



**Department of History and Civilization**

**Métissage in New France: Frenchification, Mixed Marriages and Métis as Shaped  
by Social and Political Agents and Institutions 1508-1886**

**Devrim Karahasan**

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of  
Doctor of History and Civilization of the European University Institute

Florence, July 2006

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## Abstract

This thesis deals with *métissage* in New France and Canada from 1508 to 1886 - i.e. the process of cultural, social and political encounter between Indians and French and respective conversion and marriage policies, their mixed unions and derived mixed-blood offspring, the Métis and Halfbreeds. In 1508, first Indians were taken captive and brought to France; in 1886, the *Act of Savages* legally distinguished between “Indians” and “Metis” in Canada. Within this timeframe, colonial processes and policies of *métissage*, among which mixed marriages were the culmination point, are analysed.

The theoretical framework of the history of concepts is employed in order to show how concepts on “race” changed and varied in the *longue durée* of four centuries, and how they were constructed and used in different contexts. It is held that the history of concepts is the perfect tool to analyse *métissage* as a concept that evolved over time, was discursively constructed and historically practiced. *Métissage* is treated as a Franco-Canadian rather than an Anglo-Canadian phenomenon. The fact that it was the French who pursued an officially backed policy of mixed marriages refers to Samuel de Champlain’s exclamation towards the Huron tribe in 1633: “Nos garçons se marieront à vos filles, et nous ne ferons qu’un peuple.” Yet, rather than leading to a French nation overseas through mixed marriages, the unexpected result were Metis individuals and Metis communities that expressed nationalist demands.

The premises, main questions and theoretical assumptions are posed in order to trace the development of *métissage*, the conflicts it engendered, and the ambivalences and contradictions inherent within it. An interpretation of *métissage* is offered in which *métissage* is considered as a policy to extend supremacy to distant corners of the world, to incorporate native peoples into this design and to, thus, cement colonial power relations. It is held that *métissage* is a concept imbued with racist thinking, which found its realisation in colonial policies in order to assimilate Indian populations to French culture. The concept of *métissage* has appeared in numerous discourses throughout history to describe cultural encounter and race mixture. While being ambivalent in meaning - itself a typical quality of a concept - it points to the colonial encounter of people of so-called different cultural “worth” and societal standing.

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# Introduction

## 1. The Topic: Encounter of Indians and Whites

The “dark, glancing, fearless eye, alike terrible and calm; the bold outline of his high, haughty features, pure in their native red.”

**James Fenimore Cooper<sup>1</sup>**

In his seminal book *La pensée métisse* Serge Gruzinski posed the question: “Comment penser le mélange?”<sup>2</sup> To think mixture in its many dimensions and particulars is to analyse the interplay of the sexes and races as they evolved from purity to blending of previously distinct parts. In the colonial world in particular, this is a writing of the history of love, power and war between conquerors and conquered. In New France, this intricate process gave unexpectedly birth to mixed-blood offspring and to their formation into communities. The occurrence of the “Metis” as a new self-declared nation in Canada heralded the fear of loss of power and status of established White and Indian groups and individuals. The presence of nationalist mixed-blood offspring seemed to question the supremacy performed by mostly white masculine races, which were rivalling over new territories, positions and women. In Canada, the dictum of “pure in their native red” had indeed turned into “mixed in red and white”: Indians and Whites met, mingled and formed a new people that came to be called “Metis”. Analysing the process that led to and was inspired by métissage in New France is a journey through the cultures and religions of indigenous tribes<sup>3</sup> and those of Europeans from the continent: Indian women, tribal chiefs and medicine men on the one hand, White settlers, colonial officials and missionaries on the other. With the arrival of the latter groups, Indians saw the coming of a new age, which radically altered their lives in North America.<sup>4</sup> Henceforth, American Indian tribes were no longer competing among themselves over the vast territory, but were faced with the presence of Whites who had hunger for soil and human resources, which they wanted to agriculturally, commercially and humanly exploit. When one of the first French settlers, the apothecary Louis Hébert, joined explorers Pierre de Gua du Monts and Samuel de Champlain in their expedition of 1604, the former was not only impatient to help advancing French colony building. He was equally interested in exploring the North American flora and fauna to

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<sup>1</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (New York, 1986), pp. 52-53.

<sup>2</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *La pensée métisse*, Paris 1999, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> The expression “indigenous tribes” reflects the diversity of Indians. However, I have given preference to the term “Indian” throughout my text nevertheless, while being aware of the colonialist bias inherent within it.

<sup>4</sup> There are numerous descriptions of dream visions in which Indians saw that destruction and devastation would come with the “White man”.

render it useful for medicine production to the advantage of the metropolis. This sort of métissage that took place in product exchange was one of the precursors of sexual métissage between men and women. In fact, only the unions between White men and Indian women made this product exchange possible, because the former got in contact with what the latter had been familiar with for hundreds of years before European arrival.

The present work is both a narrative and an analysis. It focuses on Frenchmen who came to the New World to seize territories, to convert indigenous tribes and to trade with them. Many traders met Indian women, had sexual relations with them or married them.<sup>5</sup> In many cases unexpectedly, but also in full consciousness of mutual love Metis children emerged. From the meeting of Whites and Indians to their mixture derived, in fact, the emergence, construction and perception of a new identity that came to be finally embedded in mixed communities. This process had been accompanied by strategies of missionaries and colonial officials who had worked at assimilating and evangelising tribes, partly by means of mixed marriages. This phenomenon is commonly described as “métissage” - grasped in our context as intercultural encounter and biological as well as social mixture, both spontaneous as well as guided, of mostly White men and Indian women - in France’s North American colony of New France. The analysis begins in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the first capturing of Indians to France. It then treats the volatile policy of mixed marriages in the colony and the subsequent emergence of the mixed-blood concept “Métis” in the 17th century. This concept was defined a century later by the French *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* as “humans engendered by a father and a mother of different quality, country, colour or religion.”<sup>6</sup> According to the Trévoux definition, mixed-bloods were not only characterized by the fact of being mixed in numerous respects, but above all by the respective different “qualities” of their parents from their two origin cultures. Applied to the context of Canadian métissage, this definition implies that the cultures of Whites and Indians involved in the process were not viewed as equal.<sup>7</sup> The definition refers to different social status, different “quality of blood” or different character or mentality of partners involved in mixture. *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française du Seizième Siècle* held that the “métis” were offspring of “unequal families”. Similarly, *Furetière* stressed the importance of social status and cited the example of the offspring of a Moor slave and a

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<sup>5</sup> Among English settlers this earned them the label of “squaw men”.

<sup>6</sup> Trévoux, *Dictionnaire universel* (Paris, 1743): “hommes engendrez de père et de mère de différente qualité, pays, couleurs ou religion”.

<sup>7</sup> Saliha Belmessous, *La vision de l’indigène américain dans la correspondance officielle des autorités françaises et britanniques de l’Amérique du nord (1672-1760)*, DEA EHESS (Paris, 1992).



Spanish freewoman.<sup>8</sup> In Canada, the fact that Indians were considered as being inferior to incoming Whites became apparent in discourse of Frenchmen wanting to convert, assimilate and francize the former. Métissage encompassed each of these strategies, which a colonial power applied towards an indigenous population in order to assimilate it to its own culture and to render it useful and instrumental for long-term aims of expansion, exploitation and acculturation.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, colonial practice implied that métissage was a sexual encounter and subsequently led to mixture of ethnic groups.<sup>10</sup>

In the Canadian context, the term “métissage”, not merely because it is a French word, refers to a Franco-Canadian rather than an Anglo-Canadian phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> Scholars of Canadian race mixture are inclined to value the French over the British experience. There is an ideologically imbued acceptance that the French were more co-operative and tolerant towards Indian tribes and favourable to mixing with them.<sup>12</sup> The French are described as more friendly towards the Indians, and those in turn, as more benevolent towards the French.<sup>13</sup> The debate is dominated by the assumption that it was the French who applied an official policy of métissage, albeit inconsistent and ambivalent, in order to realise colonial goals. The Anglo-Canadian interest towards race mixture, i.e. miscegenation, did not attain the same degree of scholarly attention due to lower quantitative dimensions and the more negative image of the

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<sup>8</sup> *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française du Seizième Siècle*, éd. Edmond Huguet, Tome Cinquième (Paris, 1961). Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire usuel contenant généralement tous les mots français et tant vieux que modernes et les termes de toutes les sciences et les arts* (La Haye-Rotterdam, 1690-1701): “Cet enfant est mestif engendré d’un père esclave et d’une mère libre, d’un More et d’une Espagnole.”

<sup>9</sup> “Acculturation” understood in the sense of the ethnologist Herskovits as “appearances which result from the direct or permanent contact between groups of individuals of different culture, and in addition the thereof resulting changes in the typical behaviour and thinking of one of the affected groups.” See Melville Herskovits, *Les bases de l’anthropologie culturelle* (Paris, 1967), p. 216.

<sup>10</sup> Yet, “Indians” were composed of many different nations and tribes. The “French”, on the other hand, came as Normans, Bretons, Savoyards and others. These tribal identities are often neglected when single-mindedly pointing to the “French nation” or “Indian nations”.

<sup>11</sup> There is no evidence of Anglo-Indian métissage before 1719, even 1716, in official documents of the kind of Louis XIV edicts, Samuel de Champlain’s dictum towards the Huron tribe or the New France trading companies’ declarations, each of which refer to mixture with Indian tribes. There is one letter, which mentions British marriage policy with Indians in Acadia in 1719. See John B. Brebner, “Subsidized intermarriage with the Indians: An incident in British colonial policy”, in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 6 (1961), p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Guillaume Aubert, “The Blood of France”: Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World”, in: *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 61, no 3 (July 2004).

<sup>13</sup> “...le nom français a toujours résonné agréablement aux oreilles des indiens des deux Amériques. (...) les Français surent se faire aimer et respecter des aborigènes. “ in: Narcisse E. Dionne, “Français et sauvages. Leur amitié. “, in: *Revue Canadienne*, vol. 26 (1890), 704-718, p. 704. Likewise Comte de Chateaubriand: “Les Français s’habituent facilement à la vie sauvage, et sont fort aimés des Indiens.” in: Chateaubriand, *Œuvres Complètes*. Tome 6, Mélanges Littéraires, Paris 1831, p. 419; and Pierre de Charlevoix: “Les Anglais dans le peu de temps qu’ils furent maîtres du pays, ne surent pas gagner l’affection des sauvages. “ cited by Chateaubriand, p. 419.

British in indigenous minds.<sup>14</sup> In fact, it was the French explorer Samuel de Champlain who had explicitly addressed the Hurons in 1633 on behalf of the French King Louis XIII with the following prophetically expressed words, “Nos garçons se marieront à vos filles et nous ne ferons qu’un peuple”. This proof of France’s official desire to mix with Indians has led to the focus of the present study on French North America. After 1763 when the city of Montréal was seized to the British, the study is amplified to include further contexts of métissage and an analysis of the concept of “Metis”. Past works on métissage had mainly focused on the social conditions of and the role of women in métissage,<sup>15</sup> on the tribes and nations that have been involved in the process of racial and cultural mixing and on emerging mixed-blood individuals and communities as a result of this mixing. Although there is an extensive array of studies on several aspects and dimensions of French colonial policy of métissage and of the Métis in Canada,<sup>16</sup> they fail to describe systematically the changing and volatile policies of state and church authorities in the *longue durée*, decrees and policies concerning mixed marriage and the discussions on the extent and nature of métissage. The question of how a mixed-blood identity in Canada was discursively and practically constructed and subsequently either accepted - even welcomed - or rejected by contemporaries and later historians needs to be highlighted.<sup>17</sup> Such aspects of métissage are essential for an in-depth examination of Euro-Indian encounter, the respective politico-administrative measures and the outcome of a new socio-legal and ethnological category for mixed-bloods.<sup>18</sup> This study seeks to fill this gap.

In the face of the many intricacies of colonial reality in Canada, métissage was introduced after previous assimilation strategies had failed. Yet, in this perspective métissage is not equated with assimilation, rather it is seen as one of the means with which the French state

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<sup>14</sup> With the exception of the famous case of Pocahontas, who was either married to John Smith or John Rolfe. See also Karen Ordahl Kupperman (ed.), *America in European Consciousness 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> Most prominently see the path breaking works by Sylvia van Kirk. Next to *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society in Western Canada 1670-1870*, Winnipeg 1980, see also her article: “From “Marrying-In” to “Marrying-Out”. Changing Patterns of Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Marriage in Colonial Canada”, in: *Frontiers*, vol. 23, no 3, (2002), pp. 1-11.

<sup>16</sup> See above all Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissage. Indiens et Français dans le Pays d’en Haut 1660-1715* (Paris, 2003); Saliha Belmessous, *D’un préjugé culturel à un préjugé racial: la politique indigène de la France au Canada* (Paris, 1999) and Cornelius Jaenen, “Miscegenation in Eighteenth Century New France”, in: Barry Gough/Laird Christie (eds.): *New Dimensions in Ethnohistory. Papers of the Second Laurier Conference on Ethnohistory and Ethnology* (Ontario, 1983).

<sup>17</sup> Jacqueline Peterson, Jennifer Brown and Olive Dickason have mainly focused on the 18th and 19th century Great Lakes region. Other scholars, such as Cornelius Jaenen and Isabelle Perrault, have dealt with 17th and 18th century New France, and Gilles Havard with the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Pays d’en Haut or the “Upper Country”.

<sup>18</sup> For other French colonies in later periods see the study on the legal category for mixed-blood individuals by Emmanuelle Saada, *La “question des métis” dans les colonies françaises: socio-histoire d’une catégorie juridique (Indochine et autres territoires de l’Empire français: années 1890 - années 1950)*, EHESS (Paris, 2001).

tried to enhance assimilation to white French culture as the presupposed and desired dominant culture to be spread in North America.<sup>19</sup> Métissage was both a *form of policy* and a *socio-political reality*, with pertinent consequences for new territories rather than being restricted to a theoretical, intellectual or humanistic concept in the void.<sup>20</sup> Métissage was not formulated as an explicit colonial programme - if we take Champlain's exclamation rather as a guarded intention - but it nevertheless came to reign in territories that saw the encounter of different groups, nations and races, inherent with a triple inequality - that between men and women, that between Indians and Whites and that between colony and metropolis - in terms of power, knowledge and resources. Furthermore, shifts in métissage policy and reality occurred and the task is to explain when and why these happened. The point is precisely to demonstrate that métissage was neither a consistent or linear policy, nor a straight process towards Indian assimilation to Frenchness. Rather this process was marked by discontinuities, inequalities and ambivalences. New France, in fact, provides an exemplary situation in order to explain the changing trends of métissage. Thus, the aims of métissage politics are compared to their actual results; previously neglected contradictions, conflicts and failures inherent in métissage policies in New France are revealed that were volatile and inconsistent. Conflicts were, for instance, prevalent because those who engaged in mixed marriages and mixed relationships without state and church sponsorship or consent were faced with a range of obstacles, hostility or outright rejection. The debates and discussions that the celebration of mixed marriages engendered on an official and a practical level are highlighted, and it is explored why they were accepted in some cases and rejected in others and how they established new social and political orders, either with or without the express approval of authorities.

Furthermore, the extent to which French agents held different opinions in their attitudes to métissage and their endorsement of particular policies of mixed marriages are analysed. Not only were the French competing with their British rivals in terms of colonial performance, but French agents also competed themselves over the best strategies in order to either realise métissage in the colony (whenever it was deemed useful) or to prevent it from happening (whenever it proved counterproductive to intended aims). There existed considerable discontent as to implementing policy schemes with regards to métissage. The question is

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<sup>19</sup> See also Sherene H. Razack: "Introduction. Droit, espace et racialisation. La fabrique d'une colonie de peuplement blanche/Law, Race and Space. The Making of a White Settler Nation", in: *Revue Canadienne Droit et Société/Canadian Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 15, no 2 (2000).

<sup>20</sup> Roger Toumson, *Mythologie du métissage* (Paris, 1998). Jacques Audinet, *Le temps du métissage* (Paris, 1999). René Duboux, *Métissage ou barbarie* (Paris, 1994).

under which specific conditions métissage as a strategy was at times dismissed. An analysis of the sources reveals that agents sometimes opted against mixed marriages when they saw that the envisaged goal of assimilation was not matched. In fact, while Indian assimilation was promoted throughout the whole period of the French regime, Euro-Indian marriages were at intervals disapproved of since they were considered to hinder the French assimilation project. In New France, the policy of mixed marriages therefore had never been a value in itself, but they were composite to the official aim to assimilate Indians to French culture.

Guiding questions are: how did political and social agents involved in colony building understand “métissage” and how did they want to see it implemented into life of the colony? How were métissage politics and policies linked to other forms of empire building? In how far did attitudes towards “métissage” differ according to the agents and institutions involved and how far did their co-operation and competition shape the process of métissage? How did métissage contribute to and establish French hegemony in Canada before it was superseded by British dominance? How can one account for the failure of métissage in New France in terms of low numbers of Christian converts, scant acceptance of official marriage policies and the virtual non-acceptance among Indians of French language and customs? How did the concept of “Metis” come into being as a result of discourses on and descriptions of mixed bloods and the negotiations of select Metis leaders? Further issues are how this concept and identity and respective communities evolved, how this was perceived by contemporaries and observers and why this new identity did not wholly merge into White or Indian society. The study follows an “order of things”; although respective measures were not enacted in chronological manner, rather they overlapped. The narrative begins with the taking of Indians to France where they were exposed to French manners and were supposed to become multipliers of French culture in the colony. Parallel to this measure, the French initiated settlements of French colonists in New France and tried to entice Indians to settle in their vicinity. The narrative proceeds by showing further strategies employed by the French in order to build the colony by augmenting its population size through assimilation and frenchification measures: civilising, instructing and converting Indians, and finally mixed marriages between French and Indians, as well as marriages of French colonists and French brides from the metropolis.

In general, the goal of assimilation was inscribed into a grander design of colonizing and restructuring newly discovered territories along the example of the French metropolis under

the precepts of “profit”, “status” and “mission”.<sup>21</sup> European expansion was designed to extent power, gains and influence of European monarchies in distant corners of the world. Expansion meant that cultures and populations hitherto unaware of each others’ existence came into contact, often in violent circumstances.<sup>22</sup> France never formulated a coherent colonial doctrine on which basis to act, however.<sup>23</sup> Its colonial endeavour had economic, political, cultural, social, religious and administrative facets that seemed unrelated with each other. The only common denominator was the notion of “assimilation”, later accompanied by “association”.<sup>24</sup> The purpose was to render colonies not only useful, but also similar to the mother country in institutions and reigning ideologies of religion, civilisation and education, and to attach it through institutions and government. In 1874, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, one of the prominent theoreticians of French colonization, explained this process from hindsight in the following terms, by borrowing understandings of imperial power from the ancient Greeks and Romans: “Colonisation is an expansive force of a people, it is its power to reproduce, its dilatation and multiplication through spaces, it is the submission of the universe or a vast part of it to one language, to its customs, its ideas and its laws. A people that colonizes, is a people, which throws the assets of its *grandeur* into the future and of its coming supremacy.”<sup>25</sup> Prime to this understanding was national prestige, which held a prominent role since the times of Cardinal de Richelieu with a growing consciousness making of the nation as a value and a concept to be defended. In this discourse, the modern idea of the nation was to become the culmination point of civilization and its declared values of honour, grandness and stability were to be mobilised and strived for. In France, this was enforced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century after a major French military defeat against Germany in 1870/71 in order to be able to draw on a new feeling of *grandeur*.<sup>26</sup> Since France was interested in *gloire*, its self-declared “*génie civilisatrice*” was

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<sup>21</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, “Entstehung der Kolonialreiche”, in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch: Kolonialismus und Kolonialreiche: Teil I*, 34. Jg. 3 Vj. (1984), 241-246, p. 243.

<sup>22</sup> Frédéric Mauro: *L’expansion européenne 1600-1870*, Paris 1996.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Grupp, “Das Kolonialreich der französischen Dritten Republik”, in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch*, 34, Jg. 3. Vj. (1984), 282-288, p. 282. Although Grupp deals with the Third Republic his argument is valid for earlier periods as well, and, he, in fact, makes a general statement on French colonial policy as a whole.

<sup>24</sup> Hubert Deschamps, *Méthodes et Doctrines Coloniales de la France* (Paris, 1953).

<sup>25</sup> Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes*, 5th edition (Paris, 1902), vol. 2, p. 704 (identical with 1st edition in 1874). The French original reads: “La colonisation est la force expansive d’un peuple, c’est la puissance de reproduction, c’est sa dilatation et sa multiplication à travers les espaces; c’est sa soumission de l’univers ou d’une vaste partie à sa langue, à ses mœurs, à ses idées et à ses lois. Un peuple qui colonise, c’est un peuple qui jette les assises de sa grandeur dans l’avenir et de sa suprématie future.”

<sup>26</sup> See Deschamps, *Méthodes*, and Lüsebrink, *Métissages*.

less intended - even in the early modern period - to enrich the mother country in the first place than to demonstrate its superiority to far away peoples in distant regions.<sup>27</sup>

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, first economic exploitations on the North American continent had led to change in the mentality of Natives and their view of the world at the face of unprecedented developments bringing about new economies and social orders. Yet, systematic re-education in terms of new national values and colonial styles was to take a long time. According to 19<sup>th</sup> century writer Léopold de Saussure, who was backing the French colonial mission, “national character” evolved in a long process, only at the end of which a “race historique”, composed of “sentiments”, “intérêts” and “croyances” emerged. De Saussure was aware that attempts to assimilate a foreign race could lead to merely superficial adaptations on the side of the Natives.<sup>28</sup> This was not only true of language, he held, but also of religious beliefs and cultural customs. The understanding with hindsight that assimilation in colonial context was destined to produce meagre results is unsurprising. Yet, at the time of contact most French authorities had disregarded any objection to cultural conquest in the colonies.<sup>29</sup> They had been eager instead to realize assimilation plans and were driven by the expectation that Indians would adopt Frenchness and form a single “one nation” with the incoming French. This aim was peaceful in intent, but it did not anticipate that Indians would react with hostility, repugnance and disinterest in order to preserve their age-old cultures from alien intruders. What began as repulsion often ended in destruction, and native balance was considerably shaken.<sup>30</sup>

Métissage implied the very attempt on the side of the French to impose language, customs and religion upon foreign tribes.<sup>31</sup> The core of the métissage process consisted in the policy

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<sup>27</sup> It is no accident therefore that British and Dutch colonial endeavours turned out to be economically more prosperous. Voltaire’s bitter polemics on the wasteful Canadian experiment seemed to have a rightful place.

<sup>28</sup> “Ce n’est qu’en apparence qu’un peuple transforme brusquement sa langue et sa constitution, ses croyances et ses arts.” Léopold de Saussure, *Psychologie de la colonisation française dans ses rapports avec les sociétés indigènes* (Paris, 1899), p. 51. James Axtell has held that the numbers of converts and the addition of baptisms, communions and Christian weddings actually said little on conversion successes since such numbers could hardly tell whether Christian values were internalised by proselytes. Axtell, 1982, p. 35. There is reason to believe that many Indians just pretended to have adopted Catholicism in order to satisfy the zeal of missionaries and to escape further harassments.

