of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, and Cayuga) throughout the seventeenth century waged a series of wars against New France and New England. At the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701, the French signed a treaty with the Iroquois and other Native groups, including

---

203 A Collection of Papers Printed by Order of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 63.
204 Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England, 60.
205 "Copy of a Petition to King Charles I, from Robert Mason, Proprietor of the Province of New Hampshire, Presenting a Chronology of the Settlement of New England, and Discoursing at Length on the Transgressions," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archive, 1691).
the Abenaki, for peace and alliance.\textsuperscript{207} Prior to this treaty, the Iroquois led raids against the towns of French and English allied Natives alike, such as Sainte-Marie among the Huron.\textsuperscript{208} Natives would not convert if doing so made them targets. Father Druillettes traveled to the heart of Massachusetts Bay Colony to negotiate with Protestants, who were similarly suffering from attacks by the strong allied Native group.\textsuperscript{209} In this moment, the French missionary allied with the leader of a Puritan family, John Winslow, against this Native threat.

This small window of cooperation is at odds with the language of sermons and literature of the SPG, which ranked Catholics as greater sinners than the unconverted heathen Natives. Catholicism was a direct sin of turning away from God’s will; heathenism was simply a sin of naiveté and brutishness.\textsuperscript{210} Father Druillettes reported of Winslow a “special zeal for the Conversion of Savages.”\textsuperscript{211} Winslow similarly spoke with calculated admiration of the Jesuit.\textsuperscript{212} He understood that the success of the Puritan mission project, despite the undercurrent of anti-popery, depended on securing the safety of converted Natives. Father Druillettes and John Winslow showed rare admiration for each other, a foil to the heated rhetoric of Cotton Mather, “God forbid That a Popish Priest should outdo a Protestant Minister in his

\textsuperscript{207} Gilles Havard et al., \textit{The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century} (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 4.

\textsuperscript{208} Richter, Institute of Early American, and Culture, \textit{The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization}, 120.

\textsuperscript{209} Chmielewski, \textit{The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier}, 23.

\textsuperscript{210} \textit{A Collection of Papers Printed by Order of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts}, 24.

\textsuperscript{211} \textit{The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier}, 23.

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid.
Industry.” In this border region, religious figures understood the nuances of Native political dynamics. They understood the demands of conversion in context of the intersection of a plethora of different interests, not merely categorized as French, English, and Native. Whereas on a larger scale religious societies seemed not to distinguish between Natives, these men did. At this individual level, it became critical to treat the Wabanaki as a unique group, with their own political agenda and cultural needs, unique from the Huron and Mohawk.

The tactics and beliefs of these missionaries were tempered by their environment, forming a hybrid religious identity for many of the adherents of both faiths. Maine residents tended to be poorly versed in Scripture, illiterate or concerned with day-to-day survival more so than study. Very few possessed books, the fundamental basis for Puritan life. Coupled with these challenges, Protestants and Jesuits were directly competing for the same Native souls, and the Jesuits had a head start. Puritan ministers had to combat the decades of Jesuit influence and infiltration. Moreover, they had to contend with the compatibility between Native interests and the services Jesuits provided them. Protestant missionaries oscillated between the increasing pressure of puritanization and the expectations of the Abenaki after their experience with the French as allies and priests. Many in fact adopted similar missionary styles to that of their Catholic counterparts, relying on ritual, and

---

215 Richter, Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America, 86.
216 Ibid.
baptizing without ministering further.\textsuperscript{217} These missionaries had to cater to larger parishes, and could not devote the same tutoring and teaching to these Abenaki.\textsuperscript{218} Letters from missionaries in the area spoke to desperation for funds and men.\textsuperscript{219} Despite believing the practice of Catholics to be sacrilegious, these priests were forced by the Dawnland to evolve and adapt their strategies.

3.2 Politics of Captivity

One defining feature of the landscape of Maine was the fear of captivity. Throughout these decades of violence and expanding and shrinking borders, men, women, and children were uprooted from their homes and forced into captivity. Their accounts detailed their physical and ideological struggles through enemy lands. Captivity narratives serve a two-fold purpose: first, their observations provided a first hand account of their opposing group and revealed their own biases and priorities; second, they reflected the health of the communities of the Dawnland, as some captives assimilated with their captors for security. Captives’ traumatic experiences represent the true test of the tenets of Puritanism and Catholicism as they came to a head in the lives of a few men, women, and children. The trauma, rhetoric, and conversion of these few Protestants exposed the weakness of Puritan missionary work and settlement structure, and increased the anxiety of leaders and individuals alike.

\textsuperscript{217} Chmielewski, \textit{The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier}, 33.

\textsuperscript{218} "Petition Submitted to the General Court by James Gouge, on Behalf of the Town of Wells (Me), Seeking Aid for the Building of a Meeting House and the Support of a Minister, Their Houses Having Been Des."

\textsuperscript{219} "Petition Submitted to the General Court by Stephen Parker Requesting Payment for His Services as a Missionary to the Indians on the Kennebec River (Me) And," in \textit{Felt Collection} (Massachusetts State Archive).
The experience of John Gyles, a captive of the Wulstukwiuk (Maliseet) from 1689 to 1698 reveals the pervasive anti-popery that developed as a result of violence. While farming near Fort Charles and Pemmaquid Falls with his brothers and father, the Wulstukwiuk raided their fields and took him captive. Gyles described captivity vividly, as his father was brutally felled within moments of the raid, and the Wulstukwiuk moved on to sack the fort and nearby towns. After a brief and tearful farewell to his mother, the Wulstukwiuk sold Gyles to the Jesuits. Immediately upon arriving in the Jesuit’s company, the Frenchman offered him hospitality. Gyles wrote that a Jesuit “gave me a biscuit, which I put into my pocket, and not daring to eat it, buried it under a log, fearing he had put something in it to make me love him.” He continued, “Being very young, and having heard much of the Papists torturing the Protestants…I hated the sight of a Jesuit.” Though only nine, Gyles’ parents taught him the language of anti-popery from infancy. The real fear of losing settlers to captivity and Catholicism made parents and leaders instill in their children an absolute hatred of Jesuits. Gyles’ mother responded to the news of his captivity by proclaiming that she would rather see her child dead, and therefore in heaven, than in the corrupting hands of the Jesuits.

Gyles’ depiction of the Wulstukwiuk was that of monstrous, greedy, and sinful people, a far cry from the Massachusetts’s Bay seal depicting welcoming Natives. He detailed the tortures inflicted on captives as if it were sport to the

---

221 Ibid., 12.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid.
Wulstukqiuk; “Sometimes an old shrieveled squaw will take up a shovel of hot embers and throw them into a captive's bosom. If he cry out the Indians will laugh and shout, and say, ‘What a brave action our old grandmother has done.’”

Gyles experienced the Natives through the lens of cruelty for the same reason he described the Jesuit as malicious, because his experience on the frontier taught him to see the Natives in that light. His brother was tortured, as Gyles recounted, force fed his own severed ear and nose before being burnt to death.

Gyles linked the tortures the captives experienced with the larger war between the Natives and English, saying “having lost some friends by a number of English fishermen, [the Natives] came some hundreds of miles to revenge themselves on poor captives.”

The reality of Maine, Acadia, and Wabanakia was a near constant state of hostility, distrust, and fear. Not a ripe bounty of souls envisioned by John Eliot and the SPG when they formulated their missionary strategies, but rather a land of hardening opinions and growing tension, where every individual, from captive to servant to “squaw,” was a soldier for their people. The English that live in Maine no longer sought to save the Abenaki from Catholic influence. With the growth of anti-popery came the association of the Abenaki with the French, and, as exhibited by these narratives, the growth of animosity towards them.