<sup>29</sup> Such as that expressed by philosophers such as Montaigne in the 16<sup>th</sup> and Voltaire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>30</sup> Urs Bitterli: “Begegnung, Beziehung und Zusammenstoß von Kulturen”, in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch*, Nr. 3 (1984), p. 235.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Grupp traces the will to impose French culture from its beginnings of the “gesta dei per francos” of the crusades through the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries up until the revolution of 1789. Grupp, *Kolonialreich*, p. 283.

and practice of mixed marriages,<sup>32</sup> which signified the failure of previous tactics in settling, converting and francisizing Indians in order to assimilate them to French lifestyle. Since the latter three strategies - settlement, conversion and frenchification - accompanied the means of mixed unions as part of assimilating Indians, it makes sense to subsume them under the heading of métissage. Métissage thus does not only denote mixture in historical context, but it accompanies the struggle over superiority and inferiority and the conflict over the separation of public and private:<sup>33</sup> while encounter and mixing of Indians and Whites engendered new ways of living, they also made apparent conflicts between private realms to be protected (such as in religious and marriage rituals) and public spheres of influence and domination through policy schemes, laws and prohibitions. As such, mixing was a debated issue because even for those who favoured it, it meant the merging of peoples, which were considered different, indeed unequal. The aim of mixing was not to acknowledge or respect the other but rather to make it disappear, giving primacy and priority to all things European. The irony is that the seeds of failure of this conception were already planted at the beginning. Precisely because it represented a foreign and inferior element in the eyes of White colonialists, rather than disappearing the native population remained omni-present. Mixing produced a new category, that of the Métis, whose biological and cultural heritage remained distinct from that of the colonialist. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not only the French imposed this distinction. The Métis themselves who claimed to be a „distinct indigenous people“ also revindicated their status. In part, this revindication was possible because the superiority of Europeans was hard to sustain in an environment in which they were a minority that depended on the Indians for their survival and that often adopted native customs and ways of life. This revindication was also possible because, despite fusion, what remained distinct and un-dissolvable, first in the eyes

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<sup>32</sup> This was at some time not only encouraged by the French state and its authorities, but also by fur traders, mostly of French origin, i.e. the North West Company. The English-speaking Hudson's Bay Company came under increased pressure at the face of trading advantages to be gained from an allowance for intermarriage and therefore lifted its prohibition of mixed marriages towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A British policy directive preceded this in 1719, which spoke of encouragement of mixed unions. See Brebner, *Intermarriage*, p. 33-36. Brebner believes that the policy objective of allocating money and territory to subjects of Her Majesty who married an Indian woman or man was never actually acted upon. Geoffrey Plank argues, "in 1719 the British Board of Trade directed Philipps [governor of Nova Scotia from 1718 onwards] to adopt measures designed to lead, in the long run, to the full incorporation of the Mi'kmaq into British colonial society." See Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest. The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 69f. The author even argues that Philipps became governor "with the assimilation of the Mi'kmaq as an official, long-term aim." He concludes, however, that Philipps could not successfully adopt this policy since some New England fishermen established permanent colonial settlements along Nova Scotia's Atlantic Coast, which aroused Mi'kmaq resistance and led to war in 1722. The peace treaties of 1725 and 1726 finally acknowledged that the Mi'kmaq could govern their own affairs. p. 70.

<sup>33</sup> Jürgen Habermas holds that "privateness" is realised once this sphere is free of any legal regulations. As such mixed marriages were never a private, but a public affair because rules and regulations were imposed upon them. See Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Berlin, 1971), p. 158.

of the Europeans, and than in the eyes of the Métis, was the Indian part.<sup>34</sup> As such, in colonial reality métissage had not to do with true mixture. Métissage politics were never meant to produce a balanced synthesis of people and cultures but remained a strategy in favour of the French. As such, métissage was a colonial phenomenon and a directed strategy and policy while also being a natural process and development. While French colonial authorities in New France lost control over the former, the latter unfolded in unexpected ways.

In order to come to an understanding of the nature of métissage in historical context, it is vital to look at official discourse parallel to historical practice itself. It is held that since métissage discourse differed markedly from métissage in actual agency, the process has to be understood both on a discursive level, and at the same time be grasped as a political, social and cultural process in practice.<sup>35</sup> In order to understand métissage, it is important to cognise the difference between these two levels. While on a discursive level it was held that métissage was necessary in order to implement French superiority in the colony, the results were - according to reports by colonial authorities - mostly French assimilation to indigenous culture, which contrary to intent seemed to be proof of Indian superiority. Fascination for the exotic way of life of Indians had aroused European curiosity at home where the image of the “noble savage” circulated in the minds of educated elites.<sup>36</sup> In the colony, those who encountered Indians were surprised to find a multitude of tribes with customs as various as their languages and with beautiful women whose dress, ornaments and body paintings were conceived of in terms of exoticism. In fact, the image of Indian womanhood was considerably more positive since male desires; fantasies and needs were projected onto them. The Indian woman was not only to act as intermediary between the groups of Whites and Indians; she was also to behave as the lover of the White man, with all the exotic projections inherent in this subordinate role. In fact, presupposed superiority of French culture implied that the Indians were seen as less worthy because - according to official discourse - they seemed to lack manners that were deemed “civilized” and “pious”.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> With thanks to Tamar Herzog for these observations.

<sup>35</sup> Joël Dauphine has analyzed the biological aspects of métissage with a view to New Caledonia. See Joël Dauphine, “Le métissage biologique dans la Nouvelle-Calédonie coloniale (1853-1939)”, in: *Colonies, territoires, sociétés*, ed. A. Saussol et J. Zitomersky (Paris, 1996).

<sup>36</sup> Jennifer Dyar: “Fatal Attraction: The White Obsession with Indianness”, in: *The Historian*, vol. 65, no 4 (June 2003), pp. 817-836.

<sup>37</sup> Saliha Belmessous, *Aspects of the Natives’ Instrumentalization by the Colonial Authorities under the French Regime*, Working Paper 97022, International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World (Harvard, 1997).



Parallel to the means of frenchification through language instructions, settlement policies were enacted in order to sedentarize mostly nomadic Indians to exercise state control over them and to make them familiar with and accustom them to agricultural activity. Religious conversion to Catholicism was made a precondition of mixed marriages, while it was hoped that cultural assimilation would follow as a by-product, which was at the same time employed in language teaching. The utmost aim was to augment population numbers in the colony to create a French nation overseas. This French nation was to be made of assimilated Indians, married Indian women to French settlers with their respective French offspring. The premises of “civilising”, “francisizing” and “evangelising” were seldom questioned or put into doubt by social and political agents in New France; agents merely favoured one approach over the other, they gave up one at the expense of another or they mingled all three objectives at once.<sup>38</sup> This illustrates that agents did not know how objectives could be properly realised: it was asked whether a converted Indian would be more easily “civilised” or francisized, or would, in turn, an Indian who first learned French readily adapt to Catholic rituals? The Jesuit missionary and historian Pierre de Charlevoix, for instance, was convinced that “the best mode of Christianising them was to avoid frenchifying them”<sup>39</sup>, led by the assumption that Christianity and Frenchness should be treated as separate, yet not altogether incompatible values. Religious assimilation was to hold prime of place before cultural assimilation. And yet: The question of whether Indians were interested in becoming French subjects was never posed. It was presupposed - since French culture was considered to be closer to God and religion<sup>40</sup> - that Indian tribes would accept incoming “salvation” brought from France. The French “mission” had an emancipating impact by creating the vision of universal Frenchness to be spread over the Atlantic with the parallel acquisition of political rights. The idea that everyone willing to adhere to French ideals could become a French citizen was both appealing and at the same time deceptive: to be *named* French was not the same as *being* French and in particular cases it did not undo inequality and discrimination derived from ethnic origin or skin colour. Historian George Fredrickson holds, “the belief that it was possible and desirable to assimilate native populations through intermarriage drew on both strains of French universalism - the counter-Reformation Catholicism that had inspired Jesuit missionaries in

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<sup>38</sup> Isabelle Perrault, *Le métissage en Nouvelle-France* (Montréal, 1980), p. 106.

<sup>39</sup> Pierre de Charlevoix, cited in James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York/Oxford, 1985), p. 43.

<sup>40</sup> This comes to the fore in many utterances of agents, which will be described in the following chapters.

Canada and the Enlightenment or Revolutionary assertion of human equality and fraternity.”<sup>41</sup> According to colonial theoretician Frantz Fanon the principle of the equality of all men found its illustration precisely in the colonies at the moment when the colonised pretended to be equal to the coloniser.<sup>42</sup> This equality was never real, however, since the French ruled over Indians on the assumption that a French nation was to be created on behalf of the idea of French superiority over everything Indian. I adhere to Edward Said’s view that colonialism requires a particular interpretation, since in its core lays a specific mental attitude and an “ideological formation”.<sup>43</sup> It is imbued with racist, or at least discriminatory thinking and acting, and as such it requires an attentive analysis. In his seminal study on *Orientalism* Said set out to analyse the ways in which Europe and its scholars confronted the Orient, “the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.”<sup>44</sup> Said argued that “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.”<sup>45</sup> That is, it used an image of the Orient in order to set itself apart and above all: superior. Said could convincingly show that knowledge on a particular region that is subject to domination by colonial powers is imbued with projections, ideologies and interests. Power, domination and cultural hegemony are the central vectors of the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised. Just as the oriental experience of Western, mainly British and French powers has resulted in a whole array of academic disciplines solely engaged in grasping the nature and essence of everything oriental, the experience in reverse direction, the Occident, has resulted in a similar occupation of writing everything down that emanated from encounter with American Indians. This sort of *Occidentalism* made a virtue of scrutinizing and evaluating their customs, beliefs, languages, diets, dresses, sexualities and dream worlds according to European standards. The encounter with the “other” was not an experience or exercise in accurately understanding him. It was rather a “mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles”, a discourse that was inevitably rarely veridical.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Fredrickson, *Mulattoes*, p. 107.

<sup>42</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris, 1968/2002), p. 47.

<sup>43</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1995), p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

In order to describe the social and political conditions of métissage in a colonial setting, a theoretical framework is required that allows making a critical examination of the sources. At the same time, it has to show how métissage evolved over time, how it was ideologically constructed and argued in discourse, on the one hand, and actually practiced in reality, on the other. That is, a theory that allows all three levels - source criticism, discourse and agency - to be taken into account in order to write an “adequate history”. The theory that fulfils these criteria of description is the *history of concepts* because it precisely looks at the evolution and implications of concepts through time. And métissage is indeed a concept, which means that it has to be interpreted rather than defined because of its several layers and the ambiguity of its meaning. Furthermore, history of concepts holds that “the social and political conflicts of the past must be interpreted (...) in terms of the mutually understood, past linguistic usages of the participating agents”.<sup>47</sup> The history of concepts is the ideal tool to look at the changing competition and co-operation of agents and their linguistic performances to achieve the goals of assimilation and evangelisation, which were indeed the cause for numerous conflicts in New France. A classical history of concepts à la Koselleck has to illuminate how the idea of métissage gained ground in the politics and language of colonial agents and how, as a result, a new category - the Metis - emerged unexpectedly, as much as an affair of words as an affair of political deeds.

The history of concepts deals with the reconstruction of the genesis of social and political concepts in historical perspective and, thus, takes into consideration a wide scope of analysis. Situated between the history of ideas and the history of words, history of concepts is devoted to analysing the *variance* and the causes for the *change* and *success* of concepts.<sup>48</sup> We have to bear in mind, however, that any writing of history of concepts is confronted with the difficulty to describe the social practice, i.e. the conditions for the production of knowledge, and if we are to introduce discourse analytical terminology: the place from which one speaks in order to

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<sup>47</sup> Reinhart Koselleck: “Begriffsgeschichte and Social History”, in: *ibid.*, *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York, 2004), p. 80.

<sup>48</sup> The theoretical foundations of the history of concepts have their origins in different countries: In France Annales historians Marc Bloch and Lucien Fèvre introduced the history of concepts into the French intellectual sphere in the late 1920s. The English, American and Australian schools refer to the traditional history of political ideas, i.e. political theory and philosophy as represented, for instance, in writings of John Pocock and Quentin Skinner. In contrast, the German school has been influenced by social history and discourse analysis. See Metzler, p. 42 and Lucian Hölscher: “The Theoretical Foundations of “Begriffsgeschichte” (History of Concepts)”, Lecture given at the summer course “New cultural history” at San Lorenzo de Escorial, 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July 1994. See also Metzler, *Lexikon*, p. 42.

generate this knowledge:<sup>49</sup> Who has defined what, when, why, and how have such speakers pushed through their ideas (assuming that history generates its facts by the discovery of those who read the production of knowledge in the sources, the images and the literature).<sup>50</sup> It sounds simple when Reinhart Koselleck pointed out that the history of concepts sheds light on past meanings and their translation into the present. It is, in fact, the task of the historian of concepts to reflect this procedure methodologically by adding a *diachronic* dimension to a *synchronic* analysis. While the term *diachronic* refers to the chronological sequence of events and „states of being“ within a system and stresses historical development of phenomena, the term *synchronic* refers to the elements within a system; the stress is on the parallelism of phenomena. In short, the history of concepts looks at different usages of concepts throughout different epochs by employing a method of parallel as well as chronological analysis.<sup>51</sup> Koselleck makes a further distinction between language with “indicator function” and language as “factor function”. The former conceives of language as representation and reproduction (*Abbild*), while the latter means language as instrument of linguistic agency (*sprachliches Handeln*). Applied to the Canadian Metis, this means that first the indicator function of language led to the naming of a new ethnic group as the result of mixture of two distinct parts. Metis were represented and reproduced in language and as such their existence came to be acknowledged. The factor function of language came in, once this turned into linguistic agency with which language followed the political demands of the epoch.

Koselleck also distinguishes source language (*Quellensprache*) from descriptive language (*Beschreibungssprache*). The latter succeeds the former, i.e. descriptive language interprets source language. An interpretation of source language takes place while later descriptive language provides the interpretation of the actual facts. One can discern a constant distension of concepts, which shifts meaning back in time. Non-simultaneity is caused through the fact that the respective concepts are initially defined in source language and that only afterwards temporal caesura is introduced in descriptive language (while source language and descriptive language may at times be the same). Therefore history of concepts looks at the usage of words, addressees, intention, context, counter concepts and social diffusion. It is at this point that social history and history of concepts meet and mingle. The question of the social

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<sup>49</sup> For a critique on the limits of the history of concepts see Achim Landwehr, in: <<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/2007-1-127>>.

<sup>50</sup> With thanks to Marc Schindler-Bondiguel for this observation.

<sup>51</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, „Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte“, in: idem, *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1979), p. 25.

duration of a concept is thus addressed: how long has a concept prevailed in a certain context and why has its meaning changed? A diachronic principle takes the concept out of context and analyses it throughout the passing of times, and thereby historical analyses of concepts develops into a proper history of concepts. The social duration of a concept can be analysed on two levels: first, it is linguistic history and second, it is structural history. Thus, it is not about a collision of linguistic change with a change of meaning, but about the clash of the “simultaneity of non-simultaneity”. To give an example: the process of North American Euro-Indian *métissage* (beginning roughly in the 1600s in New France) predates the creation of the concept of *métissage* (around 1830s in Paris). Koselleck has drawn further attention to the fact that there also exists a difference between *words* and *concepts*: whereas the former have several meanings at the same time, but only a single one in a specific context, the latter remain ambiguous even in a specific context. While a concept is always more than a word, the meaning of a word, although it can be polyvalent, always points at the signified. Social and political language knows of a range of catchwords, which have appeared throughout the ages.<sup>52</sup> With “*métissage*”, however, this is not the case: it is a modern word for a development, which has started well before the onset of modernity. History as a science indeed depends on the usage of words, which prevails in the subject area of the set of questions to be treated.<sup>53</sup> Historians have to deal with the vocabulary that contemporaries used in order to describe historical events of their time, and have to unveil covered meanings and offer layers of interpretation on intended motives. The authors of the classic dictionary work on the history of concepts, the “*Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*”, for example, argue that source language of a specific period is in itself a metaphor for history of which historians try to grasp insights;<sup>54</sup> “metaphor” understood in Rhetoric as a trope, i.e. types of improper designation, and in contrast to tropes having a similarity in the relation between that which is literally said and that which is figuratively meant. While the duration and change of concepts is addressed, all concepts are witness of a changing relation to nature and to history, to the world and to time, in short: to the modern era.<sup>55</sup> One of the latter’s characteristics is that concepts can be

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<sup>52</sup> See in: “*Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*”, ed. by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck, Bd. 1 (Stuttgart, 1972), p. XIII.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* It is the intended aim of the authors to describe the transition from the dissolution of the old world to the occurrence of the modern world in the history of its conceptual grasping, i. e. from roughly 1700 to the present. One wonders therefore why the concept of “*métissage*” is not listed whereas “race” prominently figures.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XV. In fact, the authors hold that from 1750 onwards there has been an accelerated change in the meaning of socio-political terminology, while at the same time a whole range of new terms were invented and

ideologicalized, i. e. used in the service of a specific ideology to further political and economic interests of the participating agents. Kari Palonen reminds us that, “conceptual history offers us a chance to turn the contestability, contingency and historicity of the use of concepts into instruments for conceptualizing politics. The alternative, indirect mode of political theorizing Skinner and Koselleck practise consists of a ‘Verfremdungseffekt’, which helps us to distance ourselves from thinking in terms of contemporary paradigms, unquestioned conventions, given constellations of alternatives or implicit value judgements. In the Skinnerian variant the conceptual changes are made intelligible through analysis of the rhetorical redescriptions among the political agents, whereas Koselleck thematizes the differences in the temporal index of concepts. The subversive aspect in the history of concepts consists of the explication and historical variation of the tacit normative content in the use of concepts.”<sup>56</sup>

If one follows Reinhart Koselleck’s distinction between “words” and “concepts”, there is reason to assume that *métissage* is a concept rather than merely a word. Its specific referents and components - the cultures and individuals involved - differ according to the geographical areas and historical epochs in question. Its general meaning, however, appears simple to pin down while being ambiguous and difficult to define at the same time: “*métissage*” seems to point at some sort of mixing of cultures, i.e. customs and languages, as well as that of races. As such, it lies at the crossroads of society, politics and genetics. Yet, it would be too simple to translate *métissage* into “mixture” or “mixing”, since it has to be explained what mixed, why mixed, and, above all, how mixed. Many authors of *métissage* mingle three dimensions, i.e. the social, the biological and the cultural, and turn *métissage* into an unidentifiable process or something that becomes so common that it is presumed to be all-pervasive. However, a phenomenon that is all-pervasive needs not be explained, because it is taken for granted. Yet, *métissage* has been far from being taken for granted. It has been a battlefield of conflicting ideologies, changing strategies and competing truths.

The first three chapters of this study encompass the period from 1508 to 1763 in order to show which policies French authorities favoured until British authorities took over. The last

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old ones differentiated. This is partly due also to the upsurge in new printing materials and to the extension of knowledge from some groups in society to others, i. e. from the aristocracy to jurists and intellectuals.

<sup>56</sup> Kari Palonen: “The History of Concepts as a Style of Political Theorizing”, in: *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 91-106 (2002).

three chapters take a broader perspective up until the year 1886, in which *The Act of Savages* legally distinguished between the groups of “Indians” and “Metis”. The first chapter looks at how the French combined different approaches of assimilation: the taking of Indians to the metropolis and the enticement of Indians to settle in the vicinity of colonial settlements in order to entice Indians to accustom to sedentary French way of life. It is asked when and why the French favoured one approach over the other and how Indians reacted. Chapter two deals with parallel means of assimilation by religious conversion policies and language instruction, with how objectives were linked and made a precondition of each other: language instruction was part of the cultural assimilation process and at the same time facilitated conversion. It asks how missionaries were involved in the métissage design and used their position in order to pursue their own ideas of conversion. Chapter three poses the question which positions were taken by agents with regard to mixed marriages in the colony and why changing trends adjusted to the conditions and the moral climate in the colony. Differences in favouring mixed and non-mixed marriages will be shown and the preconditions that were asked of both.

In the second part, the study unfolds first as an affair of numbers, then of words and finally of deeds. Chapter four asks why there were geographical, social and tribal differences in métissage practices and which of these favoured or hindered métissage. It turns out that approaches taken by authorities depended on the circumstances in specific regions. Chapter five analyses the specific formation of metis identity and metis communities and the question of definition guided by political demands. It answers the question why metis communities emerged although the initial tendency had been to amalgamate Metis either into Indian or White society. Finally, it addresses the question of how as a result the concept of “Metis” evolved in historical, ethnographical, economic and nationalist discourse of contemporaries and historians. It will be answered how the Metis were initially perceived as “many identities” that were difficult to grasp (unless by a multitude of designations) and how they then were accepted, or further differentiated by categorizing all mixed-blood individuals in the category of “Metis”. Chapter six discusses the community formation of the Metis, which includes the perception of Metis by outside observers and attempts at Metis nation building. This chapter looks at the question of Metis singularity in Canada - mixed-blood community formation and the recognition of distinct status.

The conclusion summarizes the failure of métissage as envisaged by French agents and factors that contributed to this failure. At the same time, there was limited success in creating a new category for mixed-blood individuals and forming the Canadian state, partly on the basis of previous strategies of métissage through co-operation and competition of numerous

social and political agents. It has to be stressed that the creation of a category for mixed-bloods in Canada is paralleled by the experience of Cape Coloureds in South Africa. Thus, this event marks a decisive milestone in miscegenation history, while at the same time adding to racist discrimination of mixed-bloods by categorizing them with specific labels. At the same time, changing positive and negative conceptions of mixed-blood culture and identity and its position in societal order, the hierarchies that built will be analysed and debates over the concept of *métissage* will be critically reviewed. In all chapters, *métissage*, *métisation*, Metis individuals and communities are differentiated. *Métissage* was the process whereby Indians and Europeans mingled in various ways and which was encouraged or prohibited by official authorities. *Métisation* was the natural process whereby Metis offspring increasingly married among themselves and thus helped to increase metis tribalisation, thereby adding to the numbers of metis individuals and metis communities in the long run.

In order to put factual evidence on “metis” and “métissage” into perspective, an ample textual corpus is required. In order to conduct my research, I have consulted libraries and state and clerical archives in Ottawa, Montréal, Québec, Chicago, Paris, Aix-en-Provence and Rome. The empirical basis and the source material includes missionary correspondence, i.e. reports and letters, partly published as *Jesuit Relations*, which were printed annually with the aim of spreading the propaganda of a successful evangelical mission overseas. They are available online and also as an edition by Reuben Gold Thwaites, who was the secretary of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, which holds transcripts. Camille de Rochemonteix has divided Jesuit documents into four categories: a) personal letters which were not destined to be published, b) those written to members of the society, c) annual letters, translated into Latin, whose publication ended in 1654 and d) letters explicitly addressed to the public - the actual “Jesuit Relations” which were initiated by Pierre Biard in 1616 and continued by Father Jerome Lalemant in 1629.<sup>57</sup> The fathers did not write everything in their annual letters. They were more expansive in letters to their superiors who wanted to be amply informed on the developments in the colony.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, we have to bear in mind that the fathers took personal stances and did not always comply with rules and expectations of their superiors and nor did they necessarily follow the dictates of the public.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Camille de Rochemonteix: *Les Jésuites de la Nouvelle-France au XVIIe siècle d'après beaucoup de documents inédits*, vol. I (Paris, 1895).

<sup>58</sup> Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites*, p. XIVf.

<sup>59</sup> Marie-Anne La Fleur has held that the Jesuits were not acting as “dutiful reporters” but rather as “wilful individuals”. See Marie-Anne La Fleur: „From Missionaries to Seigneurs: The Contributions of the Jesuits to the



I have also consulted letters of authorities in Versailles and Paris to those in Quebec/New France and vice versa; reports and letters by Recollect, Capuchin and Sulpician missionary orders and by female orders; history books, travel accounts, diaries, medical and psychiatric reports, philosophical works and economic tractates. In Ottawa, the *Public Archives* provide material on Red River Metis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and missionary reports that treat religious conversion and supervision of Metis communities. In Montréal, the *Bibliothèque Nationale* and the *Archives Nationales* were valuable in terms of finding sources on further missionary activity in Canada, baptismal records of Metis individuals and marriage contracts. The bulk of correspondence between Québec and Paris/Versailles was found in the *Archives Nationales* (CARAN) in Paris and in the *Centre d'Archives d'Outre-Mer* (CAOM) in Aix-en-Provence, which both contain sources on the history of the colonial period. Especially series C11A in "fonds des colonies" and other series contain edicts, letters, reports, despatches and orders accumulated by the Ministry of Marine, which refer to French administration in the colony, relations with Indians, as well as mission, trade and military policy.<sup>60</sup> These consist of letters exchanged between French agents in the metropolis and the colony, between governors and intendants, military personnel and missionaries reporting back to the Parisian or Roman metropolis.<sup>61</sup> Administrative sources have to be questioned for their heuristic value.<sup>62</sup> Thus the writing of métissage history has to be complemented by descriptions on the actual social practice that prevailed at the time. As such, administrative sources can only provide the frame of reference for actual policies that were implemented differently and according to various circumstances that need to be highlighted as such. Thus, in sum a more differentiated history can be written by taking into account several levels of discourse matched against the prevalent practice.

In Paris, *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* contains books, manuscripts, microfilms and special collections of source materials on the period of New France. In Montréal, the *Archives of the Ursulines* contain the letters of Ursuline nun Marie de l'Incarnation, which relate to her work with Indian girls. I also consulted materials in the *Archives of the Seminary of Québec*

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development of the St. Lawrence River Valley in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century", in: *The Jesuit Encounters in the New World 1549-1767* (Rom, 1997).

<sup>60</sup> Series C13A deals with Louisiana. Series C11C, C11D, C11E, F3 and F5 were also helpful.

<sup>61</sup> I thus contest Urs Bitterli's view that in the study of North American cultural contact it is less the official reports that are examined than the memoirs and testimonies of private individuals, such as settlers and travellers. Precisely, for a writing of the history of métissage in French North America, official policies have never been subject to a detailed analysis as seems necessary in order to understand why métissage established new social orders and why policies were so volatile in this respect. See Bitterli, *Begegnung*, p. 231.

<sup>62</sup> With thanks to Heinz-Gerhard Haupt for this valuable critique.

and of the *Archbishopric*, where I found sources on the celebration of mixed marriages. In Rome, the Jesuit archive *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* contains letters and reports of Jesuit missionaries on their conversion and assimilation work. The *Vatican Archives* and the *Archivio della Propaganda Fide* contain documents on New France on discussions between clerical superiors and missionaries regarding the celebration of mixed marriages and church policies with respect to conversion in the colony. Sources here deal with sending Indians to the metropolis, with their sale as slaves and with demands for dispenses asked of Roman authorities in order to get licence to celebrate marriages in the colony. In these sources, metis individuals and métissage are difficult to identify. That is, historical sources describe, for instance, the refusal of an Indian girl to marry a French coureur de bois, the celebration of a mixed marriage by a local priest or the complaints of missionaries on the unwillingness of Indians to co-operate with colonial authorities. Some such incidences can be found in the *Jesuit Relations*. Here, as in many other sources of European provenience, we mainly find White perspectives and the Indian viewpoint is silenced. Furthermore, in most of the sources the term “métissage” is not mentioned, and the term “metis” in the early period only rarely. In fact, discourses on “métissage” are rather couched in various contexts: they refer to material circumstances of ethnic encounter, to agents’ experiences of cultural and economic exchange, and to the results of the encounter such as religious syncretism, cultural customs or new ethnic groups. That is, discourses do not explicitly contain utterances on race mixture and its equivalent terms, but refer to marriage, exchange and co-operation and competition of antagonistic groups, their religious practices and their cultural patterns. These processes are couched in terms such as “culture“, “contact“, “francisation”, “assimilation”, “conversion”, “colonisation”, “débauches”, “libertinage”, “mariages mixtes”, “illicit sexual relations/commerce“, “missions” and “désordre” and according verbs and English equivalents.<sup>63</sup> Indians themselves are interchangeably referred to as “indien/nes”, “amérindien/nes”, ”métis”, “autochthones”, ”aborigènes”, “canadien/nes”, ”natives”, “sauvages/ses”, ”infidèles” and “barbares”. Therefore, the chosen corpus of texts has to be analysed according to such keywords. In addition to the sources, a selective analysis of the vast secondary literature on the history of New France and Canada, métissage, Euro-Indian relations and Indian tribes is included.

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<sup>63</sup> Isabelle Perrault has extended this list to imply “développement”, “peuplement” and some further terms. See in: Perrault, *Le métissage*, p. 63.

## A. Bringing Indians to the Old World and French Settlements in the New World

### 1. Arrival of Indians “...to the wonder and applause of France”

“...la sensation d’Exotisme: qui n’est autre que la notion du différent; la perception du Divers; la connaissance que quelque chose n’est pas soi-même...L’Exotisme n’est donc pas une adaptation; n’est donc pas la compréhension parfaite d’un hors soi-même qu’on étreindrait en soi, mais la perception aiguë et immédiate d’une incompréhensibilité éternelle.”

**Victor Segalen**

In 1508, the local inhabitants of the French town of Rouen were confronted with a curious event: seven men of dark complexion, dressed in clothes that were unusual in the eyes of Europeans and bearing arms that the latter had never seen before, arrived in the company of Captain Thomas Aubert. He had brought them to France after his voyage to Newfoundland in Canada where he had encountered them as part of an Indian tribe. It was described as having no religion, no usage of bread, wine nor money and walking around naked or in animal skins.<sup>64</sup> Similar instances of capturing Indians from the colony in order to bring them to the French metropolis occurred in following years;<sup>65</sup> either with the purpose of trading them as

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<sup>64</sup> See the description in 1512 by Henri Estienne (ed.): *Eusebii Caesariensis Episcopi Chronicon, Paris 1512, in-4°, f. 172 in Noca Additio*, cited in Henry Harrisse: *Découverte et Evolution cartographique de Terre-Neuve et des pays circonvoisins 1497- 1501 – 1769* (London, 1900), p. 162.

<sup>65</sup> In 1826, the priest Fauvel took the Indian Teoragaron Anò8ara to France and Rome before he himself returned to preach the Gospel in Green Bay near St. Paul. (Mentioned in a letter by Pierre Déjean, priest, during his mission with the Miamis to Paul Rigagnon, vicar general in Bordeaux of the bishopric of Cincinnati. In: Archivio di Propaganda Fide, Ser. 6, Congressi AC, vol. 9 (1827-8), fol. 369rv-372rv, 26 November 1827). In 1845, painter George Catlin brought twelve Indians to the French capital and exposed them to the applause of the Parisian public. The journal *L’Illustration, Journal Universel* reported on the 26<sup>th</sup> April on this peculiar incidence: “We are witnessing living phenomena and curiosities of all kinds (...). A journal has announced the coming arrival to Paris of a cargo of pygmies (...). The attention of onlookers and curious ones is distracted by the Indians who have arrived from the Rocky Mountains (North America) to visit our Parisian soil under the patronage of Monsieur Catlin, author of numerous books on Indian tribes. Their number is twelve.” Cited in Nelcya Delanoe: “Dernière rencontre, ou comment Baudelaire, George Sand et Delacroix s’épèrent des Indiens du peintre Catlin, in: *Destins Croisés. Cinq siècles de rencontres avec les Amérindiens* (Albin Michel, UNESCO 1992), 263-282, p. 263. Catlin, who was looking for financial support for his Indian curiosity among European elites, soon presented “his Indians” to King Louis-Philippe, who had himself lived in exile in North America from 1797 to 1800, and thus was thought to be prone to show an interest in exoticism brought home from the American continent. *Ibid.*, p. 264. Catlin seemed to continue the tradition of the merchant parade, which at the same time satisfied the curiosity of the common people and that of philosophers, poets and intellectuals. Catlin himself described his motivation as such: “I started in 1832, the date at which I had departed towards the grand spaces...”the Grand Far West” of the American continent, where the prairies were open to infinity and up to the other side of the Rocky Mountains. I wanted to grasp vividly, graphically and literally the habits, customs and characters of an interesting race and whose members are destined to rapid disappearance from the surface of the earth...nation which will de cease without an historian of its own nor a biographer among its ranks...In order to

slaves or domestic servants, of displaying them to a curious French public, of pursuing scientific curiosity or of educating them in the French language and the Catholic religion in order to turn them into multipliers of French culture on their return to the colony.<sup>66</sup> Taking captive and bringing Indians to France was applied as a strategy because Indians themselves showed no interest in going there deliberately. Indians accompanying church personnel to the metropolis, for instance, were singular incidences. This did not result in a widespread practice as a means of conversion or assimilation, due to the little success that such initiatives bore, either because of the death of the Indian upon his arrival in the metropolis or because the Indian did not act as multiplier of French culture on their return to the colony. One Indian tribe complained of the attitude of superiority displayed by the French in the following remarks<sup>67</sup>: “Thou reproachest us, very inappropriately, that our country is a little hell in contrast with France, which thou comparest to a terrestrial paradise, inasmuch as it yields thee, so thou sayest, every kind of provision in abundance. Thou sayest of us also that we are most miserable and most unhappy of all men, living without religion, without manners, without honour, without societal order, in a word, without any rules, like the beasts in the woods and our forests, lacking bread, wine, and a thousand other comforts which thou hast in superfluity in Europe. Well, my brother, if thou dost not yet know the real feelings, which our Indians have toward thy country and toward all thy nations, it is proper that I inform thee at once. I beg thee now to believe that all miserable as we seem in thine eyes, we consider ourselves nevertheless much happier than thou in this, that we are content with the little that we have; and believe also once for all, I pray, that thou deceivest thyself greatly if thou thinkest to persuade us that thy country is better than ours. For if France, as thou sayest, is a little terrestrial paradise, art thou sensible to leave it?”<sup>68</sup>

Next to its revealing content as to questioning the true motives and intentions of colonial endeavour, it is the function of language itself, which is interesting in this source. An analysis of these translated utterances made by Indians at the face of encounter with incoming Whites is symptomatic for the use of language in the contact situation: it served less as a device to

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distract it from imminent forgetting and to offer to posterity a monument to the memory of a veritably grand and noble race...and this for the edification of generations to come.” George Catlin, *North American Indian Portfolio* (London, 1844), Introduction.

<sup>66</sup> Narcisse Dionne holds that up to 1603, “il n’y a pas le moindre doute que plusieurs sauvages du Canada traversèrent l’Atlantique, entre autres des Montagnais et des Souriquois“. Narcisse Dionne: “Les Indiens en France“, in: *Revue Canadienne*, vol. 26 (1890), p. 641.

<sup>67</sup> These utterances were probably translated and written down by an English-speaking witness.

<sup>68</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, “Amerindian Views of French Culture in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century“, in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 55, no 3 (September 1974), 261-291, p. 282.

truly communicate than as an expression of astonishment and surprise as to the motives of the incoming conquerors. The fact that most “communication” between Indians and Europeans had to take the detour of translation shows the low degree of understanding between the two groups. And the nature of the contact meant that there was no alternative to translation, since most agents coming to New France did not learn Indian languages. The few ethnologists who were interested in grasping the nature and complexity of Indian cultures and languages were, for the most part, not politically influential.<sup>69</sup>

As expressed in this Indian tribe’s utterances, the French had not only left their country. They also increasingly assimilated to an Indian way of life, which seemed attractive not only as the realization of an adventure, but also because it held advantages in order to get through Canada’s unfamiliar and wild environment. But what were the confines of this territory that later came to be known as the colony of “New France”? It was the North American space colonized by France in the years 1524 to 1763.<sup>70</sup> In the sources the name “New France” is often used interchangeably with “Canada”. While the former was a designation coined by incoming colonists who wanted to design the colony in the likeness of their mother country, the latter derived from the Iroquois word for “village” or “settlement”, which originally referred to *Stadacona* (today’s city of Québec). However, in maps dating from 1547 areas situated north of the St. Lawrence River were named “Canada“. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was divided into two distinct regions: The “Pays d’en Bas” - Lower Canada<sup>71</sup> - which was mainly constituted of the St. Lawrence Valley (often called the “colony” in historical sources) and including the cities of Montréal (Hochelaga) and Québec (*Stadacona*)<sup>72</sup>. It bordered on Labrador in the North and the later states of New Hampshire, Vermont and New York in the South. The “Pays d’en Haut” - Upper Canada -, situated at the Southwest of the St. Lawrence

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<sup>69</sup> Yet, according to historian Anthony Pagden societies were for most eighteenth century linguistic theorists primarily linguistic communities. Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 203. Pagden names the prominent example of Joseph-François Lafitau, *Les Moeurs des Sauvages Américains, Comparées aux Mœurs des Premiers Temps*, II, Paris: François Maspero 1983.

<sup>70</sup> 1524 was the year in which Verrazzano received order from King François I. to find a passage to Asia.

<sup>71</sup> Works which exclusively deal with the Upper Country are those by Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissages. Indiens et Français dans le Pays d’en Haut 1660-1715* (Paris, 2003); Philippe Jacquin, *Les Indiens Blancs. Français et Indiens en Amérique du Nord (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle)* (Montréal, 1996); Richard White, *The Middle Ground. Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650-1815* (Cambridge, 1991); Cornelius Jaenen, “La présence française dans le Pays d’En Haut“, in: R. Creagh (ed.), *Les Français des Etats-Unis d’hier à aujourd’hui, Actes du Colloque international sur les Français des États-Unis* (Montpellier, 1994), pp. 11-24.

<sup>72</sup> J.F. Pendergast: “The confusing identities attributed to *Stadacona* and *Hochelaga* (Canada, NF)”, in: *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue des études canadiennes* 32 (4), pp. 149-165, (Winter 1998).

Valley, included the regions of the Great Lakes and the Illinois Country.<sup>73</sup> The latter came to be administratively included to the colony of Louisiana in 1717. In sources before 1680, the St. Lawrence Valley appears interchangeably as either “Canada” or “New France/Nouvelle France”. At the turn of the century, these regions were further differentiated: the designation “New France” was henceforth used for all the possessions of the French Empire in North America.<sup>74</sup> In 1705, New France, which had become a royal colony in 1663, included “...le Canada, l’acadie, la louisiane, la Baye d’Hudson et l’île de Terrebonne.”<sup>75</sup>

At the time of its greatest expansion, New France encompassed a territory that stretched from the Atlantic to the St. Lawrence River, from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi and its convergence into the Gulf of Mexico, where at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the colony of Louisiana was founded. The Upper Country designated the area reaching from Lac Nipigon in the North to the trading post of Kaskaskia in the South. At its eastern border lay the lakes Ontario and Erie and at its western border the trading post of St. Paul. The Upper Country came to be administratively included into the French Empire by a 1682 edict of the French King who gave Joseph-Antoine Lefebvre de La Barre the title of “gouverneur & lieutenant general en Canada, Acadie et Isle de Terrebonne, et autres pays de la France septentrionale”.<sup>76</sup> The Upper Country, which lacked the institution of a governor general, was included in the expression “la France septentrionale”. In contrast, the term “Canada” referred to the zones of the St. Lawrence Valley, Labrador and the *Domaine du Roi*, the latter being composed of the Saguenay basin and Lake St. Jean.<sup>77</sup> Finally, the expression “Canada” came to be used as a nomination for all colonial territories, and subsequently for a new state as we know it. In the early modern period, this geographically scattered state was not made of bureaucrats and state organs. Rather, royal and ecclesiastical agents, whose role as „state makers“ was important, inhabited it. In this entity, policies were contested and incoherent. The state was not a single body but rather the accumulation of specific actions, carried out by specific agents for a specific end. Indeed, there were no static identities or solid institutions, but rather different

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<sup>73</sup> A dissertation specifically dealing with French influence in this region is C. Vidal, *Les implantations françaises dans le pays des Illinois* (Paris, 1995).

<sup>74</sup> William I. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier 1534-1760* (Albuquerque, 1983), p. VII and Jacques Mathieu, *La Nouvelle-France* (Laval, 1991), pp. 134-135.

<sup>75</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol.26, f. 89v-90r, anonymous pamphlet.

<sup>76</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 8, f. 111, “Provisions de gouverneur & lieutenant général pour le roy en Canada pour le Sieur La Barre”.

<sup>77</sup> Guy Frégault, *Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle canadien* (Montréal, 1968) and Havard, *Empire*, p. 7.

individuals who acted under various constraints imposed upon them by institutions in the making such as the state and the church.<sup>78</sup>

In administrative terms, the colony of New France was composed of Canada (1524-1763), Acadia (1604-1713), Newfoundland (1627-1713), Louisiana (1682-1763) and Île Royale (1717-1758). Colonization of these regions occurred in three successive phases: explorations and first settlements (1524-1663), expansion and administrative organization (1663-1713) and stabilization after the treaty of Utrecht (1713-1763), which had recognized British takeover of Acadia in 1713.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, the territory was subject to successive European intrusion and saw different approaches in terms of colonization procedures. In terms of these differences, Canadian territories can be divided into three regions: the population colony (which were the areas around the St. Lawrence); the Pays d'en Haut, composed of the basin of the Great Lakes and the Western Sea - the latter region formed part of it only from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards - and the Pays des Illinois. On these colonial territories, the French founded military and trading posts, which were generally situated at strategic locations close to Indian villages in order to facilitate trading activities. The most important posts were Michilimackinac, Detroit, St. Paul and Kaskaskia. At these and other places, trade with Indians was undertaken on a seasonal basis. It was vital for the French to be situated close to watersheds, which made transportation easier, and to build up a commercial network.<sup>80</sup> In fact, within this network Indians and Europeans co-operated. It was not a case of a one-way profiteering. This close network helped to promote métissage, i.e. trade was a stepping-stone to mixed unions. The course of European migration, which had started at Canada's eastern seaboard, suggests that there was a specific geographical development that shaped métissage. It originated in Acadia, then stretched into the Pays des Illinois, the Pays d'en Haut and to Louisiana. Most authors agree that the St. Lawrence Valley saw few mixed unions whereas their frequency was reported in regions towards the west and the south where Euro-Indian trading, military and matrimonial alliances were widespread.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> With thanks to Tamar Herzog for these observations.

<sup>79</sup> *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime. Royaume de France XVIe au XVIIIe siècle*, éd. Lucien Bély (Paris, 1996), p. 907.

<sup>80</sup> Isabelle Perrault has claimed relations between Whites and Indians served two goals: furthering commercial alliances in order to render the colony fruitful and to find survival techniques by using the local potential. See Perrault, *Le métissage*, p. 79.

<sup>81</sup> Havard, *Empire*, 2003.

As to the assimilation of Frenchmen to the Indian lifestyle the French explorer Samuel de Champlain openheartedly admitted: “Thus judging our life wretched by comparison with yours, it is easy to believe that we shall adopt yours and abandon our own.”<sup>82</sup> Some authors have interpreted this adaptation as a “wise acceptance of folk wisdom.”<sup>83</sup> The superiority of Indianness as expressed in such utterances contradicted with the official policy of French assimilation, which was held in high esteem among colonial officials and metropolitan ministers who made this policy their utmost priority in the colony. Such strategies did not remain unnoticed by Indians. The French explorer, interpreter and wood runner Nicolas Perrot held that the tribes of Hurons, Ottawas, Fox and Sioux became aware that the French want “to dominate us and be our superiors; they even regard us as people who are in some manner dependent on them.”<sup>84</sup> The French were, in fact, concerned to acquire supremacy over Indians on the assumption that “the more imposing the power of our French people ...the more easily they can make their belief received.”<sup>85</sup> In the words of colonial theoretician Frantz Fanon from hindsight: “In the colonial context, the colonist will not cease his work of exhausting the colonised as long as the latter does not recognize with high and unintelligible voice the supremacy of white values.”<sup>86</sup> Reality was that in practical terms both groups depended on each other: The French needed assistance and trade networks of Indians in order to obtain furs, which were vital to the French economy. Indians, in turn, depended on the French in order to be able to produce goods hitherto unknown to them.<sup>87</sup> Indians, in fact, acquired a whole range of previously unfamiliar products, while the French gained precious knowledge of Amerindian flora and fauna, which was useful for medicine production, and of Indian commodities such as canoes and snowshoes.<sup>88</sup>

Parallel to taking Indians to the French metropolis, French agents employed diverse means of cultural assimilation in the colony. Such assimilation schemes were initiated in order to

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<sup>82</sup> Samuel de Champlain, *Works*, 3:145, 146.

<sup>83</sup> Jaenen, *Amerindian Views*, p. 272. In fact, James Axtell held that “Indians could seldom be persuaded that the French lifestyle was superior to their own, except in a few areas of technology.” Axtell, *The Invasion*, p. 54.

<sup>84</sup> *Memoir*, p. 145.

<sup>85</sup> *Jesuit Relations* 6:145, 8:15.

<sup>86</sup> Fanon, *Les damnés*, p. 46.

<sup>87</sup> Denys Delâge has described the process from the perspective of Indian imprints on French culture to argue that Indians were more influential on the French than vice versa. Denys Delage, “L’influence des Amérindiens sur les Canadiens et les Français au temps de la Nouvelle-France”, in: *Lekton*, 2, no 2 (Automne 1992), p. 103-191. He very much stresses the exchange of goods and services in his account of métissage. See Denys Delâge, “Indian-White Relations in New France”, in: *Encyclopaedia of North American Indians*, Native American History, Culture and Life from Paleo-Indians to the Present, ed. by Frederick E. Hoxie (New York, 1996).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* See also Denys Delâge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America 1600-1664* (Vancouver, 1993).



spread French culture over the Atlantic. The striking difference between European and Indian ways of working, clothing, fighting and nourishing led the French in subsequent years and centuries to influence Indian life and habits in the colony towards acquiring French customs. This peculiar feeling of cultural, political and religious superiority from which issued the desire to render “the other” like oneself led to numerous cultural misunderstandings and to political and military conflict between the two groups henceforth competing over the same North American territory. The intention on the side of the French was to replace the nomadic hunting practice exercised by Indians with agriculture, thus to make Indians sedentary and to encourage them to embrace Frenchness step by step through learning the French language, acquiring the Catholic faith and marrying Frenchmen. Before these measures were enacted, however, French agents initiated trading activities in order to generate good relations with Indians and to further commercial interests of France in order to advance the colony’s “mise en valeur”, i.e. turning it valuable in economic terms.<sup>89</sup>

The fact that trade preceded settlement seemed like a logical course of action since it was easier to institute and provided the necessary means in order to express good will and to bring the groups of Indians and French into closer contact with one another.<sup>90</sup> The French depended on Indians mainly for the exploitation of Canada’s natural resources, above all beaver furs for hat production in the French metropolis. The French Jacques Cartier, navigator from St. Malo and one of the first explorers to come to the Saint Lawrence Valley, described first encounters with the Indians on commercial grounds in 1534 in positive terms: “As soon as they saw us they began to run away, making signs to us that they had come to barter with us; and held up some furs of small value, with which they clothe themselves. We likewise made signs to them that we wished no harm, and sent two men on shore to offer them some knives and other iron goods, and a red cap to give to their chief. Seeing this, they sent on shore part of their people with some of their furs; and the two parties traded together.”<sup>91</sup> Yet, in his contact with indigenous peoples, Cartier - like many of his contemporaries - did not further differentiate. Again, as colonial theoretician Frantz Fanon put it from hindsight in 1961: “...the autochthonous population is perceived like an indistinctive mass. The few indigenous individualities that colonialists [...] had the occasion to get to know here and there do not weigh enough on this immediate perception to give birth to nuances.”<sup>92</sup> In fact, the colonial

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<sup>89</sup> Grupp, p. 285. This contrasts with the relatively little revenue that France drew from its New France colony.

<sup>90</sup> Brian Slattery: “French Claims in North America 1500-1559”, in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 5 (1978).

<sup>91</sup> Cartier’s first voyage, 1534, in: Henry Biggar, *Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, p. 52-53.