Women and children served a particular purpose as captives, as their vulnerability made them more likely to convert to their captive culture and assimilate. One tenth of men who were captured remained in New France, whereas one third or

---

224 Ibid., 16.
225 Ibid., 22.
226 Ibid., 23.
more of the women captured stayed behind, married, converted, and assimilated.\textsuperscript{227} Whether through force of marriage, incentive of land and money, or the exhaustion and fear of multiple captivities, many Protestant colonists such as Mary Plaisted and Eunice Williams accepted Catholic communion.\textsuperscript{228} Their stories reveal the instability and fluidity of the Dawnland, as not every captive was powerful enough to be granted a swift and safe return. The factors pushing women to convert were not matters of faith but rather a game of security. In this way the politics of captivity and marriage for Protestant women links the need to maintain a powerful imperial presence to the demand to create a strong unique differentiating religious identity. Captives, like Natives, were drawn towards the people that offered them the most security. As much as captives feared losing what made them English—their faith, their language, their practices—they also feared the suffering and hardship of life as a captive, a fear that pushed them to convert.

Hannah Swarton served as an example of woman who maintained resolve through her interrogation and trials at the hands of the Jesuits. The Abenaki in Maine at Casco Bay took her in 1690, during a raid that cost Swarton her husband and son.\textsuperscript{229} Swarton struggled throughout her captivity to maintain her “Englishness,” to live piously. She viewed her captivity as God testing her faith. In a conversation between Swarton and her Native mistress, the Abenaki woman described being born into an English Praying Town before wedding a Canadian Native and converting to

\textsuperscript{228} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 151.
Catholicism. The woman declared “had the English been as careful to instruct her in our Religion, as the French were to instruct her in theirs, she might have been of our Religion... God delivered us into their hands to punish us for our Sins.”

Hannah (or Hannah as depicted by Cotton Mather) reflected on the Native’s words, confessing that perhaps she deserved the suffering she received at the hands of the French and Natives, for her sins of moving away from the core of the colony to the outskirts of Casco Bay where her family had no minister to care for their souls. A shrewd Protestant woman, Hannah understood she needed to demonstrate humility and piety to retain her place in the community of “visible saints.” The Jesuits tried to force her to convert; yet she stayed firm. Hannah was the perfect Puritan model, serving both her role as a woman and a Protestant, deferring to scripture and offering herself up to God’s mercy for her sins.

Cotton Mather heavily filtered Hannah Swarton’s story, as well as that of Mary Plaisted, another Maine captive, as he used them to tell the story of the struggle of Maine’s Protestant settlers. Cotton Mather, a prominent Puritan leader and preacher, chastised the colonists of Maine for straying from the roots of Puritanism. Hannah served as a character for Mather’s parable of the frontier colonist. By his

Cotton Mather and Hannah Swarton., *Humiliations Follow’d with Deliverances: A Brief Discourse on the Matter and Method of That Humiliation Which Would Be an Hopeful Symptom of Our Deliverance from Calamity Accompanied and Accommodated with a Narrative of a Notable Deliverance Lately Received by Some English Captives from the Hands of Cruel Indians and Some Improvement of That Narrative: Whereunto Is Added a Narrative of Hannah Swarton, Containing a Great Many Wonderful Passages, Relating to Her Captivity and Deliverance.* (Boston in N.E.: Printed by B. Green, & F. Allen for Samuel Phillips, 1697), 55.

Ibid., 56.

Chmielewski, *The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier*, 79.
telling, straying from the center of the colony, both physically away from Boston and spiritually away from Puritanism, directly led to suffering at the hands of the Abenaki. The colonists of Maine again served a dual purpose as both a source of frustration for leaders of the Puritan movement as they strayed further from strict study of scripture, and examples on the front lines of the battle between Catholicism and Protestantism. Mather’s method of telling the stories of Swarton and Plaisted emphasized the importance of civility, Englishness, and Protestantism as the only protection for these frontier men and women against the evils of popery and savagery of the Abenaki.

Mary Plaisted served as an example of Cotton Mather’s greatest fear: she converted to Catholicism, perhaps to be reunited with her children, before returning to her Puritan life and abandoning her daughters to the French. Mary was the daughter of the Protestant Reverend John Plaisted of Maine, captured, along with her daughters, in 1692. In *Magnalia Christi Americana* Cotton Mather wrote her tale as a parable of perseverance in the face of unimaginable cruelty. Cotton Mather made it his life’s work to create accounts of the suffering of Protestants in New England, particularly women, at the hands of Natives, witches, and other manner of “dark forces.” He described Mary’s suffering at the hands of her captors, and the loss of her newborn son, murdered by the “savage” Abenaki.

---

234 Ibid., 92.
Rather than explore the dynamics that motivated Mary as a mother to receive baptism, such as attachment to her children, Mather took these same maternal feelings and directed them towards depicting the suffering inflicted on women by French-allied Natives. He never discussed her conversion; to do so would be to discuss the blurring of her English identity. Both her daughters married into Canadian families; after Mary’s return to New England she still held out hope for their safe return. Pragmatism and concern for her converted daughters pushed Plaisted to convert. But Mather preferred to keep her as the ideal Puritan woman. Mather could not explain away her motives as a mother for converting: she did not fit into his mold of a person weak of faith and spirit, so her conversion had to be kept out of his record.

Important to understanding the lives of Hannah Swarton and Mary Plaisted is not only how Cotton Mather used their suffering, but also how they navigated the insecure existence of colonists in Maine. Just as the Abenaki entered into alliances with the French or English at different times out of fear and a need for security, men, women (like Mary Plaisted), and children switched sides at various times. The Acadians of New France notoriously maintained neutrality and let conquerors and allegiances come and go as they continued their day-to-day existence. Captives, not as used by religious leaders, but as they really lived, probably kept this same pragmatism. Mary was more concerned about her safety and that of her offspring than the condition of her soul, just as Hannah understood that if she maintained her Puritan ways, the French would ransom her to prominent Protestant leaders.

238 Chmielewski, The Spice of Popery: Converging Christianities on an Early American Frontier, 93.
3.3 Captivity Case Study: the Williams Family

The captivity narrative of one prominent member of the Puritan community in Maine, John Williams, echoed the fears of John Gyles and Hannah Swarton, but directed toward discrediting Jesuits. Paralleling the rise of the SPG, Williams’ account not only related violence of captivity, but also acted as propaganda to publicize the shortcomings of Jesuit conversion methods. John Williams was a prominent member of the Puritan community, married to a relative of Cotton Mather. His family consisted of his wife and six children, all of whom served as pillars in the community.240 The Mohawk took Williams captive during the Deerfield raid of 1704, as part of Queen Anne’s War.241 The Abenaki and Iroquois allied with the French in a series of revenge raids against the English for the violence and encroachment on their lands at the end of the seventeenth century.242 By this point in the life of the Maine settlement, violence, raiding, torture, and captivity became a harsh and accepted reality of life. Despite the element of surprise that made the Deerfield raid so successful, Williams and his fellow settlers knew and understood the risks they took living on the frontlines of this war. They were soldiers, willing and unwilling, challenging the French in Maine.