<sup>92</sup> Fanon, *Les damnés*, p. 46f.

world was Manichean. In this conception, the numerous different tribes were in sum perceived as “Indians”, wrongly named as such by Christopher Columbus who was convinced that he had discovered inhabitants of the East Indies. In fact, Robert Berkhofer has shown that the concept of “Indian” was an invention of the Whites: “Native Americans were and are real, but the Indian was a White invention and still remains largely a White image, if not stereotype (...). By classifying all these many peoples as Indians, Whites categorized the variety of cultures and societies as a single entity for the purpose of description and analysis, thereby neglecting or playing down the social and cultural diversity of Native Americans then - and now - for the convenience of simplified understanding...”<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, by simplifying indigenous populations into the category of “Indians”, it was easier to foster the perception of the latter as an indistinctive “foreign mass”, or a “stranger” - to borrow Georg Simmel’s term. Yet, the real foreigners were incoming Whites who wanted to take possession of indigenous soil.<sup>94</sup>

Again in 1534, Cartier described the positive reception of Frenchmen by Indians at their encounter in Thunder Bay: “Upon one of the fleets reaching this point [Thunder Bay], there sprang out and landed a large number of Indians, who set up a great clamour and made frequent signs to us to come on shore, holding up to us some furs on sticks (...) And they [on shore], seeing we were rowing away, made ready two of their largest canoes in order to follow us. These were joined by five more of those that were coming in from the sea, and all came after our long-boat, dancing and showing many signs of joy, and their desire to be friends, saying to us in their language: *Napou tou daman asurtat* - let’s be friends.”<sup>95</sup> Yet, the French had come to trade with Indians, to assimilate them and to found French settlements. In fact, the Jesuit missionary Paul Lejeune affirmed a century later that “we do not wish to ally ourselves with them as brothers, which they would very much desire.”<sup>96</sup> He made abundantly clear that French rapprochement towards Indians was not intended as a gesture of friendship. Lejeune, thus, implicitly stated that the French had political and economic interests in their Canadian colony. As a further sign of French superiority and the desire to turn Indians into

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<sup>93</sup> Robert F. Berkhofer: *The White Man’s Indian. Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, 1978), p. 3 and p. 28f.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Cartier’s first voyage, 1534, in: Biggar, *Voyage*, pp. 49-51. In Cameron Nish, *The French Regime* (Scarborough, 1965) the author has translated the last sentence with “let’s be friends”. However, since Jacques Cartier has not specified which tribe he was referring to, it is difficult to identify which Indian language was used here.

<sup>96</sup> Jesuit Relations 6:259.

Frenchmen, Cartier took those Indians he had encountered at Gaspé Peninsula in 1534 back to France: Donnacona, three Indians from Stadacona (which is today Québec), and the daughter of Indian chief Agona. On 25<sup>th</sup> March 1538, the three Indians were baptised in St. Malo.<sup>97</sup> Charles de Champ-Girault, the doyen of the place, named the first Indian captive Charles because it was customary that Indians were baptised with the Christian name of the person who acted as godparent. The second Indian was named François according to the name of the present French King.<sup>98</sup> All these Indians died, however, because they were unaccustomed to the foreign climate and missed their home environment. One exception was the little girl who survived, and returned to New France in 1541.<sup>99</sup> French agents continued their programme of colonial expansion by bringing further Indians to the metropolis: In 1540, another group of Indians was shipped to France and was brought to the French Court where they were welcomed by François I. The King expected that by showing them French and Catholic manners in a natural French environment, Indians would more easily adopt and imitate them. It was hoped that upon their return home, in the company of French colonists, they would introduce French mores to the rest of the population, thus turning them into loyal Catholic subjects. François I. cheerfully exclaimed: “From those countries [Canada] we have brought back several men and have kept them in our kingdom so as to instruct them in the love and fear of God, his holy and Christian doctrine so as to be better able, when they return with a large number of our subjects, to induce their brethren to accept our holy faith.”<sup>100</sup> The intent was to achieve large numbers of assimilated and converted Indians in the colony. Yet, these Indians, too, arriving in France died when confronted with a new environment to which they were not immune. Either due to a lack of historic knowledge at that time or because they did not care, the French had not calculated on medical problems of infection and immunology. A change of climate and geographic environment could signal danger for which there were no remedies and to which Indians were apparently more prone than Europeans arriving in the New World bringing with them numerous diseases unheard of among Indians.

With a view to strengthen the colony, metropolitan agents suggested sending out a number of French settlers. In the years 1541 and 1543, Jean-François de Roberval and Jacques Cartier

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<sup>97</sup> Their baptism was recorded in the sources: “Ce jour Nostre-Dame XXVe de mars, l’an mil cent centz trante uoict, furent baptisés troys sauvaiges homes des parties du Canada prins uaidt pays par honeste homme Jacques Cartier, cappitaine pour le Roy notre Sire, pour découvrir lesdites terres“. Cited in: Dionne, *Les Indiens*.

<sup>98</sup> The third one’s name is missing in the sources being not readable in the passages in question.

<sup>99</sup> Dionne, *Les Indiens*.

<sup>100</sup> Cartier’s Commission for his third voyage, October 17, 1540, in: Biggar, *A Collection of Documents Relating to Jacques Cartier and the Sieur de Roberval*, pp. 128-129.

continued French expansion by trying to systematically populate vast areas with Frenchmen, without taking into account or by simply ignoring that notions of propriety and the territorial conception of Indians differed markedly from that of Europeans. While Indians believed that the soil was commonly given to all human beings through the will of the Master (i.e. God) to be shared with each other and all other creatures of the universe, the European conception rested on the understanding that the soil was part of the social, i.e. hierarchical, order. From the assumption that Indians did not belong to the family of recognized nations, it was deduced that Indians did not hold the right of property to the lands upon which they had been living for hundreds of years before European arrival in America. Thereby Europeans denied Indians sovereignty and ownership.<sup>101</sup> Indians increasingly grew aware of this, as stated in an undated letter by an Abenaki addressed to the French King, in which the author stated that the French were deceiving the Indians and were lying about the possession of lands, because in reality the French wanted to become “master of the whole country”.<sup>102</sup> At the same time, the French continued to employ coercive means of assimilation. An Inuit women and her child were kidnapped by French fishermen in 1566/67 and were brought to La Haye in France.<sup>103</sup>

As far as settlements in the colony were concerned, explorers Roberval and Cartier first wanted to set up settlements in Quebec, but were initially hindered by strong winters, scorbout and Franco-Iroquois rivalry. A new attempt was made in 1577 when Troilus Mesgouez de La Roche, who later became vice-King of New France in 1578, received “full power and royal authority” to go to Newfoundland and neighbouring places. In 1581, exploration extended to Tadoussac. Yet, rivalry with the English, who partly fought over the same territories, impeded peaceful settlement. In 1598, Marquis de la Roche Mesgouez obtained the title “lieutenant général” of Canada, Newfoundland, Labrador and neighbouring places and established a colony on Île de Sable. In 1599, François Pontgravé and Pierre Chauvin de Tonnetuit, who secured the monopole of the fur trade from King Henri IV, took over royal order to ship 500 settlers to Canada and collaborated with La Roche. From this initiative emerged in 1600 on the initiative of Pierre Du Gua de Monts the first French settlement in Tadoussac where he

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<sup>101</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, *Friend and Foe. Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contact in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Toronto, 1976), p. 160. Yet, English policies in this respect have been clearly distinguished from French ones, which were held to be less authoritative and determined.

<sup>102</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 1, f. 266v, “Lettre d’un Abénaki au Roi”.

<sup>103</sup> Cited in Nelcya Delanoë: “Dernière rencontre, ou comment Baudelaire, George Sand et Delacroix s’éprient les Indiens du peintre Delacroix“, in: *Destins Croisés. Cinq siècles de rencontre avec les Indiens* (Albin Michel, UNESCO 1992), p. 264.

left sixteen men in the winter.<sup>104</sup> Taking hold of new lands and populating them with white settlers in the belief that Natives held no right to its possession was one of the hallmarks of colonization, while colonialism in itself was an exercise of power over territories.<sup>105</sup> This process engendered extending and expanding a society beyond its traditional realm. In New France, mass individual migration (although initially in limited numbers) and settler colonies led to the pushing aside and the extinction of the indigenous population. This process was further consolidated with expansion of frontier colonisation towards the West.<sup>106</sup>

In 1603, Francis Gravé Sieur de Pont Pontgravé, a merchant, fur trader, captain in the navy and a French citizen of St. Malo, sailed with Pierre Chauvin and Samuel de Champlain to Canada in order to found further trading posts at the other side of the Atlantic. On this occasion, they took captive the son of Begourat, an Algonquin sagamo,<sup>107</sup> and an Iroquois woman, who had been condemned to death by the Montagnais, the Algonquians and the Etchemins after a cruel battle. In this way, Pontgravé saved the Indian woman's life, yet he exposed her to new dangers by burdening her with an Atlantic crossing and life in an alien environment.<sup>108</sup> During the same period, Prévert de Saint-Malo took an Indian from Acadia, a woman and two children to France, while Pontgravé repatriated two Indians who had crossed the Atlantic Ocean with him in 1602.<sup>109</sup> Meanwhile, agents in the colony continued population and conversion policies. In 1603, Aymar de Chastes assembled traders from Dieppe, Rouen and La Rochelle in order to populate the colony by finding fertile soil and by securing the maintenance of the first clerics who were sent to Canada to convert Indians. After having crossed the Atlantic a group of Frenchmen assembled on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1603 at Saint-Mathieu in order to celebrate a traditional "tabagie"<sup>110</sup> with dances and by smoking tobacco with the tribes of Montagnais, Algonquians and Etchemins.<sup>111</sup> This incident has been taken as one of the first attempts at alliance building with Indians. Sagamo Anadabijou took some

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<sup>104</sup> *Dictionnaire Biographique du Canada* 1967, 1:215. See Camil Girard/Edith Gagné: "Première alliance interculturelle. Rencontre entre Montagnais et Français à Tadoussac en 1603", in: *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec*, vol. XXV, no 3 (1995), 3-14, p. 4.

<sup>105</sup> Jürgen Osterhammel: *Kolonialismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (München, 1995), p. 8f.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18. See also C. Horguelin: "The Chevalier de Montmagny, 1601-1657: First governor of New France", in: *Revue d'Histoire Amérique Française* 54 (3), pp. 461-464, Winter 2001, and Marin Trenk: "Commerce, religion and authority – Cultural contact and indigenous residents policy in New France during early 1600s", in: *Anthropos* 94 (1-3), pp. 282-84 (1999).

<sup>107</sup> Expression used to designate an Indian chief.

<sup>108</sup> Dionne, p. 643

<sup>109</sup> Cited in Champlain, *Voyages de 1603*, p. 63.

<sup>110</sup> This was a friendly feast celebrated with tobacco.

<sup>111</sup> Girard/Gagné (1995), p. 3.

tobacco, and offered it to Pontgravé and to the Indian chiefs. He exclaimed that the former should be happy to be friends with the French King.<sup>112</sup> On this occasion, Champlain specified France's aims: being friendly, desiring to people lands and making peace with enemies. In order to realize this, the French needed the Indians as allies.<sup>113</sup> It is no coincidence that this rapprochement between Indians and French occurred with the help of tobacco: it held a strong spiritual meaning in Indian culture and was seen as a means to commune with spirits, to appease stormy waters and thunderstorms, to protect travellers or to show thankfulness to a benevolent spirit.<sup>114</sup>

## 2. Special Focus on Acadia as a Strategic Location

In 1604, Pierre du Gua Sieur de Monts continued de Chastes' initiative and took a few hundred artisans and voluntary settlers to the New World.<sup>115</sup> Colonists focused specifically on Acadia because it was a strategic location, situated at Canada's most easterly end thus providing access to the rest of the territory. Acadia was in fact chosen by the French for its "nearness to sea, the proximity of peaceable natives, an abundance of mines, a fertile soil, a mild climate, and possible access to the Western Sea."<sup>116</sup> Between 1604 and 1607, Samuel de Champlain explored the area around Fundy Bay. Meanwhile the French were successfully leaving their mark in the region with numerous French place names and close relations with Micmacs (Souriquois), Etchemins (Malecites/Penobscot) and Armouchiquois tribes. The French lawyer Marc Lescarbot, who had travelled and written on New France and Acadia,

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<sup>112</sup> Narrative by Samuel de Champlain, in: Alain Beaulieu/Réal Ouellet (eds.), *Champlain, des Sauvages* (Montréal, 1993), p. 95-97.

<sup>113</sup> According to Girard/Gagné for early observers such as Le Tac, Le Clercq, Bacqueville de la Potherie and Charlevoix it signified an exploration voyage with the aim to colonize and evangelise. To others such as Lescarbot, Lahontan and Lafitau it was simply about discovering peoples and cultures and to describe them in exotic ways as imposed by European literature of the epoch, which constructed its own image of America and of Indians. Marcel Trudel has deduced from Champlain's description that the French received permission to people the land. Trudel, *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France: Les vaines tentatives 1524-1603*, (Montréal: Fides, 1963), p. 268. See Girard/Gagné, p. 7. Historian Victor Tremblay held a similar stance: "...ils avaient mission de préparer un établissement français à le véritable caractère d'un traité tel que les traités étaient conclus à cette époque entre Indiens et Européens. Et ce fut en vertu de ce traité que les Français purent de plein droit venir s'établir dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent." Victor Tremblay, "Le traité de 1603", in: *Saguenayensia* (mars-avril 1963), p. 28.

<sup>114</sup> Ella Elisabeth Clark, *Indianische Legenden aus Nordamerika* (München, 1998), p. 114-116. In fact, in the Huron-Wyandot tribe tobacco held a supernatural place.

<sup>115</sup> Metis historian Olive Dickason agrees that the treaty in Tadoussac meant that the French could people Montagnais country, but from it no rights to possession of the territory derived. Olive Patricia Dickason, *Canada's First Nations* (Toronto, 1993), p. 103.

<sup>116</sup> Marcel Trudel, "New France, 1524-1713", in: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto), Vol. 1, 1000-1700, p. 28.

suggested transporting the “surplus population of France”<sup>117</sup> to North America. “Surplus population” meant those parts of the populace that were poor and morally suspect.<sup>118</sup> The leading strata in the metropolis were keen to remove the latter from their own ranks by shipping them to the colonies rather than trying to find solutions to incorporate them into metropolitan society.<sup>119</sup> As such, the colony was not only considered as a source of riches to be exploited, but also as an exit for undesired elements from home. In fact, colonies were characterized by a specific periphery-centre-relationship in which the periphery was by nature subordinate to the centre.<sup>120</sup>

In Acadia, a colony was to be set up with the help of soldiers under the command of a lieutenant. In the Northwest of the peninsula, Port Royal was “baptised” - a common practice in colonial intent - and a harbour was set up to receive ships and settlers from the metropolis. Amicable relations were sought with the indigenous populations of the Micmacs, with whom fur trading and fishing activities were established in order to secure a basis for the survival of the colony.<sup>121</sup> Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt took over de Monts’ trading privilege and continued colonial endeavours in Acadia: in 1606, he agreed to ship further families, artisans and labourers to the colony. The Jesuits were allied to de Poutrincourt through an initiative of Madame de Guercheville who, being known as a supporter of the Jesuit order, sent another ship with 120 settlers and ten Jesuits from France to Port Royal. The newcomers founded the settlement of Saint-Sauveur, which became a centre of Jesuit activity.<sup>122</sup> Poutrincourt made a further attempt to bring an Indian child to the metropolis in service for the Queen, but he did not succeed because the parents of the child did not consent. According to prevailing Indian custom, which foresaw close relations between parents and children, Oagimont, sagamo at the

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<sup>117</sup> Marc Lescarbot, *L’Histoire de la Nouvelle-France* (Paris, 1609).

<sup>118</sup> René Gonnard, *La Dépopulation en France*, thèse pour le doctorat (Lyon, 1898), p. 22. See more up to date: Karen Offen: “Depopulation, nationalism and feminism in fin-de-siècle France”, in: *American Historical Review* 89,3 (1984), pp. 648-676.

<sup>119</sup> See also Bettina Rainer: *Bevölkerungswachstum als globale Katastrophe. Apokalypse und Unsterblichkeit* (Münster, 2005). She argues that widespread European discomfort about surplus population began in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The example of Marc Lescarbot, however, shows that this was already the case in 1608. Rainer uses the well-known argument of Malthus who declared social distress as a natural rather than a manmade phenomenon, p. 35. She argues that Malthus can therefore be seen as the first protagonist of a “laissez mourir” policy.

<sup>120</sup> Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus*, p. 33.

<sup>121</sup> Blet, *Colonisation*, p. 85.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86. However, by 1628 Acadia was largely settled with Scottish families and thus acquired the name of “Nova Scotia”. Acadia came under English rule between 1628 and 1632 until King Charles I. decided to return Acadia to the French.

river Sainte-Croix, refused to let his eleven-year-old girl go, although Poutrincourt promised that he would make sure to sustain her for the rest of her days.<sup>123</sup>

### 3. Trading Settlement in Quebec and Metropolitan Ideas of Expansion

In 1608, Samuel de Champlain, who became lieutenant of New France from 1612 to 1635, founded the first trading settlement in Quebec, which was for a long time the only French installation in the country. However, Euro-Indian relations were not exclusively commercial, in fact they frequently led to military conflicts. In 1609, Champlain had his first confrontation with the Mohawks, which marked the beginning of a series of French-Iroquois hostilities.<sup>124</sup> To Champlain the objectives of christianisation, linguistic and then cultural francisation of Indians remained vital. Bruce Trigger has argued that in this stance Champlain proved to have cultural, as opposed to racial prejudices against the Indians.<sup>125</sup> Morris Bishop held that it was because Champlain had seen the coercive treatment of Indians that he was opposed to the use of force in the conversion of Indians in Quebec.<sup>126</sup> It is also reported that he treated Indians with civility, “forgiving their offences” and “making them laugh”.<sup>127</sup>

In 1609, Marc Lescarbot further stressed the need to populate territories with Frenchmen: “We have sufficiently talked of territories...it is time to populate them.”<sup>128</sup> As someone with “very precise opinions about the colonies, which he saw as a field of action for men of courage, an outlet for trade, a social benefit, and a means for the mother country to extend their influence”,<sup>129</sup> Lescarbot hoped that French glory would extend over the Atlantic. King Louis XIII was finally convinced and in 1610 stated: “More than ever...France flourishes in piety, religion...in a manner that not content with her borders she will carry the knowledge of the true God with her laws to New Lands and other lands of the Barbarians and Idols, as well as replant the extension of the Cross with her *fleurs de lys* on the walls of the Holy City“. In the same year, Champlain had taken a young Indian from the Huron tribe named Savignon, father of Tregouaroti, to Paris, where he stayed for one year. Champlain had taken him in

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<sup>123</sup> Cited in Dionne, *Les Indiens*, p. 644.

<sup>124</sup> J.R. Beery: “Your tyre shall burn no more: Iroquois policy toward New France and its native allies to 1701”, in: *American Indian Culture Research Journal* 24 (4), pp. 218-220 (2000).

<sup>125</sup> Bruce Trigger, *Les enfants d’Aataentsic*, p. 268. Cited in Belmessous, *D’un préjugé*, p. 173.

<sup>126</sup> Morris Bishop, *Champlain: The Life of Fortitude* (New York 1948), p. 113.

<sup>127</sup> Marcel Trudel, “Champlain“, in: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, 1000-1700, ed. George W. Brown (Toronto, 1966), p. 197.

<sup>128</sup> Lescarbot, *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*.

<sup>129</sup> René Baudry, „Marc Lescarbot“, in: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto), vol. I, 1000-1700, p. 470.



exchange for a young Frenchman whom he had confined to the Huron in order that he learned the Huron language. Lescarbot encountered “Champlain’s savage” - as he was commonly called - who was described as laughing at French habits, as instanced by a quarrel between two men whom Savignon considered being “just like women” and lacking courage.<sup>130</sup> On his return to the Hurons, Savignon gave long speeches on experiences he had made in France and impressed his compatriots, especially by virtue of descriptions of the grand receptions he had received. When Champlain finally released Savignon, he presented him with some gifts and the young Huron, in turn, was reported to be sad to have to leave his protector and mentor.<sup>131</sup> The French advocated temporary adoption of young Indians with a view to assimilating them and using them as multipliers to spread French influence within their own tribes. However, in practice, French language and customs were not spread in this way and this approach turned out to be unsuccessful as an assimilation device. Therefore, such cases did not become a widespread practice and in 1612, Marc Lescarbot entered the debate warning that it would be wrong anyway to attempt the sudden destruction of old traditional and “incorrigible customs” of peoples.<sup>132</sup> In his writings, Lescarbot mentioned the sagamo de La Hève in Acadia named Messamoet, who had been brought to France and had lived in the house of Grandmont, the governor of Bayonne. Furthermore, Lescarbot claimed that the son of Memembourré had travelled to Paris and, being so impressed by what he saw, had henceforth called himself Paris instead of his original name Semcoudech.<sup>133</sup> French authorities took Lescarbot’s suggestions seriously and re-adopted their policy of bringing Indians from the colonies to the metropolis a year later, namely in 1613, rather than trying to change Indian customs within their own environment. Yet, there was no systematic design behind this change of policy. Rather it appears to have been an ad hoc measure precipitated by the failure of the first settlement.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Cited in Marc Lescarbot, *L'Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*, livre V, chapter V.

<sup>131</sup> Dionne, *Les Indiens*, p. 645. Present giving was a widespread practice among state and church authorities. For the region of Louisiana see Christophe Tuderot: *La politique d'échange de présents entre Français et Amérindiens en Louisiane au XVIIIe siècle*, DEA EHESS (Paris, 1990).

<sup>132</sup> “La relation dernière de Marc Lescarbot, Paris 1612“, in: Lucien Campeau (ed.), *Monumenta Novae Franciae I: La première mission d'Acadie (1602-1616)* (Québec, 1967), p. 184: “On ne peut arracher tout d'un coup les coutumes et façons de faire invétérées d'une peuple quel que soit. “

<sup>133</sup> Lescarbot, *L'Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*, p. 534.

<sup>134</sup> French officials brought six Indians from the tribe of the Tupinamba from their colony in Brazil to Paris where three of them - after being baptised under the French name of “Louis” - were married to French women. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1613 jurist and poet François de Malherbe wrote in a correspondence to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Pereisc who was Magistrate of the Parliament of Carpentras in Provence: “There are women ready waiting for them. I think that one only waits for the baptism before one can accomplish these marriages and ally France to the island of Maragnan.”<sup>134</sup> This example from Brazil shows the means that the French were adopting in order to assimilate Indians to French ways and to build alliances in the New World. However, there exists no record of similar incidences of New France Indians being married in the metropolis. In their New France colony, the

French imperial vision on incorporating new territories was backed by writers expressing the need to enlarge economic activities. The economist Antoine de Montchrétien expressed the French imperialistic vision in his *Traité de l'économie politique* in 1615, which stated the desire for colonial endeavours as part of augmenting the country's wealth. Political economy deals with the science of the production and the distribution of riches in one single country. Montchrétien, himself a representative of mercantilist arguments in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, referred to manufactures, commerce, navigation and the care of the prince. In order to argue for the augmentation of the wealth of a nation, Montchrétien made a eulogy of "work" in the context of industry, commerce and agriculture. He viewed the wealth of a nation as dependent on its industrial development and therefore advised that the state promotes large manufactures, intervenes to regulate professions and elaborates a customs policy in the interests of the home country. Thus, Montchrétien was a protectionist and a free-exchanger both at the same time. Furthermore, Montchrétien propagated a division of labour, accepted a certain level of luxury and favoured competition as a stimulus for the development of industry. With a view to the colonies, Montchrétien supported the idea of colonial expansion, favoured French emigration and the conversion of the savages.<sup>135</sup> Montchrétien's writings have to be seen in the context of colony building, whose hallmark was productive and efficient work in order to advance the French civilising mission.

The year of the publication of Montchrétien's *Traité économique* saw a major Euro-Indian confrontation: Rivalry with the Five Nations Iroquois, i.e. the tribes of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onandaga, Oneida and Mohawk, increased and culminated in a joint French-Huron attack. Such military confrontations led to a destabilization of the colonial system and weakened its population structure. To remedy low numbers of French settlers the Royal Court in Versailles decided that colonists would be supported at the cost of the royal treasury.<sup>136</sup> Yet, political agents in both colony and metropolis had different ideas on the practical pursuit of settlement policies (which were often linked to conversion objectives). Also, schemes differed according to specific regions. In general, settlement was encouraged close to military and trading posts where the French had already established their presence.<sup>137</sup> Initially, colonial activities were financed through trading companies, which received special privileges and were equipped

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French later applied the reverse approach of sending out white women to marry in the colony in order to augment population numbers there. See for the context of New France in chapter C.

<sup>135</sup> Antoine de Montchrétien, *Traité de l'Économie Politique* (Paris, 1615).

<sup>136</sup> Gustave Lanctot, *Histoire du Canada. Du Régime Royal au Traité d'Utrecht 1663-1713* (Montréal, 1963), p. 52.

<sup>137</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 87f.

with money and resources from the royal treasury. Among metropolitan elites, Cardinal de Richelieu, more than anyone, was intent on the idea of populating New France with Catholics from the French metropolis and he was initially convinced that it was best to entrust the colonizing endeavour to trading companies.<sup>138</sup> Their task was to encourage trade, to assist in conversion and sedentarization of Indians, and to provide financial support to missionaries. The first such attempt in 1627 ended in failure: noblemen who had received special privileges managed to attract only a hundred and seven French settlers and seemed to be more interested in securing their own private gains.<sup>139</sup> This corruption led to ineffective results in terms of populating colonial territories. In light of this failure, Richelieu, “grand master, chief and superintendent general of navigation and commerce of France”<sup>140</sup> decided in 1626 to found the *Compagnie des Cents Associés*. It was established shortly thereafter on 29th April 1627.<sup>141</sup> The King accorded the Company the territory of Quebec “and all said Canada” in order to improve and manage the soil and to distribute it according to their own judgment to those who wanted to live on it.<sup>142</sup> Again, Indian rights to the land were purposefully violated. In the year 1627, the number of French inhabitants in the colony according to official statistics was at roughly a hundred persons among which were five women.<sup>143</sup> The *Company of New France* was instructed to search and discover lands, soil and regions in New France, said Canada, in order to establish a colony “with divine assistance”, to bring those living there to acquire the faith and the “knowledge of God”, to police and instruct them in the “catholic apostolic and roman” faith.<sup>144</sup> In quintessence, this meant that the objective was to discover new habitable lands and to insure their peopling under the banner of the Catholic religion. French authorities were convinced that the only means to bring the “infidels” to acquire the faith would be through peopling the land with “natural” French Catholics in order to serve as examples of a pious and French way of living of royal subjects. At the same time, commerce and trade were

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<sup>138</sup> This view is held by Jacques Mathieu: “Confier l’établissement d’une colonie à une compagnie passait dans les milieux de la Cour comme la formule idéale d’organisation, celle qui offrait plus de garanties de succès.” Jacques Mathieu, “Les programmes de colonisation, 1601-1663”, in: Jean Hamelin (ed.), *Histoire du Québec* (St. Hyacinthe, 1977), p. 92.

<sup>139</sup> Marcel Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France 1524-1663* (Toronto, 1973), p. 165.

<sup>140</sup> Blet, *Colonisation*, p. 93

<sup>141</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 1, “Articles accordés par le cardinal de Richelieu à la Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France dite les Cents-Associés”, 20 avril 1627, f. 79; and C11A, vol. 1, “Edit du roi pour l’établissement de la Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France”, La Rochelle 1628, f. 91. The Company of One Hundred Associates later also came to be known as “Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France”.

<sup>142</sup> Archives Nationales, “Lettres patentes: Articles accordez par le Roy à la Compagnie”, Paris 27 avril 1627.

<sup>143</sup> Cited in Perrault, *Le métissage*, p. 111.

<sup>144</sup> Archives Nationales, “Lettres Patentes; Articles accordez par le Roy à la Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France, par le Cardinal de Richelieu”, Paris 29 avril 1627, p. 113.

stressed as important activities, which could serve to advance French interests. It is evident that French authorities initially tried to people New France with French subjects, and only gave up this strategy and searched for alternatives when they discovered that there was no sufficient number of Frenchmen wanting to settle in Canada.

By giving privileges to the *Company of One Hundred Associates* Richelieu's intention was to replace the ineffectiveness largely caused by the quick succession of several trading companies by creating a single one. The aim of this policy was to bring clear direction into France's colonizing endeavour.<sup>145</sup> On this occasion, Cardinal Richelieu specified reasons for which he considered the previous Company's endeavours as a failure: "Those to whom we had entrusted the care of the colony were so little interested that, to date, there is but one settlement...in which are maintained forty or fifty Frenchmen favouring the interests of the merchants rather than the...interests of the King; so badly maintained have they been...and so neglected has been the development of agriculture that if yearly provisions had been delayed...the small group of inhabitants would have starved to death, having but one month's supplies in store...". It was stressed that the only means to expose these peoples to the knowledge of God was to populate the country with native French persons. Following the example of the latter, Indian nations were to be confronted with the Christian religion, "civil life" and the authority of the French King.<sup>146</sup> Cardinal Richelieu went a step further in trying to assimilate Indians: in the founding act of the *Company of One Hundred Associates* he declared that those Indians who agreed to be baptised before an Atlantic crossing received naturalisation letters to become French citizens. In case of their arrival in the metropolis, it was promised that these Indians would enjoy all the rights and privileges of a Frenchman.<sup>147</sup> Most Indians did not show any interest in this offer. It can be supposed that since the promise of citizenship was not automatically tied to social and economic rights - those rights that seemed to secure physical survival - the concept of "citizenship" did not appear attractive to Indians. A paper, which stated that Indians - who were accustomed to an oral culture - would henceforth be considered French citizens by way of a document, was not sufficient to attract Indians to France.

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<sup>145</sup> Reinhard, *Expansion*, p. 157. See also Mathieu, *Programmes de colonisation*, p. 92.

<sup>146</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, f. 79, "Lettres patentes. Articles accordez par le Roy a La Compagnie de la Nouvelle France", 29 avril 1627, p. 1-2.

<sup>147</sup> *Édits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du conseil d'état du roi concernant le Canada*, (Québec, 1854), p. 10.

Since the measure to introduce citizenship for Indians did not yield any significant results, the policy of engaging trading companies in interaction with Indians was pursued further. The *Company of One Hundred Associates* received more privileges as an incentive to join in the colonial endeavour: it was decided that noblemen and clerics should be attracted through the prospect that they would not lose their trade privileges at home in France. Furthermore, the company's rules envisaged that new settlers in the colony should easily obtain masters rights, which were more difficult to gain in France, that new born "Canadians" could automatically become French citizens, and that trade was to be free of duties for a period of 15 years. The conditions that company's associates, mostly French Catholics and a few Huguenots, had to meet in return were to attract 4000 new colonists, of the Catholic faith, and to equip them with land. In fact, in 1628 contingents brought to the New World numbered 4000 people who had been shipped at a cost of 400.000 livres. In the same year a royal edict had outlined that the reputation of the French should be extended "bien loin dans les terres estrangeres" and that their piousness should come to the fore through conversion of people struck in "infidelity" and "barbarity".<sup>148</sup> Yet, endeavours were complicated by two circumstances: First, Jesuits resented the decision to accept Huguenots among company associates, because it enticed religious competition.<sup>149</sup> Second, there was ongoing English-French rivalry in the colony: two English brothers, the traders Kirke, captured one of the cargos of the Company of One Hundred Associates and thus hindered immigrants from reaching Quebec. The threat posed by the Kirke brothers was so immense that, in 1629, Champlain himself returned to France with all the missionaries that he had on board and the rest of the prospective immigrant group.<sup>150</sup>

#### **4. Initiatives of Jesuit Missionaries: Further Sedentarization**

The reign of trading companies, which had turned New France into a "commercial desk" for advancing economic interests, was being undermined by the power of missionaries who worked at sedentarizing Indians. While initially, the state had been merely interested in profits and gains to be obtained from activities in the fur trade, New France slowly turned into a population colony. Henceforth, key aims became to people the country; further exploit its riches, conquer its territory and to exert political domination over and thus assimilate

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<sup>148</sup> Archives Nationales, "Edict du Roy pour l'établissement de la Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France", La Rochelle, mai 1628, p. 159.

<sup>149</sup> Reinhard, *Expansion*, p. 157.

<sup>150</sup> Trudel, *New France*, p. 29.

Indians.<sup>151</sup> This assimilation was first and foremost to be achieved through making them sedentary. In fact, in 1633, Jesuit missionary Paul Lejeune realised that New France not only needed French settlers, but also that Indians needed to be settled before they could be converted and assimilated. He was convinced that if one “let these barbarians remain always nomads, then their sick will die in the woods, and their children will never enter the seminary. Render them sedentary and you will fill these two institutions [i.e. the hospital and the seminary].”<sup>152</sup>

Paul Lejeune held that conversion was difficult to realize with nomads: “These peoples, where we are, are errant; it will be difficult to convert them if we do not arrest them.” Arrest, in this context, meant making sedentary. Lejeune had no doubt that “if once arrested, they belong to us.”<sup>153</sup> He further claimed that who ever “reduced” a family, meaning concentrating it at one spot, converted all the descendants of this family and made a little Christian people out of it.<sup>154</sup> This meant that the focus needed to be directed to families rather than to single individuals. In order to realise this, Paul Lejeune asked for assistance from the metropolis in 1634 and asked for “a number of men in order to work and cultivate the land. Those joining them should know the language, and would work for the savages to the condition that they would arrest them and put their own hand at work, would live in some houses that would be built for them, so that they remain sedentary, and through this miracle of charity in their environment, one could more easily instruct and win them over.”<sup>155</sup> Paul Lejeune saw in sedentarization a stepping-stone to language instruction and cultural assimilation. Yet, tribes were treated differently: while some Hurons were educated in a seminary in Quebec, children from other tribes were sent away: in 1636 a young Iroquois woman, a little boy and three Montagnais girls, for instance, were shipped to France.<sup>156</sup> It was children of those tribes which “prevent their instruction; they will not tolerate this chastisement of their children, whatever they may do...[and] they think they are doing you some great favour in giving you their children to instruct, to feed and to dress.”<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Mathieu, *Les programmes de colonisation*, p. 114.

<sup>152</sup> Jesuit Relations, 16:33.

<sup>153</sup> Jesuit Relations, VI:82, XI:146.

<sup>154</sup> Jesuit Relations, XVIII: 116.

<sup>155</sup> Jesuit Relations, VI:150.

<sup>156</sup> Jesuit Relations, 11:95.

<sup>157</sup> Jesuit Relations, 5:197, 6:83-89, 153-155, 12:47.

The parallel settling of lands with Frenchmen from the metropolis with the help of the *Company of One Hundred Associates* was interrupted in 1645. At this time French settlers numbered around 300.<sup>158</sup> The Communauté des Habitants continued colonial work. It did not, however, yield any remarkable results in terms of colonization. Rather it led to corruption and neglect of business objectives: “dissensions, favouritism and intrigues were soon to disrupt the country”.<sup>159</sup> By 1648, it was held that the aim was to continue to augment the colony and to people it with French Catholics who should through their example easily convert “Savages” to the Catholic religion and to civil life, while at the same time taking advantage of the soil for the advance of French commerce.<sup>160</sup> However, instead it was observed that the country rather depopulated and periled at the face of the absence of police.<sup>161</sup> It was held that in order to render navigation through the Saint Lawrence River more secure in the face of Iroquois threats, the consolidation of colonial authority required greater expenditure.<sup>162</sup> By 1660, when the population numbered 2300 new settlers,<sup>163</sup> the merchants spoke of leaving the colony of New France, which, according to estimates of the Superior of the Ursuline order, Marie de l’Incarnation, would have meant the departure of nearly 2000 people because the majority were, in fact, merchants or traders.<sup>164</sup> Thus, the colonial system would have been confronted with great loss and destabilisation. In 1662, the new immigrant quota was therefore set at three hundred heads of families annually for ten years.<sup>165</sup> The *Company of New France*, also called *Company of Canada* listed some reasons why the King should not give up the colony. Among others, it proposed to choose every year from “the hospitals a certain number of the strongest men and those most able to carry out work...”<sup>166</sup>. Manpower represented vital capital for any colonial endeavour, and thus this argument was frequently employed in order to receive assistance from the state.

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<sup>158</sup> Reinhard, *Expansion*, p. 157.

<sup>159</sup> Trudel, *New France*, p. 30.

<sup>160</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 1, f. 247f, “Arrêt portant règlement en faveur des habitants de la Nouvelle France“, Paris le 9 mars 1648.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 248.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 249. See also R. Zimmer: “Escape from the Iroquois. A small group of French Jesuits in 1656 in New France, Canada”, in: *American History* 36 (1), pp. 30-36, April 2001.

<sup>163</sup> Blet, *Colonisation*, p. 133. Lionel Groulx speaks of 1.200 immigrants in the period 1608 to 1660. See Lionel Groulx: *Histoire du Canada Français depuis la découverte*, Montréal 1950, p, 45.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> Anon.: *Colbert et le Canada* (Paris, 1879), p. 30.

<sup>166</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 2, f. 45, “Raisons de La Compagnie de Canada pour empescher sa depossession ou du moins pour porter Le Roy a luy accorder des Conditions dont elle puisse se Contenter, Canada, 1663“.

When New France eventually became a royal colony of France a year later, in 1663, its population comprised six to seven white men for each white woman of marriageable age.<sup>167</sup> This ratio indicates that there were not enough white women to marry colonists in order to augment the population of the colony through marriage and reproduction. Therefore, already in 1634, state authorities had sought to remedy the lack of women in New France by sending out the *filles du roi* at the expense of the royal treasury.<sup>168</sup> French authorities had an intrinsic interest in augmenting the numbers of the colonial population. First, the French Empire was competing with British colonies to the South, which showed a much better performance in terms of population numbers.<sup>169</sup> Secondly, the figure of a viable colony with many inhabitants was identified by the French authorities as one of the preconditions for effectively exploiting its riches and securing trade advantages for the metropolitan mainland. Realising this aim required high population numbers. It was hoped that by sending women from the metropolis it would be assured that residing colonists became still more sedentary through marriage and by establishing their own homes.

On this issue, Intendant Jean Talon warned Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert in October 1665, of the diminution of the size of the colony: “I clearly perceive that the Company, by pushing its power to the extreme it pretends, will doubtless profit by impoverishing the country; and will not only deprive it of the means of self-support, but will become a serious obstacle to its settlement, and that Canada will in ten years be less populous than it is today.”<sup>170</sup> In 1667, 286 persons, mostly from the North of France, arrived in the colony and were followed by another 228 in 1668.<sup>171</sup> According to official statistics the proportion of Whites numbered around 6.000 persons in 1671.<sup>172</sup> In 1672, this figure surpassed the mark of 7.000 inhabitants, a rise, which signified a double in population figures since 1666. Between 1663 and 1670, about 2.500 new immigrants settled in New France according to the registers. In 1681, New France’s population was at 10.000 people. By the turn of the century the total

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<sup>167</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 596.

<sup>168</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 88. See more on this in chapter C.

<sup>169</sup> Wolfgang Helbich, „Die geschichtliche Entwicklung Kanadas“, in: *Kanada: Eine interdisziplinäre Einführung*, hg. von Hans Braun und Wolfgang Kloß (Trier, 1992).

<sup>170</sup> „M. Talon to the Minister“, Quebec 4th October 1665, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 30-31.

<sup>171</sup> Abbé Lortie, „De l’Origine des Canadiens Français“, in: *Bulletin du Parler français* (Québec, 1903-1904), p. 18.

<sup>172</sup> Alfred Zimmermann, *Die Kolonialpolitik Frankreichs. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1901), p. 66.



population number of the colony was around 12.000 inhabitants.<sup>173</sup> This rise in population numbers was due to a high birth rate, rather than to directed immigration. Most Frenchmen from the metropolis were reported to be reluctant to endure an Atlantic crossing and feared the cold winter climate, and that which they heard about Indian hostility towards settlers. This reluctance of settlers to come to the colony corresponds with the fact that France did not truly need settler colonies since its population at home had become increasingly stagnated.<sup>174</sup>

## 5. Debates in the Metropolis over the Prospect of the Colony

Population policy in New France was a disputed topic among French elites. Consequently, opinions diverged as to how and if to pursue it. On the one hand, there were those who saw New France as a lost enterprise, which seemed to absorb money and resources without adding to productivity or returning substantial gains.<sup>175</sup> On the other hand, there were those who hoped for commercial gain and national glory. Some of those who favoured the expansion of colonial possessions in the New World held that this should happen without populating territories or mixing peoples. Historian Cornelius Jaenen named this programme “expansion sans peuplement”<sup>176</sup>, a process that helped to foster alliances between French and Indians. This sort of expansion envisaged that Indians would preserve their autonomy while accepting French presence and protection. With the support of French-Indian alliances the colony could continue to fight the Anglo-American frontier and restrain English influence at the Atlantic.<sup>177</sup> This “expansion sans peuplement” meant the occupation of space without its population with new settlers from France - a move apparently in accord with the low numbers of willing emigrants from France.<sup>178</sup>

Yet, local administrators in the colony frequently affirmed the necessity to effectively populate New France.<sup>179</sup> One of the principal protagonists of a settlement policy was Pierre Boucher, governor of Trois-Rivières. In 1661, Boucher wrote in his memoirs that the colony

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<sup>173</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, „Colonisation compacte et colonization extensive en Nouvelle-France“, in: Alain Saussol/Jospeh Zitomersky. *Colonies, territoires, sociétés. L'enjeu français* (Paris, 1966), p. 17.

<sup>174</sup> Grupp, *Kolonialreich*, p. 286.

<sup>175</sup> See the numerous polemics written by Voltaire.

<sup>176</sup> Jaenen, *Colonisation*, p. 17.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> According to William Eccles, the politics of French expansion were in general a failure since their effect was to lead New France toward a confrontation with the English colonies towards the South, which were more densely populated colonies, and therefore more powerful in terms of men power. See William Eccles, *Frontenac. The Courtier Governor* (Toronto, 1959), p. 337.

<sup>179</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 57.

deserved to be populated and flattered the King, stating that the colony should become “a new world for the glory of the King” in the interests of France.<sup>180</sup> He advised the principal political agents not to limit their activities to the area of the St. Lawrence Valley, which had initially been the region in which French authorities had undertaken the biggest efforts to subjugate the local Iroquois. There was a whole quadrangle of competition between Iroquois, Montreal settlers, Jesuits and Hurons: “When the Iroquois massacred the early settlers of Montreal, the Jesuits in the hinterland, and the allies of the French, the Hurons, they were not merely killing Catholics, but more important, Frenchmen or friends of Frenchmen. Both were economic rivals.”<sup>181</sup> Pierre Boucher was, in fact, aware of the Iroquois threat, which stemmed from a powerful Confederacy of Indian tribes with whom they tried to control the region. He held that once the Iroquois were subjugated, entrance from the Saint Lawrence Valley into the Upper Country would be easy, “and then we would not lack beautiful places to inhabit”.<sup>182</sup> Boucher convinced the King that the Iroquois had to be subjugated before the colony could be steadily populated with white settlers. The King verbally agreed to secure the financial means for this endeavour, but seemed to remain at the level of “cheap talk”. Instead, on 27th March 1665, a memoir of the King to Intendant Talon stated that, with respect to the Iroquois, metropolitan authorities were determined to “bring war in every corner in order to destruct them entirely”.<sup>183</sup> Colbert had given instructions to Talon and expressly stressed the fact that the King had insisted that the Iroquois be “exterminated”: “...the Iroquois have declared themselves to be the perpetual and irreconcilable enemies of the colony, and through their massacres and cruelties they have prevented the colony being populated and established.”<sup>184</sup> The authorities in the metropolis increased the number of troops to be sent to the colony. Colbert wrote in 1666: “...de Courcelles and Talon have arrived in Canada with their troops that her Majesty has sent there in order to act against the Iroquois and to destruct this nation which, since the birth of the colony, has been a perpetual and an invincible obstacle to its augmentation and prosperity.”<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Boucher, *Epitre*, pp. 1-3, p. 6, p. 140, p. 143, p. 144-147.

<sup>181</sup> Nish, *The French Regime*, p. 23.

<sup>182</sup> The French original reads: “Quand le pays (la vallée laurentienne) sera habité, et que les Iroquois seront soumis, on trouvera bien l’intention de s’en rendre l’entrée facile (dans le Pays d’en haut): et puis on ne manquera pas de beaux lieux à habiter.” Boucher, *Epitre*, p. 5, pp. 25-27, p. 38, p. 57, p. 143.

<sup>183</sup> Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec (Québec, 1930-1931), p. 5.

<sup>184</sup> Cited in Colbert et le Canada (Paris, 1879), p. 23-24.

<sup>185</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, no 20, Lettre N, Versailles, le 5 avril 1666.

As much as it is reasonable to assume that from the French perspective the colony was initially seen as being subject to the interests of the French metropolis, the French state spent substantial amounts of money in order to finance its colonisation programme.<sup>186</sup> Yet, the King repeatedly stressed that initiatives should not cost the royal treasury too much. In fact, economic historians have claimed that one of the utmost objectives of the French state in the early modern period was to increase the fiscal power of the monarchy. To this design, the role of the colonies was restricted to the provision of markets for metropolitan products and to supplying natural resources to the mother country. In this context, New France was seen as becoming nothing more than “a supplement to Europe”<sup>187</sup> because it was subordinate to European market developments. This status, however, was not exclusive to New France, but was, in fact, accorded to colonies more generally. As such, the North American colony could not claim a privileged, let alone equal treatment to its mother country. In contrast to their English, Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch rivals, scholars regarded the French as never more than “reluctant imperialists” because France lacked comparable capacity for empire building.<sup>188</sup> “This shortcoming, has been attributed to the ideological split in the metropolis between internalists and externalists. This meant, on the one hand, that there was a half-hearted approach to any colonial endeavour and, on the other hand, that colonial activity was necessarily limited to short-range and generally insufficiently funded.”<sup>189</sup>

## **6. Family Allowances, Sending Soldiers and Making Indians Still More Sedentary**

It was mostly due to the initiatives of Intendant Jean Talon in the colony and Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert<sup>190</sup> in the metropolis that progress in the interests of the French Empire, i.e. developing the colony in order to render it useful to the metropolis, was envisaged. Talon had a close working relationship with Colbert who mainly gave the instructions to Talon. The latter, who held two terms of office - from 1665 to 1668 and then from 1670 to 1672 - was mainly interested in finding ways to encourage large families and rapid population growth. To

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<sup>186</sup> Gilles Havard, for instance, has neglected parts of the practice of sending the „filles du roi“ in order to marry colonists. The French state financed their dowry. This policy was especially encouraged after 1634, between 1663 and 1675 and again in 1713. See chapter C.

<sup>187</sup> Dale Miquelon, *New France 1701-1744: A Supplement to Europe* (Toronto, 1989).

<sup>188</sup> For a differentiated discussion on the difference between imperialism and colonialism see Urmila De/Alexis Rappas: “Introduction”, in: Diogo Ramada Curto and Alexis Rappas (eds.): *Colonialism and Imperialism: Between Ideologies and Practices*, EUI working paper HEC No 2006/01, p. 2.

<sup>189</sup> Conrad, *Reluctant Imperialists*, p. 104.

<sup>190</sup> Anon., *Colbert et le Canada* (Paris, 1879).

this effect he enacted measures designed to make payments to couples who married early and to families with over ten children, as well as to fine fathers whose children were not married before a certain age. In political terms, Talon expressed in 1665 his aim to turn the colony, in the likeness of the mother country, into a monarchy that would extend from the St. Lawrence to Mexico.<sup>191</sup> Talon stressed that the objective was to expand the French King's sovereignty to foreign lands, but insisted, however, that it was preferable to accept a minor extension of territorial possessions to reigning over a vast country that would be difficult to sustain as a colony. Colbert claimed that if the colony became too big, the Crown would have to give up parts of it, which would harm its reputation.<sup>192</sup> Colbert's long-term aims in New France were to introduce industries based on natural resources, agriculture and products of forests and the sea, then render these resources valuable to the metropolitan economy.<sup>193</sup> This is supported by the view that "the colonies are in the eyes of Colbert simply an organising element of the metropolis."<sup>194</sup> In this light, colonies served as operation bases for the established trading companies and as sources of raw goods that were to provide the basis for metropolitan manufacturing.