242 The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America, 16.
Even after his captivity, Williams returned to Deerfield with a garrison of soldiers to fortify the outpost. After the description of the horrible violence he and his colleagues endured, it is hard to understand what made him move back to this area. As he described, during the raid “some [Natives] were so cruel and barbarous as to take and carry to the door two of my children and murder them...Who can tell what sorrows pierced our souls?” Williams’ journey to the heart of Quebec and back revealed the principles that motivated this God-fearing man to return, despite and because of his losses.

Unlocking the motivation behind Williams’ efforts to survive, thwart the Jesuits, and defy his Native captors is the key to understanding the psyche of English settlers in Maine. Their biggest fear was that the region, and their frontier life, was unraveling their civility. Throughout the account of his captivity, Williams takes on three voices: that of the Puritan preacher, reporter to the governor, and captive experiencing the struggles of removal. The Deerfield raid was a scene of violence, terror, and suffering; Williams’ removal deep into New France only served to deepen these wounds. The Abenaki and Mohawk came at night, surprising the English as they slept. They burnt down houses, beat infants to death, wounded Williams’ wife, and ransacked his home. Williams’ captive voice expressed fear he felt for the safety and future of his family, while the reporter voice accounted for the casualties, lost property, and identity of their attackers. The Natives then led Williams and his

---

243 Ibid., 68.
244 Ibid., 19.
245 Ibid., 4.
246 Ibid., 68.
247 Williams, The Redeemed Captive, 46.
248 Demos, The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America. 69
neighbors into the frontier, claimed by both French and English, but in reality occupied by Natives moving in between the settlements, fleeing European incursion.\textsuperscript{249} Mrs. Williams died shortly thereafter, and Williams’ chief concern became the safety of his children and his neighbors, as the French, Natives, and English alike viewed him as the leader.\textsuperscript{250} Williams was simultaneously a father, a Protestant, and a political figure. Despite the reality of captivity, he attempted to keep up good Puritan practices and maintain them in others. The only thing that kept the English from assimilating and dispersing among the French and Natives, in their minds, was these practices.

For Williams, the safety of his fellow captives included the security of their faith and souls. His account then becomes the concrete reflection of anti-popery and the fear of Protestant conversion to Catholicism.\textsuperscript{251} The death of his neighbors at Deerfield was a manifestation of God’s wrath on the region for their lack of faith. He used his captivity and endurance as a biblical test of his faith, and the account as evidence of his visible sainthood. “I begged of God” he wrote, “to remember mercy in the midst of judgment…that we might have grace to glorify His name, whether in life or death, and, as I was able, committed our state to God.”\textsuperscript{252} Shortly after their capture, Williams interviewed his seven-year old daughter in a rare opportunity to see her after the Natives split them into smaller groups. He urged her to hold her “catechism” close, and remember her studies.\textsuperscript{253} In this intimate moment between father and daughter—one that, at the time, could have been their last—Williams

\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 25.
\textsuperscript{250} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{251} Williams, \textit{The Redeemed Captive}, 48.
\textsuperscript{252} Ibid., 45.
\textsuperscript{253} Demos, \textit{The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America}, 37.
focused on the welfare of her soul above all else. Williams was then separated from his children, and dragged further into New France.

Through Williams’ telling comes the unique perspective of many holy men in this area that Natives acted as agents of God, testing their resolve. Captivity both demonized the Abenaki to captives and revealed their humanity. Williams attributed Native kindness to God’s mercy: “God made the heathen so to pity our children that, though they had several wounded persons of their own to carry upon their shoulders…they carried [them].”254 While viewing Natives as cruel and barbarous, he saw God acting through them for his salvation. He and his fellow English neglected the motivations for Native violence, namely the English decimation of their communities, capturing their children, and spreading disease. During the journey, younger captives struggled from hunger and discomfort, many suffering from frostbite or wounds inflicted by the Natives. When Williams’ son fell ill along the way, his father feared that the Natives would murder him for slowing them down, as he saw them do countless times before. But, as he described, “their savage cruel tempers were so overruled by God that they did not kill [my son].”255 Williams presented a dichotomy: Natives existed both as demons and agents of God’s will. This perception explains much of the push and pull between colonists and Natives over conversion. The Abenaki existed, in the minds of colonists like Williams, in two opposing spaces: as children of God in need of instruction, and monsters ready at any moment to destroy families, homes, and lives.

254 Williams, *The Redeemed Captive*, 47.

255 Ibid., 54.
Williams’ first redemption came when the Natives ransomed him to the French. He expressed gratitude, as the French tended to his wounds, fed him, and offered to help his efforts to reclaim his children; but with this gratitude came a renewed fear of Catholic influence. French kindness did not come without an underlying motivation. The Jesuits immediately began to try and convert him. Williams resisted their efforts, by describing the insidious methods they used to try and convert colonists, and by depicting Natives as doubtful of their teachings. Williams described his trial by the Jesuits, whereby he was dragged to Mass every Sunday and questioned about his faith, in an effort to force his conversion. Williams identified the flaws in the Jesuit system: “One of the Jesuits was at the altar saying Mass in a tongue unknown to the savages.”\textsuperscript{256} In this way Williams mocked the “conversion” of Natives to a service and faith that they could not understand. He then got into a debate with his French captors about the role of scripture versus ritual in faith. They attempted to force him to cross himself, threatening him with death and torture if he disobeyed. He responded “I should sooner choose death than to sin against God.”\textsuperscript{257} Williams depicted himself overcoming Catholic threats, through the power of God, proving once again his status as part of the saved few of the Puritan community.

Captivity hardened Williams’ attitude toward Natives and Catholics, part of a larger trend in the region following decades of violence and uncertainty. Williams’ ability to overcome Catholic trials not only affirmed and stiffened his Protestant resolve, but also helped sharpen the definition of Puritan worship as a foil to Catholic

\textsuperscript{256} Ibid., 61.
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid.
Mass. With each captive taken by the French, the anti-popery of the region grew, and became directed toward not only relaying the cruelty of French and Natives, but also discrediting Catholicism. With the level of Protestant converts relatively low, Williams’ account reflected an attempt to undercut the French narrative of successful conversions by showing their ritualized religion to be hollow. But after witnessing, describing, and mocking the Catholic instruction of Natives, Protestant priests could not co-opt their practices without losing legitimacy. In the Dawnland region that demanded adaptation, and lacked the resources for strict Puritan instruction, increasing animosity of the English toward the French served only to cost them converts. Whereas the loose definition of Catholic conversion mapped well onto the decentralized Dawnland, the English were bound to their scriptural study and Native removal dictates, only made stronger by the resolve of “redeemed” captives, like Williams.

Williams’ dual focus on discounting Catholic dogma while instilling fear in Protestants not to convert came to a head when he discovered that his son had converted to Catholicism. In an exchange of letters between father and son, the two engaged in a dialogue about scripture and dogma. His son began by describing the Jesuits’ efforts to convert Natives, including their deathbed services and the miracles they worked among the Mohawk. John Williams replied, “The Roman Catholic Church can’t be a true church of Christ in that it makes laws directly contrary to the laws and commands of Christ.”258 His son in a last letter apologized to his father for converting and blamed the Jesuits for pressuring him.259 Whether this letter was an

258 Ibid., 101.
259 Ibid., 106.
accurate account of what he wrote to his child, or a further attempt to sell his
sainthood to the reader is unclear. What does come through, however, is the real
struggle of people living in Maine and Deerfield trying to navigate their close
proximity to Jesuit influence.