Colbert became aware that these aims could not be achieved in the short term and on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1666 he wrote to his intendant Talon that colony building was a long-term endeavour that required the overcoming of diverse obstacles.<sup>195</sup> In any case colony building required stable circumstances. Colbert was in no doubt that this endeavour would be successful only if certain objectives were met. He held that "the true means of strengthening the Colony is to cause justice to reign there, to establish a good police, to preserve the inhabitants in safety, to procure them peace, repose and plenty, and to discipline them against all sorts of enemies; because all these things, which constitute the basis and foundation of all settlements, being well attended to, the country will get filled up insensibly, and in the course of a reasonable time may become very considerable."<sup>196</sup> This meant that once certain preconditions were realised, people would voluntarily come to live in such a well-ordered country. Colbert, in fact, insisted that for building any powerful state it was indispensable that one had people to settle in these new lands. Yet, he was against sending out too many French citizens because

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<sup>191</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 2, f. 144, "Talon au Ministre Colbert", Québec 4 octobre 1665.

<sup>192</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 2, f. 202v, "Colbert à Talon", 5 avril 1666.

<sup>193</sup> Lionel Groulx, *Histoire du Canada français depuis la découverte* (Montréal, 1950), vol. 1, p. 113.

<sup>194</sup> Lamontagne, p. 56.

<sup>195</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 2, f. 199, "Colbert à Talon", Versailles 5 avril 1666.

<sup>196</sup> Translation in O'Callaghan, *Documents*, p. 39.

he feared that France might become depopulated. This would have meant a weakening of the metropolitan system in France: “It would not be wise to depopulate the Kingdom when one needs to populate Canada.”<sup>197</sup> French encyclopaedists shared Colbert’s hesitance and held that “it would be going against the very purpose of the colonies to establish them by depopulating the ruling country.”<sup>198</sup> Other means had to be sought in order to consolidate the colony. Yet, the census of 1666 showed that a total of 3418 families settled in New France that year, of which 555 were in Quebec, 584 in Montreal, 678 in Beaupré and 461 in Three Rivers. In the same year, the number of men, capable of bearing arms, from 16 to 50 years of age was at 1344.<sup>199</sup> In 1667, there were 84 men of a marriageable age and 55 girls above age 14.<sup>200</sup>

A considerable push for peopling the colony was seen in the sending of soldiers. In 1665, soldiers from the Carignan-Salières regiment were instructed to fight the Iroquois. Around 1.000 soldiers embarked for New France and 400 took lands on which they settled. Most of them decided to settle in the colony after they had served or whilst serving in the country. Soldiers usually came on short-term contracts of three to five years, but could stay longer if they decided to settle in the colony. Colbert wrote to Talon in 1666, that some assistance was needed in order to help these soldiers to become sedentary in the country and to establish families: “The King has been very glad to see by your and [Alexandre de Prouville] de Tracy’s dispatches that the greater number of the soldiers composing the four companies, who already went to America under the command of Sieur de Tracy, and the regiment of Carignan-Salières, are much inclined to settle in the Country if they be somewhat aided in establishing themselves there; for his Majesty deems it so important to the good of his service and of that Colony, that he wishes they should all remain in Canada.”<sup>201</sup> Funds and money were allocated in order to help realise this aim. Among 1.139 families residing in the colony in 1668, 412 soldiers and 300 of the four companies settled there that year.<sup>202</sup>

King Louis XIV was convinced, after consultation with experts on the state of the colony, that further increase in population numbers was needed. He wrote to Governor Frontenac on this matter in 1672, and asked for his loyalty in order to bring French objectives to realisation: “...The aim of all his behaviour and service that he can render His Majesty in this employ

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., f. 199.

<sup>198</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 42.

<sup>199</sup> “Census of Canada 1666”, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 57-58.

<sup>200</sup> “Census of Canada 1667”, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 61.

<sup>201</sup> “M. Colbert to M. Talon”, Versailles, 5th April 1666, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 43.

<sup>202</sup> “Census of Canada” 1668, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 61.

must be the augmentation and multiplication of these peoples in this country.”<sup>203</sup> However, in 1673, the King decided to cut down expenses for the colony, which proved to be too costly. Minister Colbert declared to Governor Frontenac on 13th June: ”...I will repeat again to you that His Majesty has not planned on giving any assistance to Canada this year because of the large and prodigious expenses that he has been obliged to make for the raising of...200.000 soldiers presently mobilized...and one hundred ships and twenty-five galleys presently at sea. He has not neglected to again incur the expenses for the sending of sixty young women and has given some assistance to the hospital at Quebec and to a few individuals, but this is all he was capable of doing for this year.”<sup>204</sup> The Minister also reiterated that more women should be send to the colony.

La Salle and Cadillac had the plan to found strategically important posts in order to attract Indians into their proximity. La Salle hoped to lead a great number of savages into a lifestyle similar to the French by encouraging them to live on specific territory and by exercising a profession: “to attract the biggest number of Savages that is possible, to give them soil to form a village and to cultivate, to learn professions and to bring them to a life more conform to ours.”<sup>205</sup> In fact, the statistics show that at Fort Saint-Louis du Rocher La Salle succeeded in attracting 20.000 Indians between 1682 and 1683.<sup>206</sup> While the concentration of Indians was pursued, competences of missionaries were to be augmented. In 1684, Marquis de Seignelay, the son of Jean-Baptiste Colbert and one of the King’s advisers, sent a letter to Intendant Jacques de Meulles in the colony in which he addressed this matter: “You cannot too much encourage the Gentlemen of the Montreal Seminary to increase the establishment of the Indian villages in the neighbourhood of their settlements. His Majesty continues to allow them the grant of 6 m. [thousand] livres, which he gives them every year.”<sup>207</sup> While Indians were encouraged to settle close to missionary posts, Frenchmen who decided to settle in lands belonging to the English and the Dutch were punished. The latter were treated as deserters who had quitted their land holdings in New France.

In April 1684, an edict was passed which stated that “being informed that diverse of our subjects settled in our Country of New France, and who have lands there to them belonging,

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<sup>203</sup> Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec (Québec, 1926-27), p. 6.

<sup>204</sup> Minister to Frontenac, 13 June 1673, R.A.P.Q (Québec 1926-1926), pp. 24-26. The number of 200.000 soldiers must be questioned, however. It is more likely that the figure should be 20.000.

<sup>205</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 4, f. 97.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> M. de Seignelay to M. de Meules, Versailles, 10th April 1684, in: Brodhead (ed.), *Documents*, p. 222.

keep up an intercourse with vagabond and loafing Frenchmen who have deserted to settle at Manatte, Orange and other places under the dominion of the English and the Dutch, and that they have been led, by this example of fecundity and licentiousness, to abandon the cultivation and clearing of their lands, which would inevitably bring ruin on the Colony, were it not promptly remedied; Wherefore we have, by these presents signed by our hand, expressly forbidden and prohibited all Frenchmen, inhabiting New France, removing to Orange, Manatte and other places belonging to the English and the Dutch, without our permission or that of those who have authority from us grant it; We will that those of our subjects who shall become ringleaders, and who, as Chiefs, will have undertaken to desert and remove to the said English and Dutch, be condemned to Death.”<sup>208</sup> While it was stressed that these French were punished because they neglected their agricultural duties, one may assume that these so-called “deserters” were settling on English and Dutch territory because they were taking Indian women there.<sup>209</sup>

Meanwhile, populating the colony continued to be one of Colbert’s primary aims. He hoped that this would be realised by sending French citizens from the provinces.<sup>210</sup> French administrators, such as Boucher, had already accepted the necessity to look for ways to secure the populating of the colony in the past in order to create a basis for exploiting its furs and fishery.<sup>211</sup> Thus, Colbert’s initiative did not break new ground. Gilles Havard, however, has drawn attention to the fact that Canada did not need to be populated in order to exploit its riches of furs. This was already secured through the employment of wandering *coureurs de bois* and *voyageurs* in the service of the two principal fur-trading companies of the North West Company and the Hudson’s Bay Company.<sup>212</sup> It appears, however, that the objective of such schemes was rather to make sure that the exploitation of the colony would be made more efficient by augmenting the numbers of traders. Inputs into the subsystem of the colony meant strengthening its economic power towards the system of the metropolis. Governor Louis de Buade de Frontenac saw himself as loyal servant of his King and was working towards augmenting the population in the colony. In 1687, the King reiterated towards Governor Jacques-René de Brisay de Denonville and Intendant Jean Bochart de Champigny the need to

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<sup>208</sup> “Edict for the punishment of Frenchmen who will remove to Manatte, Orange and other places belonging to the English and the Dutch, Versailles 10th April 1684“, in: Brodhead (ed.), *Documents*, p. 224f.

<sup>209</sup> See chapter C on this point.

<sup>210</sup> See for instance René Le Tenneur, *Les Normands et les Origines du Canada Français* (Paris, 1973).

<sup>211</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 267.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61

increase the numbers of Indians in French settlements. The King saw, in fact, a correlation between high population numbers and the spreading of Christianity. The King was acting on an initiative by Denonville: "His majesty has examined the census of the colony, which the said Sieur de Denonville has sent him, and he has been surprised to see that there has been less land under cultivation in the year 1686 than in 1685, and that there has been so little increase in the number of Indians living among the French; yet there is nothing more important both for religion and for the service of his majesty as to increase the population in general, by all possible means, nothing being more proper than the acquisition of new subjects by his majesty without expense to the kingdom; and nothing can contribute more than this to the establishment of the Christian religion among the tribes."<sup>213</sup>

The King made clear that he considered Indian sedentarization close to French settlements as the best means to continue spreading Christianity and that this had to be the utmost priority in the colony. Yet, he also wanted to reduce costs as much as possible in order to relieve the French treasury, which was required to provide substantial funds for the colonial endeavour. Rather than pursuing this policy with rigour, however, Indians were sent to France in 1687 instead. Cardinal Angelo Maria Ranuzzi, who was formerly a professor of Canon Law in Fano, reported from Rome to French authorities in Paris that some seventy Indians of colour, i.e. of dark complexion, had arrived in La Rochelle in Western France. They had been captured as prisoners during wars in Canada and the intention was to send them to Marseille to be sold as slaves.<sup>214</sup> This measure further shows that France applied a diverse strategy: on the one hand, to sedentarize Indians in the colony in order to convert and instruct them, and at the same time to use their labour force as slaves in the metropolis. A sedentarization strategy was applied rather in the region of the Mississippi Valley. Pierre d'Iberville explained to the King why settlements there were important: "The reasons which prompt us to maintain this settlement are in the first place the instruction of the savages and the knowledge to be given them of the Christian faith, - this the Spaniards are unable to do, - and to spare them the misfortune of falling into the hands of the English or of the French Huguenot refugees."<sup>215</sup> According to d'Iberville the French were more able than the Spaniards to spread Catholicism, and he made clear that Huguenot influence had to be prevented.

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<sup>213</sup> Archives Nationales, "The King to Denonville and Champigny, March 30, 1687" [AN, C, B, vol. 13, f. 16-34, C, extract, printed in Brodhead, 9:322].

<sup>214</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano, "Lettere del S<sup>r</sup> Card. Ranuzzi Nun. Ap.", Parigi 27 Nov. 1687, in: Segretaria de Stato Francia 176, f. 587v.

<sup>215</sup> Archives Nationales, C13C, vol. 2, f. 12v-13, "Mémoire de la coste de la Floride et d'une partie du Mexique".



D'Iberville went further: he wanted to win over all the Indians of the Mississippi Valley “to form a barrier to the English from Boston to Florida, or Carolina.”<sup>216</sup> He finally convinced authorities to place missionaries among Indian tribes of the region, which were geographically situated between areas under English control. The Jesuit Father Tremblay also thought of building a bulwark against the English colonies towards the South. Tremblay lamented the Franciscan influence in the region around Port Royal in Acadia and wanted Jesuits to be positioned there in order “to uphold the faith at the gate of heresy which reigns in New England.”<sup>217</sup> Tremblay, in turn, stressed the competition with Protestantism. The constant confessional divide among Catholics, Protestants and Huguenots in Canada was decided in favour of the Catholic Church who was best backed financially and morally by the State and who was thus able to exercise more influence in the region. Their missionaries were to further work towards concentrating Indians. The most long-lasting transmigration plan was realised in Detroit according to the plans of Officer Antoine Laumet de la Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac. 4.000 Indians were attracted from 1701 onwards, above all from the tribes of the Huron, Ottawa and Miami.<sup>218</sup> In 1702, d'Iberville further propagated the idea to transport whole nations from one place to another. He wanted to resettle the Illinois, the Sioux, the Miamis, the Mascoutens and the Kikapous through “making change their land to more than 12.000 savages.”<sup>219</sup> Pontchartrain, however, was sceptical and thought that “entire nations can not be transported from one place to another.”<sup>220</sup> Despite such reasonable objections, Jesuit Father Gravier could not prevent such a resettlement as that which took place in 1700 when a transmigration of the village of the Kaskaskia separated this tribe from the Peorias and the Moingouens. Gravier preferred to see them united at one spot, which would have facilitated his conversion work. Gravier noted in desolate and sentimental terms: “I have a broken heart to see my ancient troop be divided and dispersed.”<sup>221</sup> Yet, these resettlements schemes were not of long-lasting effect, and in many cases they had to be given up. One of the exceptions was Detroit, which later grew into a sizeable city.

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<sup>216</sup> O'Neill, *Church*, p. 30.

<sup>217</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres O 28, Tremblay to Glandelet, 7th May 1700, p. 19. Tremblay to Laval, 31st March 1702, Lettres N117, p. 11.

<sup>218</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 23, f. 160. Pierre Margry, (ed.), *Découvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique Septentrionale, 1614-1754* (Paris, 1879), vol. 5, p. 142.

<sup>219</sup> D'Iberville, in: Margry, *Découvertes*, vol. 4, pp. 596-599.

<sup>220</sup> Pontchartrain, in: Margry, *Découvertes*, vol. 4, p. 607.

<sup>221</sup> Jesuit Relations 65, pp. 100-102.

## 7. Prospects of Citizenship and Marriages of Soldiers in the Colony

Meanwhile, the King's authorities in the colony increased their endeavours of attracting immigrants to New France. They set up an initiative whereby foreigners were eligible to be accepted as new subjects. In 1713, the King agreed to issue naturalisation letters, which were to be given to foreigners who were recognized as "true natural subjects" with permanent rights of residence: "They shall be allowed and free to remain in New France."<sup>222</sup> In reality, hundreds of non-French decided to settle in the colony under the French regime.<sup>223</sup> Four years later, in 1717, this policy was extended to Blacks wanting to enter Canadian territory. The Council of the Marine decided that for the augmentation of the colonial population and its commerce, Blacks should be allowed to immigrate, a policy copied from the English colonies. It was held that English and Flemish did not work, and that it was mainly Blacks who did. It was hoped that in Canada they could be employed in fisheries, hunting, construction work and mining. Yet, it was held that the cold climate was not suitable to the "temperament" of Blacks. This was the reason for which Governor Pierre François de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil objected to this initiative of introducing "citizenship" for Blacks in New France.<sup>224</sup> On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1718, the King turned his attention back to Indians and assembled the tribes of the Narantsoak, Panaouiamske and that of Rivière St. Jean in order to forge alliances with them. It was claimed that there was no danger that the Indians of a certain village would turn into English subjects. The Governor sent 200 families in order to settle them at Panakamske River, another 500 to live nearby and yet another 500 to establish themselves at the St. Jean River.<sup>225</sup>

Colonial agents also hoped to extend the colonial enterprise to further Canadian territories. In 1719, it was issued that the island of Saint-Jean, the later Prince Edward island, was to be colonised under Louis-Hyacinthe Castel, comte de Saint-Pierre, as well as the island Miscou, and that fisheries were to be established. This happened in the same year in which the English made one of their own initiatives to allow mixed marriages with the Indians, the first timid attempt in this direction already being made by 1714. It is unclear, however, if the French

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<sup>222</sup> Archives Nationales du Québec, Rambouillet, Juin 1713, "Insinuations du Conseil supérieur", vol. 4, f. 10. André Vachon, *L'enracinement. Le Canada de 1700 à 1760. Les documents de notre histoire*. Archives publiques Canada: Ministère des Approvisionnement et Services Canada (Ottawa, 1985), p. 55.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 37, f. 41-42, "Décisions du Conseil de Marine relatives au Canada 1717: Proposition de faire passer des Nègres en Canada".

<sup>225</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 39, f.157-159, "M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil à Quebec", 31 octobre 1718.

were already aware of this new English policy by this time, and therefore it is not certain that the new colonising endeavour was a direct reaction to this. In 1725, sending of Indians to the French metropolis as means of acculturation was taken up again in order to impress them with French manners and to enhance publicity.<sup>226</sup> On 27<sup>th</sup> of September, state officials made such an attempt: two Indians arrived at the Royal Court in Paris and were formally received by the French King at a meeting of the Company of the Indies. The commandant of Missouri Véniard de Bourmont, who had mainly financed the trip, and Jesuit missionary Nicolas-Ignace de Beaubois, who acted as interpreter, accompanied them. This initiative, however led to no results. Again, the attempt to assimilate Indians by sending them into a French environment was unsuccessful.

Eight years later, French authorities were therefore more concerned with the marriage of soldiers in the colony, which was seen as another means to populate the colony. On 14<sup>th</sup> October 1733, Governor Charles de Beauharnois and Intendant Gilles Hocquart wrote to the Minister from Quebec on this behalf: “It has always been a habit, according to the intentions of the King to dismiss those soldiers who have married upon the arrival of new recruits. It happens ordinarily that it is the best who settle.”<sup>227</sup> Of 10.000 persons settling in Canada during the period of the French regime, approximately 3.500 were soldiers. More immigrants steadily populated Canadian territories: in 1739, the island of Saint-Jean counted 422 persons. Population numbers increased with an influx of a few thousand Acadian refugees between 1749 and 1758.<sup>228</sup> Similarly, Newfoundland had only one thousand inhabitants at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a figure which increased to 7.300 in the year 1750 in accordance with the demographic rise of Acadia, which was under British rule during that period.<sup>229</sup> According to official figures, Île Royale hosted 3.407 inhabitants in 1734, mostly fishermen, workers and merchants from Acadia, Newfoundland and the maritime regions of Western France, i.e. from Bretagne, Gascogne, Normandy, Aunis, Saintonge, Poitou and Labourd.<sup>230</sup> The capital of Île Royale, Louisbourg, was already so well developed that it hosted a hospital, a monastery of the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame, a house of the Recollect order, numerous cabarets, an edifice for the bastion of the King, the loge of the Governor, the military officers

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<sup>226</sup> Thanks to Gilles Havard for this comment.

<sup>227</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 59, f. 184-184v. See Vachon, *L'énracinement*, p. 59.

<sup>228</sup> Vachon, *L'énracinement*, p. 79

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>230</sup> Archives Nationales, G1, vol. 466, “Recensement de l'île royale, 1734”. Vachon, *L'énracinement*, p. 80.

and a section of the military troops. Thus, Louisbourg steadily grew into a sizeable city.<sup>231</sup> As far as other Canadian territories were concerned there were 2.300 persons in the parish of Notre-Dame de Quebec in 1716. In 1737, the colony contained a total of 6.872 families and 39.970 individuals, of which 20.708 were men and 19.262 women. Of these 17.486 or 43,7% had not yet reached the age of 15, indicating that nearly half of the population of the colony was rather young. In 1754, of 55.000 inhabitants that were listed altogether, 42.200 lived in the countryside and 12.800 in towns. Quebec had meanwhile quadrupled to 8.000 within forty years, while Montreal's population numbered 4.000 persons.<sup>232</sup>

In 1749, the New France colony was threatened by the expansionist drive of the English. Governor Roland-Michel Barrin de La Galissonière recommended sending more troops and colonists in order to strengthen the colony. He requested that some posts be set up around Ohio:<sup>233</sup> "...to establish solidly [by augmenting the population] the environments of fort Saint-Frederic and the posts of Niagara, Detroit and Illinois." When the Seven Years War with the English broke out in 1754, the French military response was not well prepared. Yet, in 1755 Marquis de Vaudreuil continued to write optimistically on the colonisation prospects of Detroit: "I am flattered that I will see in the next spring chiefs of all nations, and that I will succeed to render their attachment for the French inviolable. I have no doubts, Monseigneur, that you are informed of the excellence of the soil in Detroit. This post is considerable, it is well populated, but one could easily place three times more families there than are at present. Unfortunately we do not have enough people in the colony. I will make arrangements in order to favour the establishment of two sisters of the congregation in this post for the education of the children without raising any costs for the King."<sup>234</sup> In fact, the King received this initiative positively since attention to the costs of colonial endeavours was given high precedence in the metropolis. The aim was to spend as little as necessary to gain as much as possible from the colony. In 1758, philosopher Voltaire, who waged bitter polemics on the Canadian colonial endeavour at home in France, because he held it to be a wasteful adventure, which simply cost too much, claimed that it was better for the French to cultivate cacao, indigo, tobacco and

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<sup>231</sup> Vachon, *L'enracinement*, p. 128.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73. See also M. Paquet: "The Algonquian Tesseruat and the foundation of Montreal – Franco-Indian diplomacy in New France", in: *University of Toronto Quarterly* 68 (1), pp. 150-154, Winter 1998.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>234</sup> M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil, Montréal le 30 octobre 1755, in: *Extraits des Archives des Ministères de la Marine et de la Guerre à Paris*. Publiés sous la direction de l'abbé H.-R. Casgrain. Canada. Correspondance Générale. MM. Duquesne et Vaudreuil, Gouverneurs-Généraux 1755-1760. (Québec, 1890), p. 107. It is not clear to whom this letter is addressed. From the title "Monseigneur" one could deduce that he is addressing himself to Minister Colbert rather than to the King.

mulberry trees in the Mississippi region than to wage a “fruitless Seven Years War” against the English. Meanwhile population numbers in New France increased in 1760 to 70.000 people. However, in 1762 Voltaire did not give up his polemic and tried to support his view by referring to public opinion and the bad press of Canadian colonial activities: “I am like the public. I like peace far more than Canada and I think that France can be happy without Québec.”<sup>235</sup>

## 8. Conclusion

At the outset of their colonial endeavour, French agents probed several strategies at once: taking Indians to France, sedentarizing Frenchmen, and attracting Indians to the vicinity of French settlements. The most successful of these programmes was French settlements: neither transmigration of Indians nor taking them to France helped to assimilate them to French ways. In practice, a procedure was established whereby evangelisation and civilising were imposed, while language instruction and education mostly became a matter of choice.<sup>236</sup> Regardless of the order of things, the purpose of assimilation aimed to transform Indian habits into French or European ones. So-called “savage” characteristics were identified such as the absence of reason, which was to be undone by evangelisation, the nomadic chase to be replaced by agriculture and settlement, semi-nudity to be remedied through the wearing of European style clothes, rudimentary *cabanes* to be replaced by French houses and chimneys, the absence of government to be remedied by French authority, the absence of writing to be undone by alphabetisation, and “defective” language by instruction in French.<sup>237</sup> The peculiarity of these aims becomes apparent, when one considers that usually it is the incoming culture from which assimilation to cultural and political values of the group living on the territory is expected. The fact that during the colonial period the reverse was true reveals the colonial objective: subjection and domination, assimilation and instruction in order to take possession of new territories with the aim of incorporating them into a world economy and turning them into European strongholds.

There was a particular power constellation in the colony and its respective relationship to the metropolis. Among French state agents, the King had more power over decisions than his

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<sup>235</sup> Public Archives Canada, MG 18, A3: “Lettre de Voltaire, 6 septembre 1762”.

<sup>236</sup> Perrault, *Le métissage*, p. 109.

<sup>237</sup> Olive Dickason, “The concept of “l’homme sauvage” and early French colonialism in the Americas”, in: *Revue française d’histoire d’Outre-mer*, vol. 64, no. 234 (1977), pp. 5-32.

governors and intendants, although the latter were usually better informed on the development of the colony than the former. The King, in turn, was influenced by the stance of ministers in the metropolis. However, it turned out that colonial officials could manipulate decisions that had been taken in the metropolis, and, in fact, often did so in order to adjust policy objectives to colonial realities. Both colonial and metropolitan authorities as well as Indians and French showed flexibility in decision-making. Concurrently, all groups were dependent on power hierarchies within their political and cultural systems. For both sides those in important positions could out rule other agents on vital issues. As such, office and status holding were more important than competences and actual problem solving.

The French favored assimilation rather than separation or segregation because their aims implied coexistence and the formation of a French nation overseas. This national formation stood under the banner of one ethnic marker: the citizens of New France were to be culturally and ethnically French and this did presuppose Frenchness as an integrative force. Also, the French were partly peaceful in intent and did not envisage hegemonic supremacy through warfare in the first place, although destruction occurred mainly with regard to the Iroquois who proved most resistant to French domination. The offer for citizenship on the side of the French was meant to facilitate Indian assimilation; it was designed to act as an incentive. The French - although not being motivated by purely humanistic ideals - also had emancipating intentions: The hope to turn Indians into French citizens was meant to be an offer that Indians could either decline or accept. Further treatment, however, was not outlined with this offer for citizenship. In fact, Indians - either because they knew that citizenship would not secure them the rights needed for survival, or because they had no access to this kind of identity-formation - mostly preferred to remain Indians. As Reinhart Koselleck has shown for the context of Prussia at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, “citizen” was a struggle concept (*Kampfbegriff*), in that it aimed at a “polemical goal” directed against traditional corporate society, in itself unequal. “Citizen” was a struggle concept because future “citizens” demanded equality and opposed those who refused to grant them this right.<sup>238</sup> “Citizen” was at the same time an expectation concept in that it created the expectation of becoming an equal member of society. For the context of Indians in North America the impact of the concept of “citizen” rather derived from incoming French than from subjected Indians themselves, who were not carrying this concept in their mouths. To them equality derived not from a political right granted by state agents or

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<sup>238</sup> Hans Erich Bödeker: “Concept - Meaning - Discourse. Begriffsgeschichte reconsidered”, in: *History of Concepts. Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans and Frank van Vree (Amsterdam 1998), 51-64, p. 55.

institutions, but was ascribed by the natural authority of the tribe and its chief. Therefore, the concept of citizenship did not play a crucial role in the Indian mind. Yet, the very idea of giving citizenship to Indians implied that they would finally adhere to equality; as such “citizen” was also a future concept since it projected the privilege of becoming a citizen with full rights into the future. René Maunier had pointed out: “If one puts forward that citizenship shall reign between the conquerors and the conquered, one has to go all the way with this idea and put forward that equality shall reign between them.”<sup>239</sup> However, it must be questioned if this was what the French aimed at. Citizenship appears to have been intended as an incentive to assimilate Indians to French culture, by creating the impression of accepting them into the French realm, rather than truly creating a community of equal French citizens. Moreover, the “microbic choc” led to disastrous results: before they could turn into citizens, many Indians died. Rather than achieving the aim of high numbers of assimilated Indians, letting them die or killing them in warfare could have been a means of easily effecting French domination in North America. However, incorporation was temporarily realized because competition with the British was so strong that the French initially needed Indian populations for alliance building and in order to navigate through Canada’s unfamiliar wilderness. Yet, as Isabelle Perrault has rightly pointed out: this was not merely exploitation on the side of the French; Indians also knew how to profit from the contact situation and its aftermath by acting as indispensable intermediaries.

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<sup>239</sup> René Maunier, *Sociologie Coloniale. Introduction à l’étude du contact des races* (Paris, 1932), p. 65.

## B. Converting, Instructing and Assimilating Indians: Frenchification and Evangelisation

### 1. Rationale for the Religious Conversion of Indians

“Gardez-vous bien, mon fils, je vous conjure, de n’avoir dans la religion que cette vue d’intérêt, très mauvaise quand elle est seule.”

Louis XIV<sup>240</sup>

In an early modern world, religion was one of the primary identity markers in Europe. In consequence, people who did not share the Christian belief in a monotheistic God, did not obviously worship him in the same prayers and rituals and did not seem to live according to civilisation as understood in the Old World, had - according to prevailing doctrine among state and church elites - to be converted. The fact that Indians did not seem to be aware of sin, of the Christian notions of heaven and hell and of the idea that Jesus Christ would return to Earth enticed early modern believers to set out to turn the “New World” into a Christian stronghold. The concept of “conversion” derived from the Christian understanding of the world, which was based on a creation myth. It held that prior to man’s sinful downfall the world was an earthly paradise in which all creatures had been living in harmony and mutual understanding. With the sinful act of eating an apple from the tree of knowledge, Eve heralded the age of man’s cumbersome labour for his own well-being.<sup>241</sup> Burdened with the Christian creation myth, on the one hand, early modern believers were influenced by another drama, on the other: the end of the world as we know it. According to the German historian Lucian Hölscher “to old-European society, whose intellectual horizon has defined up until our present century the thinking and acting of the majority of the population, the distant future was a realm, which was for the most part filled with Christian imaginations of the end of all time.”<sup>242</sup> According to this understanding, judgment day, the coming of the Anti-Christ, the second return of Christ himself and images of God’s eternal kingdom bustled in the minds of believers, who were searching for fixed dates in their “belief of the future”.<sup>243</sup> Eschatology lay in the hands of the Church who was the administrator of this belief: “It [the Church] was in

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<sup>240</sup> *Mémoires*, ed. Longman, p. 62.

<sup>241</sup> Moses, first book (Genesis), 3, 17, 19.

<sup>242</sup> Lucian Hölscher: „Zukunft und Weltende. I. Die Entdeckung der Zukunft in der frühen Neuzeit, 1. Der Zeitpunkt des Weltendes“, in: *ibid.*, *Die Entdeckung der Zukunft* (Frankfurt a. Main 1992), p. 27. The translation from the German original is my own.

<sup>243</sup> Hölscher uses the term “Zukunftsglauben”.



possession of the monopole in old-European society over man's imaginations of the future."<sup>244</sup> It was in this logic of Christian belief that only with the last part of the divine history of salvation, i.e. with the return of Jesus Christ, "at the point where God's revealing signs of the end of the world took on, the Christian believer would gain clarity as to the temporal position of the present age in the totality of world history."<sup>245</sup> Not all missionaries were instructed in Christian eschatology. Some of the main protagonists who pursued the evangelical mission with fervour, however, tried to motivate fellow fathers in a direction that was defined precisely by such Christian notions as divine providence.

French justification for the conversion of Indians to Christianity derived from the assumption that Indians were pagans and thus did not live under the authority of a prince allied to France.<sup>246</sup> Conversion was carried out parallel to the acquisition of lands on which Indians had been living. According to Brian Slattery, "only two modes of acquisition were envisaged: peaceful agreement and war - in classical terminology, cession and conquest. There is no reference to acquisition by discovery or symbolical acts."<sup>247</sup> Jacques Cartier's erection of a Christian cross at his arrival in Gaspé Peninsula in 1534, however, can precisely be read as such a symbolical act. Cartier was among the first official representatives of the French state. With the erection of a Christian cross on which was inscribed "Vive le Roi de France", Cartier expressed both the French monarchy's territorial claims and linked them to Catholicism as the official state religion. The symbol of the cross displayed to the Indians that henceforth missionaries would invade the country in the hundreds and would try to spread Christianity over the Atlantic. At the same time, it made clear that Europeans had no intention to respect the propriety rights of Indians. With a simple act of taking possession, which was to be repeated many times thereafter, "the field was opened to colonial practices": this act of a White man invalidated all the lived experience of anterior occupation of the soil by natives.<sup>248</sup> Henceforth, territories which had belonged to the Indians were named "Pays des Illinois" or "Pays des Hurons", for instance, which did not signify recognition of Indian ownership, but simply designated the territory according to the tribe that was most established on it. Taking possession of territories and aiming at assimilating Indians went hand in hand. Yet, Marcel

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid. See also W. Trillhaas: Art. "Geschichte und Geschichtsauffassung II.B", in: RGG 3rd Edition, vol. 2 (1959), p. 1482f.

<sup>246</sup> Belmessous, *D'un préjugé culturel*, p. 321.

<sup>247</sup> Slattery, *French claims*, p. 159.

<sup>248</sup> Isabelle Perrault has most accurately pointed this out in *Le métissage*, p. 103.

Trudel has claimed that France was the only European power to have granted the Savages the “privileged treatment” of assimilating rather than destructing them.<sup>249</sup> If assimilation and expropriation did not envisage destruction in the long run, then France was indeed acting on humanistic principles in contrast to its colonial rivals. However, there were eminent voices among French agents who spoke of eliminating Indians, merging them into White society and thus undoing this identity so that it would be effaced into a new order.

Before Jacques Cartier’s first voyage to the St. Lawrence, and the arrival of French explorers and missionaries in Canadian regions thereafter, spreading of Christianity through missionary activity had been common practice in Spanish America where the first missionary experiments took place. Popes who rhetorically favoured the colonisation endeavour wrote bulls with a view to South America where Spain and Portugal had established dominance. The idea of missions in New France was introduced in order to challenge these colonial rivals and to create a co-operative basis between the French state and the Catholic Church. In 1539, the theologian Francisco de Vitoria of Salamanca rhetorically backed colonisation endeavours in South America with the claim that Indians could only be dominated if they were properly evangelised. De Vitoria thought that Europeans had the right to evangelise “infidels”, by force if the latter prevented them from doing this.<sup>250</sup> Prior to de Vitoria’s statement a debate had been waged on the issue of whether Indians were actually incapable of receiving the faith, a debate that ended with success on the side of de Vitoria who held that such opinion was heretical and merited the death penalty.<sup>251</sup>

This was paralleled by debates, which suggested that Indians were not interested in acquiring Christian faith. Two years prior to Vitoria’s pronouncement on the evangelisation of Indians, Pope Paul III, who had taken up ideas formulated by his predecessor Alexander VI, held that Indians were “veri homines”, i.e. human beings as opposed to animals, who were capable of existing in Christian faith. Paul III believed that Indians should be converted to the example of a good life, i.e. a Catholic one. Initially, however, it was not specified whether this was to be achieved through prayers, restriction of sexuality or other means. The “good life” was contrasted to the “savage life” of Indians, which was seen as incompatible with Catholic

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<sup>249</sup> Marcel Trudel, *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France: Les vaines tentatives 1524-1603* (Montréal, 1963), p. 47.

<sup>250</sup> Francesco de Vitoria, *Leçons sur les Indiens et sur le droit de guerre*, §162-200, 268-283, cited in Belmessous, *D’un préjugé culturel*, p. 322.

<sup>251</sup> While Bartolomé de Las Casas was trying to protect Indians at court and with special laws, a member of the royal council thought that Indians were too low in the human hierarchy to be able to receive the faith, since they were regarded as similar to animals. See Louis Hanke, “Pope Paul III and The American Indians”, in: *Harvard Theological Review* vol. 30/2 (1937), p. 67.

rituals.<sup>252</sup> One of the major differences between Christian and indigenous ways of thinking was that the former was described as having a linear understanding of salvation, whereas the latter was circular: for Christian believers salvation was attained through heaven, for Indians it was about maintaining a circular balance in the universe. This fundamental conflict of two worldviews was bound to lead to hostile and difficult relations. Luca Codignola has argued that the discovery of the Americas was the trigger for the formulation of Papal bulls and that the European movement of Catholic and Protestant reforms led to new evaluations of the “nature” and treatment of Indians. Codignola has held that reforms in the Church led to an increased awareness for co-operation of major Christian denominations, whose members were convinced that Christianity had to be spread throughout the world.<sup>253</sup> The propagation of the Christian faith was the utmost aim of missionaries whose follow-up task it was to maintain it. Codignola holds that the former aim was pursued until 1658. In the late 1650s, however, the objective shifted towards maintaining faith among the newly established Europeans in the colony.<sup>254</sup> The idea of missions was thus not a value in itself. In the eyes of Cardinal de Richelieu it was described as being “a secondary matter, an afterthought, or a manoeuvre”.<sup>255</sup> By pointing at the necessity of missions in New France and by playing the Catholic card, Richelieu hoped to win over the Pope and to convince him that France should pursue the same degree of access to the New World as Spain and Portugal did. By securing entry to the New World via the Catholic cause, Richelieu could subsequently pursue his political and economic intentions. Several authors have held that the propagation of Christianity served to legitimate the process of colonisation, without being the veritable cause thereof.<sup>256</sup> Religion could be used as a vehicle to transport religious dogmas used to justify colonial activity, such as the acquisition of property and goods.<sup>257</sup> At the same time, the Church’s task also consisted in

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<sup>252</sup> Joseph Metzler (ed.): *America Pontificia*, vol. I; p. 364-366. Hanke, *Pope Paul III*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>253</sup> Luca Codignola/ Pizzorusso, Giovanni: “Les lieux, les méthodes et les sources de l’expansion missionnaire du Moyen Age au XVIIe siècle: Rome sur la voie de la centralisation“, in: Laurier Turgeon (ed.): *Transferts culturels et métissages Amérique/Europe*, codirection avec Denys Delâge et Réal Ouellet (Québec/Paris, 1996), pp. 486-512. “Rome and North America 1622-1799: The Interpretative Framework“, in: *Storia Nordamericana*, vol 1, no 1 (1984), 5-33. Ibid.: “L’Amérique du Nord et la Sacrée Congrégation “De Propaganda Fide“, 1622-1799. Guides et inventaires“, in: *Revue de l’histoire de l’Amérique française*, vol. 33, no 2 (1979), p. 197-214.

<sup>254</sup> Luca Codignola: “Competing networks: Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in French North America, 1610-58“, in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 80, no 4 (December 1999), pp. 539-84, p. 569 and (1995), in: Kuppermann, *Consciousness*, pp. 195-292.

<sup>255</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 4. See Deschamps, *Méthodes*, p. 22. Compare to Salone, *La Colonisation*, p. 17; Louis Pauliat, *La Politique coloniale sous l’ancien régime* (Paris, 1887), p. 40 and Albert Duchene, *La Politique coloniale de la France* (Paris, 1928), p. 15.

<sup>256</sup> Tzevan Todorov, *Les morales de l’histoire* (Paris, 1997), pp. 99-101.

providing religious service, in converting the Natives to Christianity, in educating children and in helping the sick and poor.

The means and approaches of the several missionary orders, which came to Canada, differed according to the doctrine of their original convent, their respective financial resources and individual personalities. Since France was a country of “missionary awakening” many individuals were eager to participate in the evangelising conquest.<sup>258</sup> However, among the 114 French missionary requests made between 1607 and 1615 only eight specified Canada as their desired destination.<sup>259</sup> As to the conversion of the savages, Pierre Chaumonot explained in 1637 that according to the mentality of the Indians there was no need for a doctrine and that simple humility would suffice. He held that the most docile clerics should be reserved for work in Europe, while those most “ignorant in doctrine” should go to America, these “so wide regions”.<sup>260</sup> Furthermore, differences existed between regular and secular clergy. The secular clergy were the bishop and the parish priests who served in rural communities; they were mostly concerned with keeping records of births, marriages and deaths and with drawing legal contracts when there were no notaries available. Regular clergy consisted of the male and female religious orders, among which the Recollects were the first to arrive in New France in 1615. The latter included fathers Denis Jamet, Jean Dolbeau, Joseph Le Caron and Pacifique Duplessis. It was Samuel de Champlain who had asked this order from the French province of Saint Denis to come to Canada in order to assist in the education and conversion of Indians.

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<sup>257</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard has contradicted the view that profits were the sole motivation of colonial powers. He holds: „These major phenomena [„profit“, „status“ and „mission“] were subject to considerable change through time. Insinuating that agents had a capitalist thirst for surplus value can solve not all problems of history of European expansion. However, the all-pervasiveness of a powerful, yet at times very uncapitalistic will for profit cannot be denied (...). The major objection to the monocausal reduction of the colonial interest to profit interests consists in the fact that the will for profit, above all in the early modern period, many times stood in conjunction with other interests, above all the amelioration of individual and collective status.“ Wolfgang Reinhard, „Entstehung der Kolonialreiche“, in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch: Kolonialismus und Kolonialreiche*, Teil I, 34. Jg., 3. Vj. (1984), 241-246, p. 243.

<sup>258</sup> G. de Vaumas, *L'éveil missionnaire de la France au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1959).

<sup>259</sup> Giovanni Pizzorusso: “Le choix indifférent: mentalités et attentes des jésuites aspirants missionnaires dans l’Amérique française au XVIIe siècle“, in: *Mélanges de l’École Française de Rome, Italie et Méditerranée* 109, no 2 (1997), pp 881-894. See Dominique Deslandres: *Le modèle français d’intégration socio-religieuse, 1600-1650. Missions intérieures et premières missions canadiennes*, thèse de doctorat (Montréal, 1990), pp. 203-206. For an analysis of missionary requests on a grander scale in a different geographical context (Germany) see Christoph Nebgen: *Missionarsberufungen nach Übersee in drei deutschen Provinzen der Gesellschaft Jesu im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Regensburg, 2007). The author has analysed 1400 written requests - so-called “litterae indipetarum”, i.e. application and self-promotion letters of missionary aspirants - from the Society of Jesus of three German provinces.

<sup>260</sup> Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, FG, vol. 741, doc. 40. He used the words “deboli nella scienza“ and “quelle contrade tanto grossolane“.

The Recollects were followed by Jesuits in 1625, namely Jerome Lalemant, Jean de Brébeuf and Edmond Massé, and by Sulpicians in 1657. They were mainly occupied with the conversion of Natives. Female orders established the first schools and hospitals and were amongst the first women to come to New France. The Order of the Saint Augustine of the Hotel-Dieu and the Ursulines arrived in 1639;<sup>261</sup> Superior nun Marie de l'Incarnation, who had visions about her vocation to go to New France, led the latter. Hospitalières followed these orders in 1659, under the guidance of Jeanne Mance and the Congrégation de Notre-Dame headed by Marguerite Bourgeois. The zeal of female orders for conversion work in the colony was thus described in the words of Paul Lejeune in 1636: "The Carmelites are all on fire; the Ursulines are filled with zeal; the Nuns of the Visitation have no words significant enough to show their ardour; those of the Notre Dame implore permissions to share in the sufferings which must be undergone among these people; and the Hospitalières insist that they be brought over here next year."<sup>262</sup> At least thirteen sisters had made written requests.<sup>263</sup> In 1693, Hospitalers of the Mercy of Jesus joined in. Finally, the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the founding of the Order of the Grey Nuns in Montreal in 1740.<sup>264</sup>

The Recollect Jean Dolbeau was devoted to the Montagnais,<sup>265</sup> whereas Joseph Le Caron took care of the Huron, Algonquin and Wyandot tribes. Conversion was reported to be most successful with the Huron and the Iroquois tribes, which seemed to be receptive to the "Gospel".<sup>266</sup> There was continuous interaction between the Hurons and missionaries between 1634 and 1650.<sup>267</sup> Officer Jean-Baptiste d'Aleynac made the following observation about the conversion successes with the Huron reserve in Lorette: "The most francized and the best Catholics (live there)."<sup>268</sup> However, tribes differed in their attitude toward conversion. Indians reacted differently under specific conditions. Some decided to co-operate with missionaries, others did not. Franz-Joseph Post has therefore differentiated "mission friendly" and "mission

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<sup>261</sup> P. A. Goddard: "Augustine and the Amerindian in 17<sup>th</sup> century New France. A cultural anthropological escape from the stereotypical "savage" and the intellectual foundations of Christian spirituality in the New World", in: *Church History* 67 (4), pp. 662-681, December 1998.

<sup>262</sup> Paul Lejeune, in: *Jesuit Relations 1636*, pp. 237-239.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239-242.

<sup>264</sup> Allan Greer: "Colonial saints: Gender, race and hagiography in New France", in: *William and Mary Quarterly* 57 (2), pp. 323-348, April 2000.

<sup>265</sup> P. A. Goddard: "Converting the "savage": Jesuit and Montagnais in 17<sup>th</sup> century New France (Catholic missionary strategies for the Christian conversion of the native peoples of Canada)", in: *Catholic Historical Review* 89 (2), pp. 219-239, April 1998.

<sup>266</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 87.

<sup>267</sup> Post, *Schamanen*, p. 142.

<sup>268</sup> Coste, *Aventures*, 27. In this usage "Canadian" here means Indian. See also Dickason, 1993.

hostile” or traditionalist Indians.<sup>269</sup> The majority of Indians belonged to the latter group since descriptions of missionaries are dominated by endeavours to try to win over Indians to the Catholic faith. Consequently, Denys Delâge has held that it was syncretistic Indian religious customs that had an influence on official Catholicism rather than the other way around.<sup>270</sup> It is to be asked, however, if it was indeed the syncretistic nature of Indians that affected an influence on Christian culture, or if this was the case rather because the French who settled in Indian country were curious about new spiritual rituals and because Indians were fascinating and charismatic enough to arouse such interest. This said however, accounts of Indians being buried in Christian cemeteries and receiving Catholic baptisms suggest a different view.<sup>271</sup> In fact, conflict broke out among agents because of the clash between Indian spirituality and European religiosity. Indians opted for co-operation only when traditional Indian ways failed in the face of challenges posed by Europeans.

## 2. Sending out Missionaries in Trading Companies

In the expression of Marcel Trudel New France was a “mission colony” because of the dominant influence of the Church and its missionaries.<sup>272</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard holds that lay and Catholic France may have been in opposition at home, but they shared an equally strong will to missionize.<sup>273</sup> This may refer both to the will to evangelise as well as the will to civilize. As to the relation between mission and state interests, Reinhard claims: “Mission interests have the capacity to mobilize state interests for their own aims, but they have to serve as excuse for the state’s own intentions or even act as ideology producers.”<sup>274</sup> The production of a Christian ideology had been furthered in the metropolis before it was exported to the colonies where many initiatives of converting and civilising were tried out. The catholic nature of colonisation was stressed through the massive involvement of Christian missionaries in France’s civilizing mission. Conversion work started at the request of the French state and of trading companies whose officials asked clerics if they were willing to support France’s *mission civilisatrice* in the New World. First systematic conversion endeavours of the French began in Acadia. In 1604, King Henri IV granted a ten-year trading monopoly for Acadia and

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<sup>269</sup> Post, *Schamanen*, p. 6. The designation “traditionalists” stems from Trigger, *Les Indiens*, p. 169ff.

<sup>270</sup> Delâge, *L’influence*, p. 138.

<sup>271</sup> See further in the course of this chapter.

<sup>272</sup> Trudel, *New France*, p. 30.

<sup>273</sup> “Das katholische und das laizistische Frankreich mögen sich unversöhnt gegenüberstehen, an missionarischem Eifer sind sie sich ebenbürtig.”, in: *Entstehung*, p. 243.

<sup>274</sup> Reinhard, *Entstehung*, p. 244.

accorded the task of converting Acadians to the trader, explorer and later governor of the province, Pierre de Gua de Monts. De Monts was instructed, “to convert, bring and instruct the peoples, who live in this land, from their barbarian atheism without belief and religion to Christianity”. These instructions were repeated and amplified by the Vice-Regent, the Duc de Montmorency: the aim was “to try to bring the nations to some profession of the Christian Religion, civilisation of manners, regulations of their lives, practice and intelligence with the French for the usage of their commerce.”<sup>275</sup> The last point indicated that, after conversion to Christianity and good manners, Indians should use “practice” and “intelligence” in order to approach the French to the beneficent result of having trade relations with them and of leading to an increase in French profits.

In 1608, the lieutenant governor of Acadia Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt made first attempts to introduce religious forces into the system of the colony with the help of the Pope. Biencourt asked Paul V to send Christian priests to Acadia: “My whole will is to bring Christ to these disseminated populations...It is not through the force of arms that one has to bring them to our religion, but through persuasion and predication of dogma and morals.”<sup>276</sup> Since dogma and morals were officially held to be superior to the use of arms, Jesuit priests rather than soldiers received order to embark for Acadia in order to set up missions for Indians.<sup>277</sup> The Huguenots, however, who had attained liberty of conscience in New France, searched for ways to monopolize this liberty in the colony and tried to exclude Catholics.<sup>278</sup> Huguenots thus turned into antipodes of the Jesuits, a move that marked the beginning of rivalry between Protestant and Catholic religious truths in North America. Cooperating with the Calvinist de Monts, the Huguenots tried to prevent Catholics from crossing the Atlantic on ships that were sent out from France. Marquise de Guercheville protected the Jesuits and, in 1610, exerted her influence on Marie de Médicis to revoke the letter patents that had been granted to de Monts. In association with Biencourt, the son of the Catholic Poutrincourt who brought over many colonists under the protection of Henri IV, Guercheville gave parts of her fortune in order to finance the establishment of Jesuit missions in Acadia.<sup>279</sup> The pioneering figure in this region was Jessé Fléché. Immediately following his arrival in 1610 Father Fleché baptised Micmac chief Membertou and others of his tribe.