The reality of this region, as understood from Williams’ account, was a
hardening of animosity toward Catholics and Natives, which influenced conversion
efforts in two important ways. First, the focus of priests and missionaries turned away
from converting these hostile “heathens” and toward maintaining the souls of their
European congregation. Second, despite the importance of adapting missionary
strategies to the frontier region, Williams’ mocking of Jesuit tactics identified the
importance of keeping to strict Puritanism in conversion efforts. Without this
adherence to scriptural study and public confession, conversions lost legitimacy. The
evidence of this need for legitimacy comes from the very motivations that pushed
Williams, and other captives such as Mary Rowlandson, to publish their stories. They
had to account for their actions during their time of captivity, and prove that, despite
crossing borders into Native land and beyond, their faith remained firm. Williams and
Rowlandson begged for any scrap of scripture they could obtain, offering up their
suffering to God.\textsuperscript{260} Their published pieces served as evidence of their visible
sainthood.\textsuperscript{261} As Jill Lepore argues, in this border region far from the control of
Boston and farther still from London, maintaining Englishness and by extension their
Protestant identity became a constant struggle.\textsuperscript{262} The captives were so beholden to
Puritanism that despite trying to adapt for survival and in many cases to gain

\textsuperscript{260} Ibd.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., xiii.
converts, they had to banish any trace of blurring the boundary between Protestantism and French or Native culture from their accounts.263

Eunice Williams, daughter of John Williams, by contrast remained in New France and married into Catholic culture. Her situation, however, was unique from that of Mary Plaisted because her prominent father repeatedly attempted to ransom her from the French, to no avail. John Williams, after his liberation, pleaded with the French for the return of his daughter, but they declared that as she had wed a Native, it was out of their hands; the French did not control the Natives, nor could they prevent the marriage.264 Pierre Cholonec, a French priest, and John Schuyler, an English trader, visited her on behalf of Governor Dudley. They met with Eunice and her Mohawk husband, and begged her to return. As they described, Cholonec “promised…if she would go only to see her father, [he] would convey her to New England, and give her assurance of liberty to return if she pleased.”265 Eunice responded with the Mohawk words “Jaghte oghte,” meaning, in essence, no.266 Eunice “went Native,” marrying a Native, dressing as a Native, speaking Native language, losing her English identity, even changing her name through baptism to Marguerite.267 Eunice represented everything Mather and her father feared would happen to frontier settlers when they lost their catechism.

Unpacking Eunice’s motives for remaining in New France, despite her father’s efforts, demands an understanding of the Kahnawake Iroquois place in the French colonies. These baptized Iroquois lived a syncretic life, both in faith and

263 Colley, Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World 1600-1850, 150.
264 Demos, The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America, 112.
265 Ibid., 107.
266 Ibid.
267 Ibid., 151.
custom, as the Jesuits baptized them into the Catholic faith, yet they maintained the values and beliefs of their Native lives. The Jesuits and French then held the exact opposite values to that of the English. They welcomed blending where the English feared it. This came through at every level, from the foundation of a tolerant Acadia, to the movement of the Jesuits among the Natives, to now the blending of culture through marriage. The Jesuit mission to the Kahnawake was not a Praying Town, but rather the assembling of Iroquois into a religious community for their own benefit. They gained trading channels and the protection of the Jesuits, all without giving up their cultural identity. They lived in longhouses, observed matrilineal inheritance, and blended Christian beliefs with their own. Drunkenness, a sin to the Catholics, became a demon to the Kahnawake.\textsuperscript{268} Eunice became a part of this syncretism, an English captive turned Mohawk wife. Perhaps they offered her security and power; perhaps the flexibility of Catholicism enticed her to convert. But the conversion of the daughter of such a powerful Protestant family was not only a blow to her father, but also evidence that in this region, Catholic life proved more appealing to not just Natives, but high-ranking colonists as well.

Stepping back and explaining the politics of captivity, however, unearths a few key questions. What did the French hope to gain from taking and converting Protestants? The French desire to obtain captives speaks to their stance as an empire in relation, and competition, with the English. The captives were a live audience forced by their captors to experience life in Canada. Hannah Swarton, for example

\textsuperscript{268} Ibid., 130.
was treated quite well by many of the French that fed and “physicked” her.\textsuperscript{269} John Nelson, a captive in Quebec, similarly expressed that he was treated extremely well by the French (until he attempted to sell their secrets to the English).\textsuperscript{270} The French readily adopted Protestant children taken captive in Wabanakia and trained them alongside Abenaki in missions. The French took advantage of the universality of Catholic understanding and prayer to teach these children to be diligent Catholics, claiming that in fact they were overcoming the prejudices their parents instilled in them in New England (such as John Gyles) to embrace baptism.\textsuperscript{271} Children, like women, were the most vulnerable, and least valuable, colonists. Sadly children died so frequently that few children were traded in negotiations for captives. They then became only useful for their conversion in service of imperial goals, and the message it sent about the strength of one faith.

The English, by contrast, took captives like Governor Louis-Alexandre des Friches de Meneval of Acadia during their raids into New France, not to convert them but rather to destroy French power structure. The English, under the command of Sir William Phips, captured Port Royal in Acadia in 1690, taking the governor and decimating remaining French forces.\textsuperscript{272} Phips used these acts of aggression to gain

\textsuperscript{269} Swarton., \textit{Humiliations Follow'd with Deliverances: A Brief Discourse on the Matter and Method of That Humiliation Which Would Be an Hopeful Symptom of Our Deliverance from Calamity Accompanied and Accommodated with a Narrative of a Notable Deliverance Lately Received by Some English Captives from the Hands of Cruel Indians and Some Improvement of That Narrative : Whereunto Is Added a Narrative of Hannah Swarton, Containing a Great Many Wonderful Passages, Relating to Her Captivity and Deliverance.}, 153.
\textsuperscript{270} Donald F. Chard, "Nelson, John," in \textit{Dictionary of Canadian Biography} (University of Toronto).
\textsuperscript{271} "Jacques Bigot to Unidentified Jesuit," in \textit{JR} 65:91.
\textsuperscript{272} Rene Baudry, "Des Friches De Meneval, Louis-Alexandre," (University of Toronto).
the surrender of Acadia and allegiance of French allied Abenaki and Mi’kmaq.\textsuperscript{273} He succeeded in 1693 signing a treaty with the Abenaki and Acadians, yet the English presence in this area was minimal.\textsuperscript{274} Phips’ demonstrated his prowess as a conqueror, a motive absent in the larger coordinated religious effort that characterized French efforts.\textsuperscript{275} The English targeted not the weak but rather the powerful for captivity, as their motives were not religious but territorial. Protestantism relied on purity of faith and demonstrated sanctity, with no room for captives; they only served imperial purposes.

More than this, the French drive to capture and convert and the English fear of losing their Protestant identity exposed the growing polarization between a culture that embraced blending and one that feared it. Anti-popery and fear of violence simultaneously ruled the English frontier, each feeding the other. The French, on the other hand, existed in a state of blending, as Jesuits moved fluidly between Natives and French, and Catholicism became a spectrum rather than a series of strict dictates. For Maine this meant that despite the inability for the terrain to sustain true Puritan studious piety, their very identity as English hinged upon their Protestant culture. Understanding this struggle sheds light on why missionary dictates seemed so incompatible with the dynamics of the region, and why so long after these men and women understood the Natives to be savage and French allied, the SPG continued to send missionaries and funds towards converting them.

\textsuperscript{274} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{275} Ibid., 94.
3.4 Impact of Conversion on the Dawnland

As discussed in Chapter Two, it is difficult to decipher from missionary and captive accounts the extent to which Natives, from the Huron to the Abenaki, embraced the religion into which they were baptized. Their motives for accepting religion speak to the politics of conversion and incentives or threats that pushed them to pray. The Abenaki understood the political dynamics at play between the French and English. They also understood that often times French interests and Jesuit interests were not one and the same, just as Protestant aims and English aims did not necessarily coincide. Understanding Abenaki opinions and experiences is very difficult, as their voice is largely absent from historical record. Examining the lives of those most notable Natives, as well as records of treaties, confessions, conversions, and slaves, reveals the true impact of European religion on the lives of the Abenaki, and why they received it in some moments and violently rebelled against it in others. Christianity did not just change the lives of converts, it also subverted Native culture and customs in subtle ways, as it shifted allegiances, shaped mythology, and changed the fabric of the Dawnland. Understanding first the religious culture that existed in the region before the Europeans arrived, and then the push and pull factors that motivated conversion, reveals why some Abenaki received Catholic baptism, and others Protestant.

Though no extensive record exists of the experience of conversion by the Abenaki, a thorough picture of what that process meant for these individuals can be reconstructed from an understanding of Native religion. The Abenaki believed in

animism; that all things have a spiritual essence.\textsuperscript{277} The Abenaki held that there existed three stages in the history of their people, from their creation out of first stone, and then wood, by \textit{tabaldak},\textsuperscript{278} to the present. They viewed these stages as moving from humans as equal to animals, to the rise of men over animals and natural elements. Each person, during his or her life, had to undergo a “dream vision quest” to acquire powers and spiritual forces from objects and tokens.\textsuperscript{279} Rituals such as marriage, greeting visitors, funerals, and harvests were essential to the Abenaki spiritual community, and this spiritual growth.\textsuperscript{280}

The beliefs of the Abenakai were not stagnant before the arrival of Europeans, and permeated every aspect of their lives. The Dawnland was historically a mosaic, occupied by diverse and decentralized communities, with members of other groups, such as the Fox, entering their communities through marriage or capture.\textsuperscript{281} Europeans fundamentally misunderstood both the Abenaki beliefs that shaped their interactions with Europeans, and the dynamics that formed and shaped their communities. Abenaki mythology accounted for the coming of “white men” from the east signaling the doom of the people of the Dawnland.\textsuperscript{282} While the first invaders did not appear snow white as their myths foretold,\textsuperscript{283} this story impacted reception of the Europeans by the Abenaki. Yet the English, when they first approached the Abenaki, had no idea this myth existed. Similarly, when they viewed the Abenaki community, they did not understand the dynamics that held together such a wide number of

\textsuperscript{277} Day, "Western Abenaki," 157.
\textsuperscript{278} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{279} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid., 158.
\textsuperscript{281} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{283} Ibid.
diverse groups, nor how their coming and proposals of trade would impact these communities.

Abenaki spiritual beliefs permeated their healing practices, community structure, and worldview, all of which were immediately altered by the arrival of white men on the horizon. Even those who did not embrace full conversion were affected by the arrival of European, as their religions formed a syncretism. With the fulfillment of this prophecy, and the influx of European diseases, goods, and alcohol, Abenaki spirituality had to adapt to accommodate these new challenges. The influx of Christianity accelerated this adaptation. The Abenaki could not have envisioned the “sin of Drunkenness,” but the Europeans not only gave them the means to achieve it but the language to curse it. Concepts of sin did not translate into Native culture either, as they based their customs on revenge wars and material restitution rather than a Western construct like morality. Native religion absorbed these ideas—the Trinity, the Rosary, Communion—as part of a larger group of spiritual beings and forces. Catholics took advantage of this compatibility, allowing for this syncretism in order to gain more baptisms.

The Jesuits adaptation of myth was appealing to the Abenaki, as they posed no threat to their land interests or cultural integrity; however, they in fact corrupted Abenaki spirituality from within. While Protestants withdrew their converts from the community, Jesuits planted theirs in the heart of daily Abenaki life, spreading their influence more dramatically and effectively. Father Druillettes asked only three things of those Abenaki he lived among: give up alcohol, live in peace, and cast away

---

284 Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, 82.
285 Ibid., 83.
shamanistic tokens.\textsuperscript{286} These would seem fair requests for the connection to the fur trade and diplomatic relations to the French that Abenaki gained through conversion. They did not have to give up their rituals completely; in fact the Jesuits grafted Christian celebrations onto their preexisting ones.\textsuperscript{287} What was subtler was the way the seeds of religion were planted: as the Jesuits lived among and integrated into the small communities they attempted to convert, they executed these minor changes. They showed the Abenaki the similarities between their beliefs and Catholic dogma. They cured the sick and replaced shamanistic rituals with sacraments, corrupting Native culture from within.

Religion had a dramatic impact on the lives of those Abenaki and other Natives who embraced Protestant conversion because of the level of transformation it demanded. Conversion was a highly traumatic event, particularly for Protestant converts. Discovering everything about the way they lived their lives damned them to an eternity of hellfire and suffering terrified those Natives who truly believed in their conversion.\textsuperscript{288} While still filtered through a European voice, the records of Eliot’s Praying Indians reveal the depth to which the Puritan method of total replacement of Native culture impacted the lives of these Praying Indians.\textsuperscript{289} From the Protestant perspective, animism became idol worship, and ritual celebration of holidays signified devil worship.\textsuperscript{290} This translated into a traumatic conversion for the Praying Indians who had to give up every aspect of their former spiritual foundation and

\textsuperscript{286} \textit{Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England}, 63.
\textsuperscript{287} \textit{Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America}, 82.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{289} Eliot, \textit{Indian Dialogues: For Their Instruction in That Great Service of Christ, in Calling Home Their Country-Men to the Knowledge of God, and of Themselves, and of Jesus Christ}, 2.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid.
replace it with the dictates of the SPG.\textsuperscript{291} One can imagine that these Natives felt cut adrift, losing the guidance of their “dream vision quest,” utterly reliant on the English for instruction and salvation.

Native slaves were in a unique position, as their acceptance of baptism could either raise their status or further their subjugation. Under the Code Noir of 1685, the French required the conversion and baptism of all slaves, Native and African alike.\textsuperscript{292} The French instructed Native slaves, and put masters in charge of caring for the wellbeing of their slaves’ souls.\textsuperscript{293} These converts did not embrace the Catholic sacraments of baptism willingly, but rather because it was the law. By extension, it offered the potential for improvement of their condition as a path to assimilation.\textsuperscript{294} Captives and slaves became converts, and yet the promises of equality in the eyes of the Lord through study and piety clashed with their treatment. While full of hypocrisy, the conversion for the sake of domestication also proved an effective way for Catholic priests to present positive results and increasing baptisms to the French monarchy.

Conversion and citizenship to these colonies came hand in hand, but also raised more questions than answers for Natives who moved within European communities. Europeans saw conversion as a means of subservience, an idea not understood by their converts. The level to which this subservience was realized in

\textsuperscript{291} A Collection of Papers Printed by Order of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 50.
\textsuperscript{293} Ibid. 272
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid. 274
every day life differed greatly between the two empires. When the French demanded they return Eunice Williams, they refused. French identified Natives were able to retain their autonomy. By contrast Protestant Natives became prisoners. The differences stemmed from the demands of conversion. Citizenship in a Praying Town required sacrificing culture, custom, and land, while the French moved within Native communities. Therefore French identification and Native community identification could coexist, while the English demanded Natives sacrifice their identity, becoming instead Eliot’s Indians, or Wheelock’s Indians.

The case of the relationship between John Eliot and his translator speaks volumes to this complexity of reliance, submission, and subjugation in the English colonies. Captured during the Pequot Wars, Cockenoe-de-Long Island served as a slave to an Englishman in Massachusetts before being recommended to John Eliot to act as a translator and language tutor. Eliot described this young Native as a gift from God sent to help him carry out his work evangelizing Natives. In this way Natives served as tools of God’s will, just as they did to the captives in their narratives. The relationship between Eliot and Cockenoe was critical to his missionary project and vision, yet was not one of equals. Eliot described the Natives

295 "Address to the Sagamores of the Eastern Indians, Concerning an Agreement Made with John Hawkins About the Exchange of English and Indian Captives," in Felt Collection (Massachusetts State Archives, 1690).
296 Demos, The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America. 130
as “poor souls,” despite his reliance on them. Just as imperial ambitions created a power vacuum for intermediary tribes to serve as trade brokers, conversion efforts opened the window for Natives like Cockenoe to raise their status, even as slaves, and serve as advisors during treaty negotiations. The intrusion of European religion and culture completely disrupted Native systems. Cockenoe was at one point paid for his services as an advisor, raising himself out of servitude with his skills. While the Europeans viewed their Native slaves and converts as brutish, at least Cockenoe was able to adapt and grow within their new regime.

The complexity of dynamics between colonist and convert in the Dawnland stemmed not only from proximity of different groups but also the impact conversion had on Abenaki culture and identity. Whereas from the perspective of the societies or empires, the distinction between heathen Native, convert, and colonist was neat and clean, in the Dawnland, no individual’s identity clearly fit into these distinctions. Dynamics were also fluid over time—as one law came into effect, the ramifications presented new challenges and needs for the community. Converts went from sovereign to subservient. Religious traditions were corrupted or replaced by European influence. The Jesuits subtly channeled animism and Native ritual into Catholic language, targeting captives and prisoners for conversion. Protestants used their trading power and military strength to pressure converts. Many Abenaki and other Natives adapted to fit into this “New World,” finding new ways to maintain autonomy and exert control. But as the European religious and political competition

298 Ibid. 14
299 Ibid. 37
placed them squarely in the crossfire, the Abenaki had to become increasingly active and at times hostile to defend their community from the encroaching settlers.

### 3.5 Conversion in the Wake of King Philip’s War

The reality of religious life and conversion for the Abenaki and other Natives who accepted baptism was entirely intertwined with their understanding of politics, war, and commerce. Whereas missionaries depicted conversion testimony as a purely spiritual enlightening, the Abenaki fully understood the risks and benefits of their religious allegiances. The French valued the Abenaki as a defense against English attacks—the English similarly courted their alliance to remove this barrier. The Abenaki did not serve as this buffer for religious reasons to the bafflement of colonists and priests, as they switched allegiances and faith. They fully understood the implications of their political maneuvers. Those who fought back against colonial incursion and rebuked conversion efforts did so for their own political ends. Examining these motivations reveals why the Abenaki rejected or accepted certain conversion offers over others. On the whole the souring of relations between Protestants and the Abenaki in the wake of King Philip’s War reflects the Native rejection of Protestant methods and teaching, as evidenced by accounts of the trauma of conversion and building rebellion against religious symbols, influence, and figures.

During King Philip’s War, the English sequestered the Natick Praying Indians on Deer Island outside Boston, an experience that soured their relationship to the

---

300 *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England,* 92
301 "Order from the House of Representatives Confining the "Friendly" Natick, Punkapoag and Hassanamisco Indians to Their Respective Plantations. Included is Authorization to Advane Funds for the Indians," in *Felt Collection* (Massachusetts State Archives, 1706).
English and Protestantism. Natives from Deer Island were routinely kidnapped and sold into slavery, or killed if they tried to leave. One of the Natives who fled the island later described “we say there is no safety for us, because many English be not good, and may be they come to us and kill us…we are sorry for the English have driven us from our praying to god.” John Eliot expressed distress for the treatment of these Natives and their leaving the missionary fold, but the majority of Massachusetts Bay colonists distrusted even these Protestant Natives. The treatment of these captive Praying Indians not only caused other Natives to rebuke conversion efforts, but also exposed the depths to which relations between colonists and Native had turned hostile. Eliot and his missionary colleagues still had hope for the success of conversion efforts, even reprinting his translated Bible in 1685. In a missive sent to colonists Protestant leaders urged the treatment of Natives in a “just, charitable, and kind manner.” There was a fundamental disconnect between the majority experience of life in the region, Native and colonist alike, and the hopes of the missionaries.

303 Ibid., 139.
304 Ibid., 138.
305 "Petition to the Governor and Council from John Eliot Protesting the Selling of Indians as Slaves. Eliot Writes That This Would Prolong the War (King Philip's War); He Uses Religious Scripture to Suppo," in *Felt Collection* (Massachusetts State Archives, 1675).
307 "General Court Order Appointing a Committee to Inquire into the Complaints of the Praying Indians in Their Dispute with the Inhabitants of Marlborough (Ma)," in *Felt Collection* (Massachusetts State Archives, 1684).
Understanding the goals and costs of religious alliance in the aftermath of the wars that tore apart the Dawnland reveals when conversion tactics complemented Abenaki goals, and when they did not. Madockawando, a Penobscot sachem living amongst the Acadians, serves as a perfect example of a power broker, swearing allegiance, but swapping loyalties for his own ends. His story also highlights the extreme disconnect between imperial edicts and frontier dynamics. Madockawando first appeared in the historical record for his relationship with Jean-Vincent d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin, a French military officer who lived among the Abenaki and eventually married Madockawando’s daughter. During King Philip’s War the English, out of fear of their neighbors, preemptively attacked the Penobscot despite their neutrality. In response the Penobscot, and their fellow Abenaki, took up arms against the English. Madockawando threw accusations at the English for their high expectation and low payout to allies. They expected the Natives to fight their wars for them, but could not guarantee that colonists would stay off tribal lands.

Madockawando then demanded something neither French nor English could accept: neutrality, the role of trade partner and nothing more. The English replied “If we sell you Powder…and you give it to the Western Men [Saco and Androscoggin Abenaki], What would we do but cut our own Throats.” While they eventually settled into an uneasy pact, this too fell apart, as Governor Andros of New England attacked Castin, and the Penobscot sachem held his first allegiance to the Frenchmen.

---

310 Ibid. 109
311 Ibid. 109
Madockawando did not hold to his agreement with the French out of loyalty, but rather as an economic calculation, as the French funneled him weapons and fur trade business. The Abenaki continually frustrated the French and English alike for their unpredictability—the Europeans and Natives fundamentally understood allegiance to have two different meanings.\footnote{312}{"General Court Order Rewarding Hugh and Other Eastham Indians on Cape Cod for Their Defence against an Attack by the French," in \textit{Felt Collection} (Massachusetts State Archives, 1697).} Loyalty for the Abenaki was abiding by the spoken agreements at these conferences—for the English and French leaders, existing not in the mosaic of Wabanakia but the black and white world of imperial posturing, the Abenaki had to choose a side.

When Abenaki did convert to Protestantism, the conditions surrounding their submission show the importance of captivity, and vulnerability, to conversion. In the account of Bommaseen, an Abenaki sachem held captive in Boston in 1696, he testified to the evils of French popery to gain favor from his Puritan captors. Whether out of coercion or a calculated understanding of English political needs, Bommaseen fed his captors exactly what they want to hear. He claimed that the French had falsely informed the Abenaki that Jesus Christ was a Frenchmen, crucified by the English. He alleged the French went around poisoning the Abenaki with spiked wine, directing them against the English.\footnote{313}{\textit{Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England}, 72.} Cotton Mather wrote the account of Bommaseen and thus it no doubt reflected his attitude, but also shows the deep linkage between conversion, politics, and trauma. This account of Abenaki revelation and embracing of Protestantism, when juxtaposed with the record of a conference between leaders of the Wabanaki and Massachusetts Bay Colony (wherein they held firm to their new
Catholicism and rebuked Protestant missionary presence) exposes the depths to which vulnerability influenced conversion. During the peace process that followed the wars that ravaged this region, Abenaki leaders emphasized that they wanted nothing to do with Protestant ministers, yet Bommaseen, a captive, embraced them.\footnote{Ibid., 107.} Under duress the Abenaki promised conversion, but with increased incursion and hostility by the English, the Abenaki who remained sovereign rebuked English efforts.

The distrust in the Dawnland became a self-fulfilling prophecy of violence, and utterly undermined missionary efforts. Particularly in a frontier setting with little infrastructure, the missionaries relied on converts to spread their religion on the reputation of their empire. But this reputation was destroyed by the actions of a few committing violence and violating treaties. While the Abenaki were able to separate the Jesuits and Christianity from French interests, and similarly understood that John Eliot was not representative of the larger Massachusetts Bay Colony, this very fact undermined the conversion projects. The interests of empire and missionary were in fact linked and reliant on each other; the acceptance of one, but not the other, rendered both ineffective. Certain characters like Eliot, Saint-Castin, and the Jesuits became invaluable for their connection with the Abenaki—they lived among and understood the Abenaki motives. But for every Protestant connecting with the Abenaki on a personal level there were twenty more English settlers threatening their territorial sovereignty.

**Conclusion**
The Abenaki repeatedly rejected Protestant conversion, evidenced throughout the historical record in treaty negotiations and missionary accounts. Land interests can only partially explain this failure to convert. As shown by Madockawando’s story, the English proved a formidable enough opponent to pull the Abenaki to the negotiation table. Why then did they not embrace the Protestantism that the English viewed not only as foundational for their empire, but also for alliance? As shown by captive narratives, in the Dawnland religious loyalty took a temporary backseat to survival instinct. Some, for whom piety proved advantageous, resisted conversion. For others, captives, women, and children, conversion proved a relief from violence and insecurity. The same motivators are at play in understanding the Abenaki’s resistance to conversion. The English appeared both hypocritical and hostile in their interactions with the Abenaki, as the terrain of Maine proved a poor home for the strict reliance on text and study Puritanism required. And while Jesuit conversions proved more superficial spiritually, their lesser demand for allegiance and loyalty proved better, long term, in maintaining relationships and steadily growing the seed of Catholicism.

The conditions and lived reality of Maine at the end of the seventeenth century, as told by these Abenaki, captives, and priests, shows the true challenges facing those men and women who tried to live by imperial and religious dictates. The identity of the English, as simultaneously part of an empire, part of a Protestant project, and part of frontier society, was contradictory. The demands of life in the Dawnland could not sustain the demands of Puritanism. The hardening of anti-popery made conversion of Natives difficult, if not impossible. And while the hope remained
in the hearts of leaders like John Eliot, and officials in Boston and London, here in the borderland, far from their control, the English struggled to maintain their civility. Priests and missionaries became more engrossed in protecting the souls of English colonists than gaining new Native converts. While Catholicism grew through the taking of captives and alliance with the Abenaki, Protestantism closed ranks. The Abenaki rebelled against the demands of English conversion, preferring the autonomy they retained under French control to life in Praying Towns and on Deer Island. And despite renewed hope after the conclusion of King Philip’s War for peace and conversion, those who lived in Maine and understood the Abenaki knew that bridge was burned.
Epilogue

Written in the margins and text of the Eliot Bible is the history of religious syncretism, subversion, struggle, and stalemate in the Dawnland. Looking closely at the text, Native scholars such as Jessie Little Doe Baird of the Mashpee Wampanoag glean the impression those first Native converts left on the text. Translating the Bible from English to a language with no written component, and no equivalent words for concepts like devil, sin, and serpent, left a gap, a window through which to see into the minds and lives of those who penned it. The word for “sorcerer,” for example, used in the Bible in the context of Leviticus 19:31 “Do not turn to mediums or sorcerers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God,” was replaced by the Wampanoag word for holy man or healer. In this way the English subverted Native culture, using the absence of a concept as an opportunity to undercut their beliefs.

The translation of the word “hell” reveals something entirely different. The Wampanoag believed that the soul lived in the brain or the head, and therefore the biggest torture they could conceive was not the fire and brimstone of English hell but rather an “empty head.” It is unlikely the English that supervised the translation process would have accepted this substitution; the Native translators who took on this project blended their own culture with the text of the Bible to produce the translation. Some scholars, Little Doe Baird included, doubt Eliot participated in the translation process as closely as he reported. The prevalence of vocabulary exclusive to an island off the coast of Massachusetts that Eliot only visited once suggests he outsourced

much of the translation to an unsupervised group of Natives that spoke both Wampanoag and English, giving them liberties to mold scripture.

The Eliot Bible serves as the perfect intersection between imperial, societal, and personal ambition; its life span, from translation to re-printing, mirrors the slow decay of Protestant missionary efforts in the colony. While the Abenaki were ripping pages out of the Bible, stripping Protestant prisoners naked, and forcing them to cover themselves with the scripture, religious leaders in Boston and London ordered a reprinting. Native violence and Protestant hope converged in one volume. The translated Bible started as a Protestant dream, born from the accounts of Purchas and Hakluyt of a land full of ignorant souls, ready to be harvested for Protestantism. Puritan church leaders, escaping to form their City on a Hill in North America, heralded the translation effort as a triumph of Christian industry, the heroic efforts of the Apostle among the Indians. They believed that only through studying text could they convert Natives, a slow effort when it required they speak English to study scripture. This translation was supposed to be the tool for conversion.

Instead it became a tool of frustration and violence. The Abenaki targeted the Bible as a symbol of English aggression and oppression, burning stacks of them, shoving them into the opened stomachs of their tortured captives. The settlers and missionaries who lived in Maine saw this, and understood that the conversion hopes of John Eliot and his brethren were all but lost. They took the remaining Praying Indians and sequestered them on Deer Island to starve, remnants of an abandoned missionary effort. Abandoned not by John Eliot and the leaders of the SPG, but rather

316 Colley, Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World 1600-1850, 145
by those who lived in the region and were supposed to carry out their plans. Leaders in London ordered a reprint of the Eliot Bible in 1685. While reading captive narratives and reports from priests demanding funds, fearing the loss of Protestants to Catholicism, societal leaders could not and would not adapt their methods.

The undercurrent of English identity formation at the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth undermined Protestant conversion efforts. At the imperial level, English territorial expansion coupled with the insecurity of succession brought about by the volatility of the Tudor line, resulted in the placement of boundaries around what was “English” and what was “Catholic.” These lines existed both physically placed on the Dawnland, and scripturally, as Protestants carved out a specific set of religious principles that defined their lives. From the outset the English expansionist project was fraught with contradictions. Leaders hoped to expand in the name of sovereignty, but take property and lands in the name of the monarchy. Settlers hoped to establish their own dominion for religious dissidents, but this rebellion against leadership served as poor foundation for a structured colony. The new Protestant English identity encompassed all these tensions and directed them toward an imperial expansionist goal, to the detriment of conversions, as it set restrictions and expectations on the goal of missionaries.

John Eliot and the SPG had to “propagate” Protestantism in a very specific manner that held anti-popery and scriptural study at the center. As part of a community of visible saints, missionary work served to demonstrate their piety. Successful conversion then brought Natives into this circle of learned and studied holy men and women. This was the hope of the SPG and John Eliot as they formed
Praying Towns, wrote missionary handbooks, and reported to imperial leaders. But unlike the Jesuits, that moved within Native communities and considered ritual the gateway to conversion, the Protestant reliance on studying the written word and purging of cultural identity made conversion slow in the best case, and undesirable in the worst. The Wabanaki used their position between the Catholics and Protestants to their advantage. They joined the Jesuits, as they allowed them to maintain autonomy and sovereignty. They converted when English military pressure proved to be too great. They rebelled against the English when this allegiance was repaid with mistreatment. The inflexibility of Protestantism in the confines of anti-popery prevented them from gaining a convert following.

The lived reality of Maine—the vulnerability, fluidity, and violence in the region—could not sustain these efforts. The priests and settlers of the Dawnland struggled to both maintain their Englishness and expand to reclaim Native souls from the clutches of popery. As conveyed by John Gyles in his interaction with a Jesuit priest during his captivity, residents of Maine were indoctrinated with a hatred of Catholicism, and a fear and distrust of Natives, from an early age.\(^\text{318}\) Maine and Acadia, Jesuit and Protestant did not exist in two separate yet parallel spaces as envisioned by Protestant thinkers like Hakluyt. Jesuits like Father Druilletes crossed in to English space to form alliances against the Iroquois. Some English, like Eunice Williams and Mary Plaisted, married into French and Native communities after captivity. The boundary between English, French, and Native was porous and pliable in the Dawnland, a source of anxiety for the Protestants. This fluidity hardened anti-

---

popery and fear of Natives; rather than opening their communities to Native
cconversion, settlers in Maine closed ranks to keep their own residents from shedding
the constraints of their Protestant English identity.

The French were able to accumulate more baptisms and Native allies by the
end of the seventeenth century than their English counterparts, but these conversions
came with their own troubles. The French had a different definition of a successful
conversion, one that centered on ritual and abandoning a select few Native practices
such as drinking and torture. The Jesuits moved within Native communities, grafting
Catholicism onto Native religious practices to form a syncretism. They explained
God, Communion, even baptism in Native terms, and then reported these baptisms
back to their imperial leaders as conversions. The degree to which these Natives,
from dying infant to captive, understood themselves to be converts is debatable. But
the French did gain military and economic alliances through the connections the
Jesuits forged in these communities, a trust strengthened by baptism.

The English argued that French conversions were superficial at best. From
their perspective, a successful conversion changed the core of Native identity, and
therefore services preached in Latin and sacraments delivered to ignorant followers
only scratched the surface. Yet time and again the Abenaki chose to side with the
French and Jesuits, religiously, militarily, and economically. Religious conversion
was not separate from an understanding of the benefits of alliance. And when the
French offered the autonomy demonstrated by captive negotiations and the ability of
the Kahnawake to retain their ritual culture, and the English offered captivity on Deer
Island, the choice of Catholicism became clear. Natives joined Praying Towns and

---

Protestant communities to gain English protection, and under threat of English violence. Yet even this incentive could not combat the behavior of settlers continually encroaching on Abenaki lands, and the treatment of these converted Abenaki.

Only a dozen or so of the first printed Eliot Bible remain intact. Scribbled in the margins of some are the notes and thoughts of those first converted Abenaki that read the translated scripture and embraced the trauma of conversion. These men and women learned English concepts of sin and prayer and transformed their lives to fit within the confines of Puritan society. Yet the vision of Eliot and the SPG, of Natives moving into Praying Towns, learning English, studying scripture, and instilling this in their children, did not come to fulfillment of the Dawnland. The Abenaki fought and rebelled against English incursion, allying with the French and other Natives to protect their sovereignty. English conversion efforts fell short of their goal both because settlers could not carry out Puritan dictates and make massive conversion efforts and the Abenaki themselves rebuked missionary attempts throughout New England to sequester them in Praying Towns. The contact with the French afforded the Abenaki a powerful ally, one that required a lesser sacrifice and greater reward for baptism.
Works Cited

Primary Sources:

"Address to the Sagamores of the Eastern Indians, Concerning an Agreement Made with John Hawkins About the Exchange of English and Indian Captives." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1690.


"Copy of a Petition to King Charles I, from Robert Mason, Proprietor of the Province of New Hampshire, Presenting a Chronology of the Settlement of New England, and Discoursing at Length on the Transgressions." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archive, 1691.


———. *The Learned Conjectures of Reverend Mr. John Eliot Touching the Americans, of New and Notable Consideration, Written to Mr. Thorowgood*. 1660.


"General Court Order Appointing a Committee to Inquire into the Complaints of the Praying Indians in Their Dispute with the Inhabitants of Marlborough (Ma)." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1684.

"General Court Order Rewarding Hugh and Other Eastham Indians on Cape Cod for Their Defence against an Attack by the French." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1697.

"General Court Vote Directing That Inquiry Be Made in the Province in Order to Insure That They Are Protestant, Suggesting That They Be Required to Take an Oath Of." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1692.


Hubbard, William. *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England from the First Planting Thereof in the Year 1607 to This Present Year 1677, but Chiefly of the Late Troubles in the Two Last Years, 1675 and 1676 to Which Is Added a Discourse About the Warre with the Pequods.* Boston 1677.


"Mr Pritchard to the Secretary." In *Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel microform:* Lamont, Harvard University Archives, 1704.


"Order from the House of Representatives Confining the "Friendly" Natick, Punkapoag and Hassanamisco Indians to Their Respective Plantations. Included Is Authorization to Advanve Funds for the Indians." In *Felt Collection: Massachusetts State Archives,* 1706.

"Original and Attested Copy of a Treaty between the English and the Eastern Indians. Included Are Agreements with the Indians That No Alliances Will Be Made
with the French; Submission to the Massachus." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1693.

"Petition Submitted to the General Court by James Gouge, on Behalf of the Town of Wells (Me), Seeking Aid for the Building of a Meeting House and the Support of a Minister, Their Houses Having Been Des." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1700.

"Petition Submitted to the General Court by Several Inhabitants of the Province Requesting That the Laws against Anabaptists Continue in Force So That They Will Be Prevented from Entering the Colony." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archive, 1646.

"Petition Submitted to the General Court by Stephen Parker Requesting Payment for His Services as a Missionary to the Indians on the Kennebec River (Me) And." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archive.

"Petition to the Governor and Council from John Eliot Protesting the Selling of Indians as Slaves. Eliot Writes That This Would Prolong the War (King Philip's War); He Uses Religious Scripture to Suppo." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archives, 1675.


"Report of the Commissioners Sent to Meet with the Kennebeck (Norridgewock) Indians to Discuss Land and Trade Disputes, Problems of Indian Drunkenness and French Attempts to Incite the Indians Against." In *Felt Collection*: Massachusetts State Archive, 1720.


**Secondary Sources:**


Chard, Donald F. "Nelson, John." In *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*: University of Toronto.