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<sup>275</sup> Marc Lescarbot, *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France* (Paris, 1671), livre IV, p. 212, p. 218.

<sup>276</sup> Blet, *Colonisation*, p.82.

<sup>277</sup> Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire du Canada de son Église et de ses Missions* (Paris, 1852), p. 25.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

In 1615, Recollect fathers quickly recognized that the Indians' nomadic way of life and their dispersion was a serious obstacle to any evangelising endeavour. The Recollects were supporters of colony building and in 1616 they stated "none could ever succeed in converting them, unless they made them men before they made them Christians. That to civilize them it was necessary first that the French should mingle and assimilate with them, which could be done only by the increase of the colony."<sup>280</sup> In fact, Joseph Le Caron was convinced that the colony had to grow: "They must be familiarized and settled among us. This cannot be done at once, unless the colony multiplies and spreads in all directions."<sup>281</sup> Le Caron, in accordance with de Champlain's ideas of francisation and inspired by the works of Franciscans in South America, set out to regroup and sedentarize Indians. At the same time, he wanted to bring them towards adopting agricultural activities. Le Caron was convinced that the conversion of Indians would succeed only if they were subject to the authority of the French, i.e. that they first were to be francized, an aim, which it was claimed, would be easy to realise with a well-organized colonial society, which could serve as a model to imitate. In 1619, the first Recollect father arrived in Acadia. Father Sebastien opened a mission in 1620 for the Indians of the Bay of Chaleur.<sup>282</sup> In 1624, Le Caron held "for all that concerns humane and civil life is a mystery for our Indians in their present state, and it will require more expense and toil to render them men than it has required to make whole nations Christian."<sup>283</sup> Yet, Montagnais Indians, for instance, proved resistant to such endeavours and the task of turning trappers and hunters into farmers turned out to be a difficult one.<sup>284</sup>

In the face of first failures, Richelieu decided to replace the Recollects with traders and Jesuits - whom he deemed more able to bring about conversion in the colony due to their wealth, numbers and discipline.<sup>285</sup> Between 1632 and 1650, a total of 46 Jesuits came to the colony in order to preach "the Gospel" to Indians.<sup>286</sup> Other clerics also acquired an increasing role in the colonisation endeavour. The *Company of One Hundred Associates* was established on 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1627 with the aim of populating the colony and advancing trading activities

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<sup>280</sup> Axtell, p. 53 See also LeClerq, *First Establishment of the Faith*, 1:110-11, 214, 222, 256, 377, 379.

<sup>281</sup> Axtell, p. 54.

<sup>282</sup> Bock, *The Micmac Indians*, p. 9.

<sup>283</sup> Cited in LeClerq, *First Establishment of the Faith*, 1:379.

<sup>284</sup> Axtell, *The invasion within*, p. 36.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38. See also V. Grégoire: "Pensez-vous venir à bout de renverser le pays: The practice of spreading the Gospel in New France according to the Jesuits", in: *Dix-Septième Siècle* (201), pp. 681-707, Oct.-Dec. 1998.

<sup>286</sup> Lucien Campeau, *La première mission des jésuites en Nouvelle-France (1611-1670) et les commencements du Collège de Québec (1626-1670)* (Montréal, 1972), p. 103. Cited in Shenwen Li, *Stratégies Missionnaires des Jésuites Français en Nouvelle-France et en Chine au XVIIe Siècle* (Paris, 2001).



with the help of missionaries. The latter's role was stressed in article 3 of the Company's charter, which stated that at least three clerics in each settlement should be charged with the task of converting Indians and bringing "spiritual comfort" to French citizens. The Associates were asked to provide all the means necessary for fifteen years in order to fulfil these tasks and to distribute lands to clerics.<sup>287</sup> Company Associates, in return, expressed their intention to contribute to colony building by instructing Indians in French and Catholic manners and by co-operating with settlers and other subjects of the French King: "As our desire is to establish a strong colony in New France so that we may instruct the indigenous inhabitants...in the knowledge of God...we have welcomed all those who have presented themselves to assist us by the...King."<sup>288</sup> As stated in article XVII of the company's charter, it was believed that baptism would transform savages from being barbarians into civilised persons, and turn them into "authentic" French. One year before the Company started its work, in 1626, Jesuit fathers landed in New France. They were faced with the same problems as the Recollects and began to devote themselves to converting Montagnais, Algonquians and Hurons tribes with whom some conversion success was indeed attained. In 1632, Richelieu prohibited Recollects from returning to Canada because he wanted to secure a monopolistic position in the colony for the Jesuits with whom he developed a good working relationship in the following years.

### **3. Conversion with Baptism Rituals and Opposition to it**

Instruction "in the knowledge of God" not only meant spreading the practice of prayers, but primarily the celebration of baptisms. In order to convey the image at home that endeavours in the colony were successful, Jesuits used the vehicle of *Jesuit Relations* to spread the belief that Indians had begun to accept the healing power of baptism. It was reported that in 1629, Jesuit father Jacques Brébeuf baptized a Huron child on its deathbed who was seen walking around healthy five years later.<sup>289</sup> A Huron woman was also baptized since Jesuits thought her to be close to death. She appeared to be cured thereafter and was said to have praised missionaries' healing powers.<sup>290</sup> The opposite occurred as well: death of individuals who had

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<sup>287</sup> Establishment of the Company of the 100 Associates, 29 April 1627, in: *Edits et Ordonnances*, pp. 5-11.

<sup>288</sup> „Concession of a large part of the island of Montreal by the Company of One Hundred Associates, 17 December 1640”, in: *Edits et Ordonnances*, pp. 20-23.

<sup>289</sup> A common practice was to baptize dying children with a wet handkerchief without the consent of the parents. Thwaites 1959, vol. 14, 6ff. (*Jesuit Relations* 1637).

<sup>290</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 8, p. 134 (*Jesuit Relations* 1635). Missionaries had further devices against diseases. In addition to baptism, these were prayers, messes, the usage of relics and of sugar and fruit. In practice these techniques sometimes turned out to be useless, in some instances, however, they appeared to have a healing effect.

been baptized on their deathbeds led some Indians to try to prevent missionaries from attaining access to ill patients.<sup>291</sup> Fathers Charles Turgis and Charles du Marche, who arrived in Bay of Chaleur in 1635, succeeded in baptising only “two little Indians” in the subsequent years.<sup>292</sup>

The missionaries’ task of converting Indians received more explicit mention in 1635 in charters such as the Company of the Isles in America, which stated on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1635 that one of its principal aims was “to instruct the savages” and that it would do its best to convert savages to the Catholic faith.<sup>293</sup> The Huron mission had initially been that in which Jesuits had invested the most time, money and personnel. They had started to run the mission in 1634 with six lay brothers. By 1640, they were 14 and in 1648, 19 brothers were working together with seventy soldiers.<sup>294</sup> In May 1642, a royal edict to the Company of the Isles stated that “the principal object of the said colonies [i.e. New France] ought to be the glory of God” and that “the associates are not to tolerate the exercise of any religion other than the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman, and will do their utmost to see that governors and officers act firmly in this matter.” The exclusion of other than Christian religious practices was seen as a central task. This implied the extinction of Indian spiritual rites. In the same edict, King Louis XIII stressed vital interests of France since none of the intense colonial activities were undertaken for the sole benefit of people on a foreign territory, but rather in the interest of the metropolis: “It is hoped that the said company will (...) obtain the results we have desired in the conversion of the barbarous peoples to the Christian religion...besides the advantages which our kingdom can draw from these colonies.”<sup>295</sup>

The Bishop of Quebec Jean-Baptiste de La Croix de Chevrières de St. Vallier wanted to ensure that missionaries exercised their main function, the celebration of baptism, only with his explicit consent and, therefore, issued an ordinance to that effect.<sup>296</sup> On a practical level, superstition often led Indians to seek this ritual, i.e. Indians sought baptism not because they believed in the salvaging nature of the ritual and in the promise of eternal life, but because they thought that through accepting Christian rituals they could save their lives. This sort of

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<sup>291</sup> Post, *Schamanen*, p. 155.

<sup>292</sup> Bock, *The Micmac Indians*, p. 9.

<sup>293</sup> Emilien Petit, *Droit public ou gouvernement des colonies françaises* (Paris, 1771), p. 3.

<sup>294</sup> Campeau, *Mission d’Acadie*, p. 467.

<sup>295</sup> Petit, *Droit*, p. 6. Not surprisingly, Henri Blet has claimed in the Grand Encyclopédie that “les colonies ont été créés par la Métropole et pour la Métropole.” Blet, *Colonisation*, p. 196.

<sup>296</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, “Ordonnance sur le baptême des sauvages“, 15 no 66. No date.

superstition was not always rewarded. In many cases the opposite occurred: baptised Indians died straight after the ritual. In one instance an eight-year-old girl died after baptism through a Jesuit. Jesuits did not necessarily interpret Indian death following baptism as failure. They argued from the viewpoint of spreading religion, not of maintaining life. Thus they argued that the girl could preserve her “baptismal innocence”, whereas a longer life among the Montagnais tribe would have jeopardized her religious purity.<sup>297</sup>

Yet, baptisms had precisely been propagated as a guarantor for a long and healthy life. Missionaries saw this means of conversion as a remedy against diseases and against evil as well as a way to save souls. During the winter of 1634/35, in which mainly the Huron were faced with virgin soil epidemics, baptism propaganda turned out to be particularly successful. Missionaries complied with the wish of many Hurons who were desperately trying to combat unknown diseases, to be baptized in order to prevent death. Indian rituals such as dances, drinks and feasts had been powerless to chase away the ills that had befallen many Indians since the arrival of Europeans. Thus, Father Brébeuf reported to his superior in Québec in 1636: “They seek baptism almost only for preserving their health.”<sup>298</sup> The statistics show that during the 1630s and 1640s, every second Huron was affected by epidemics, while no single missionary seemed to suffer from such diseases.<sup>299</sup> This led many Indians to believe that, rather than being the consequence of European migration to the American continent, which had brought about new viruses and bacteria, epidemics were the result of Christian evil magic with which incoming Europeans were deliberately trying to decimate the numbers of Indians. This line of discourse was reflected in the Jesuit Relations of 1636/37 in which a missionary reported his observation of an Indian shaman called Sacondouane: „For a while Sacondouane (...) has tried to prohibit ill patients from the snow of France; this is the way they call sugar, and he has persuaded some that it was some sort of poison.”<sup>300</sup> The Indian Sacondouane believed that sugar, so-called “snow of France”, was poison used against ill patients. He saw a correlation between the popping up of unknown diseases and the import of new raw materials. The upsurge of epidemics at the end of the 1630s even led Indians to believe that missionaries hoped to spread diseases among Indians as much as possible: “It is the foreigners who are the

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<sup>297</sup> Jesuit Relations 1676/77, Thwaites 1959, vol. 60, 250ff.

<sup>298</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 10, 12 (Jesuit Relations 1636).

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>300</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 14, 50 (Jesuit Relations 1637).

sole cause of this; they are running now in pairs of two through the whole country in order to spread the evil everywhere.”<sup>301</sup>

This position led some Indians to argue that the best remedy against European disease and epidemics was the expulsion of missionaries from Indian settlements.<sup>302</sup> Between 1638 and 1641, reports of missionaries contain descriptions of how missionaries were attacked with hatchets and how their crosses were torn down. In 1639, a village council in Huronia even commonly decided to collectively attack the Jesuits, however its plans were not carried out.<sup>303</sup> Franz-Joseph Post claims that Indians never intended to kill missionaries, because in practice most of their attacks did not result in death of their counterparts. This was a deliberate strategy, Post argues, because Indians contented themselves with intimidating missionaries rather than eliminating them.<sup>304</sup> Yet, the danger was quite real to Jesuit father Paul Ragueneau who reported most vividly: “He had his axe straight in the middle of my head, just discovered and discharged his coup so rapidly that father Chaumont and I believed coming in this moment what we had wished for so long: I do not know what brought his coup to a halt, other than the immenseness of my sins, but at least rather than feeling the axe split a head in two, one cannot be closer to death.”<sup>305</sup> Missionary Davion stated that missionaries “were being killed on all sides.”<sup>306</sup> He therefore urged for aid since otherwise none of the missions would survive. Davion believed that the help of the Court was needed to restore order: “It is to be hoped that the Court will make known that it is its intention that [the officials] uphold the missionaries and see that they are respected by the natives; otherwise there is no hope for doing any good among them.”<sup>307</sup> Yet, it was particularly the experience of martyrdom that enticed some missionaries to wanting to go to Canada. Jean Rullier in 1659, Louis Nicolas in 1661 and Théodoric Beshefer in 1664 followed the call to Canada.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 20, 28. (Jesuit Relations 1640).

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 15, 12ff, 30-34, 50, 54-58 (Jesuit Relations 1638); vol. 17, 114-118 (Jesuit Relations 1639); vol. 19, 112-116, 176ff., 182 (Jesuit Relations 1640).

<sup>304</sup> Post, *Schamanen*, p. 160. “Eine ernsthafte Verletzung oder Tötung der Missionare war nicht vorgesehen, wie die letztlich harmlosen Angriffe dokumentieren. (...) Der formalen, aber keineswegs substantiellen Einwilligung in die Gebote der Missionare korrespondierte die angedrohte, aber eben nur angedrohte und nicht vollzogene Erschlagung der Jesuiten. (...) Die Indianer folgten damit dem kulturell überlieferten Modell der Konfliktlösung, das eine konsensuale Beilegung von Divergenzen bevorzugte.“

<sup>305</sup> Thwaites 1959, vol. 19, p. 212ff. (Jesuit Relations 1640)

<sup>306</sup> 23 September 1703, ASME, 344, p. 70.

<sup>307</sup> 12 December 1702, ASME, 244, pp. 57-62. Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres R 36, St. Cosme to Tremblay, 21 October 1702, , p. 4.

<sup>308</sup> Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, FG, vol. 757, fasc. I, doc. 22 (Rullier), 47 (Nicolas), 88 (Beshefer).

Violent experiences in the conversion of Indians led the Jesuits to come up with the idea of “missions volantes”: rather than to remain at one place, Jesuits through the *missions volantes* travelled throughout the country in order to reach pagan Indians and to carry out conversion work “on the road”. This meant that rather than concentrating Indians and being exposed to them at one spot, Jesuits went to where Indians were living. In general, missionaries were aware of economic and logistic circumstances. They were interested in positioning themselves on vital communication routes where provisioning and trade was guaranteed, i.e. mostly along riversides.<sup>309</sup> The opposite of this concept was the concept of “réductions”. They envisaged that, rather than intruding into the realm of the Indians, posts would be set up in order to concentrate Indians at one spot. Marc Jetten has argued that Jesuit réductions in New France differed from other missionary efforts in their attempt to gather native converts into communities separate from European settlements. These reductions differed from the classic type of reserves because they were designed to carry out conversion work at one place rather than simply to concentrate Indians in specific confines.<sup>310</sup> In 1637, there was one réduction at Sillery “where at great expense ground was cleared and houses built, so that the natives would find everything prepared on their arrival.”<sup>311</sup> From 1638 onwards, further réductions were set up in the vicinity of the towns of Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Montreal. These places hosted Abenakis, Algonquians, Nepissings, Hurons and Iroquois Indians. A prominent example is the Lorette reserve where mostly Hurons gathered. The French called such Indians “domiciled Indians”, because they were expected to reside permanently in these places and to quit their nomadic way of life.<sup>312</sup>

#### 4. Language Instruction and Arrival of Sulpicians

Governor Jacques-René de Brisay Marquis de Denonville was convinced that because missionaries were learning Indian languages, they had far better access to them and could understand them more than any other agents in the colony. It was believed that missionaries could influence Indians and manipulate their minds and thoughts. Yet, a few missionaries set out to learn Indian languages and were successful in the endeavour. Upon their arrival in Acadia in 1611, for instance, the Jesuits Edmond Massé and Pierre Biard set out to learn the

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<sup>309</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, p. 384.

<sup>310</sup> The latter version, however, became a widespread policy towards the 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. See the vast literature on Indian reservations in Canada.

<sup>311</sup> Trudel, *New France*, p. 30.

<sup>312</sup> For more details see Marc Jetten.

Micmac language.<sup>313</sup> Others initiated a Huron grammar or a Micmac hieroglyphic system of writing. The more generally adopted approach was the reverse: Indians were taught French in order to improve communication with them. Paul Lejeune was convinced that it was vital to start by instructing children who could be more easily evangelised given the manipulability of their characters at early age.<sup>314</sup> It was believed that teaching Indian children would ensure the conversion of the next generation. In order to achieve this, some children were sent to France in order to receive instruction in French manners, either in French families or among religious congregations.

Yet, the coercive atmosphere did not match the mentality of Indian children who did not feel at ease, fell ill and became melancholic. It was therefore decided in 1635 that a seminary for children should be founded in Quebec City. The daily routine consisted of prayers, mass celebration, schoolwork, little recreation, chasing and fishing, and long walks.<sup>315</sup> Yet, the children showed that they were not willing to adapt. Paul Lejeune noted that the children were hostile to “subjection of any kind, whenever it pleases them.” After seven years the seminary had to be shut down due to lack of pupils and poor results. Parents had been reluctant to send their children to this institution; and the children themselves had proven resistant to such assimilation measures. By 1639, the Jesuits were aware of the failure in their endeavours towards Indian children;<sup>316</sup> especially because those already converted showed no inclination to proselyte religion amongst their fellow peers and were ineffective as multipliers of faith. Present giving was a further method to win over the affection and friendship of Indians. Jesuits did not hide their true motives in applying this as strategy. In 1637, Charles Hault de Montmagni gave presents such as iron hatchets and arrowheads to Hurons, stating: “This kind of present astonished them at first, as not being according to their usages, but we gave them to understand that only the hope that we had of seeing them become Christians led us to desire their friendship.”<sup>317</sup> This means of evangelisation, which was transferred from missionaries in the Philippines and in China, was mostly applied in Jesuit missionary work among the Hurons and Montagnais tribes in the 1630s and remained in use until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Missionaries also used fear; particularly they sought to invoke fear of death and of suffering

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<sup>313</sup> Brian J. Hanington, *Every Popish Person* (Halifax, 1984), p. 19.

<sup>314</sup> This was an idea, in fact, that was adopted from the Recollects who had tried to make first experiences in the interior missions. Belmessous, p. 175.

<sup>315</sup> Stanley, *Francisation*, p. 334.

<sup>316</sup> Trigger, *Les enfants*, p. 536-537.

<sup>317</sup> Jesuit Relations 23 (1642-43), pp. 211-213.

in hell, especially in their work with the Huron and Algonquin tribes. One Jesuit maintained, “fear is the forerunner of faith in these barbarous minds.”<sup>318</sup>

The Ursulines, who were mainly charged with the education of girls, tried to convey a positive image of their efforts. Marie de l’Incarnation exclaimed in 1642 that much progress had been made in Christianising Iroquois and Algonquians. She praised the former that they would never let a poor girl die, but would rather marry her. Marie de l’Incarnation held that as to conversion to Christianity, a very good Christian girl who knows how to read and write could return to her tribe and spread Christianity and help those of her gender in complying to assimilation pressures. In terms of defining correct treatment for Iroquois girls, in fact, Marie was waiting for detailed instructions from her Majesty. At the same time, she laudably mentioned all those savage girls who already knew to speak the French language fluently, which seemed to considerably facilitate conversion endeavours.<sup>319</sup> In reality, however, very few Indian girls could speak French. Therefore the Jesuits switched back to instructing adults, especially men influential in their own tribes. This time christianisation was favoured over francisation, in particular at the face of previous failures of the latter policy. Missions were founded near Montreal, Québec and Trois-Rivières and were modelled after examples from Paraguayan missions.

In 1657, the Sulpicians arrived. Because of the depopulation of the missions with every hunting season, Sulpicians were instructed from the Seminary of Foreign Missions in Paris to slacken their rules of conversion in order to be able to maintain their mission stations.<sup>320</sup> In 1663, when New France was becoming a royal colony, the King and Minister Colbert in the metropolis reiterated that they wanted the savages to be instructed in the Christian religion and in French manners.<sup>321</sup> Previous failures of this policy were ascribed to the incapacities of the clergy;<sup>322</sup> and royal authorities continued to propagate christianisation, sedentarization, instruction in French and cohabitation with the French as means of métissage. The King and Colbert were particularly convinced of the superiority of French culture, yet they gave no

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<sup>318</sup> Jesuit Relations 11 (1636-1637), pp. 87-89.

<sup>319</sup> National Archives of Canada, dossier B12, vol. MC-6 B11-15 93: “Letter from Marie de l’Incarnation to her Superior Reverend Mother, written in Quebec monastery of the Ursulines, 30 August 1642”, pp. 128-129.

<sup>320</sup> Louise Tremblay, *La politique missionnaire des Sulpiciens au XVIIe et début XVIIIe siècle, 1668-1735, mémoire* (Montréal, 1981).

<sup>321</sup> Belmessous, *D’un préjugé culturel*, p. 176.

<sup>322</sup> This is an argument mainly advanced by Stanley, *Francisation*, p. 339.

detailed instructions how measures should be put into practice.<sup>323</sup> Directives were formulated in a very general way, without detailing specific courses of action. In 1664, the Company of the West Indies joined in the missionary endeavour and stated in its charter of May of that year that traders “look principally to the glory of God, in procuring the salvation of Indians and savages...to whom we desire to make known the true religion.”<sup>324</sup> Company associates affirmed that Indians needed salvation through acquiring the Catholic faith. As to the role of missionaries it was affirmed that, “the said Company (of the West Indies) ...will send missionaries...to preach the gospel and instruct these peoples on the belief of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion...it will build churches.”<sup>325</sup> To this end trading companies sent out further missionaries to the New World and sought for ways to secure their maintenance. Furthermore, state officials gave instructions regarding co-operation between colonial agents and clerics. In 1666, Jean Talon wrote to Minister Colbert that he wanted to take measures to make police regulations for Algonquin and Huron Indians and to punish them in case of disobedience. Language, however, posed an obstacle and Talon regretted that Indians had failed to learn French in order to communicate with the French. Talon, however, did not think that the King’s subjects had to learn Indian languages.<sup>326</sup>

## 5. Introduction of Police and Co-operation with Church Authorities

On the side of state authorities, it was mainly Jean Talon who was supposed to represent the French state’s objectives, to seek co-operation with Jesuits in the colony and to work in this direction. Before Jean Talon’s departure to the colony, Minister Colbert reminded the intendant of his actual and short-term tasks, and explained the power structure in the colony to him in 1665. First, it was made clear that he “shall well observe, and on which it is proper that he have correct ideas on leaving here, is, to understand perfectly the actual position of these two authorities [the Bishop and the Jesuits] in the country, and that which they ought naturally occupy. To obtain this, he will have to see the Jesuit Fathers here, who have been in said country, and who have all its correspondence; also the Attorney General and Sieur Villerey,

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<sup>323</sup> In fact, Saliha Belmessous holds, “Nulle ligne de conduite n’est définie à l’intention des gouverneurs généraux et intendants, chargés de réaliser cette assimilation conjointement avec le clergé. ”, *D’un préjugé culturel*, p. 177.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.* The same document mentions the building of churches to this purpose.

<sup>326</sup> “M. Talon to M. Colbert. Extracts of a Memoir on the Condition of Canada, addressed by M. Talon to M. Colbert, 13<sup>th</sup> November 1666”, in: O’Callaghan, *Documents*, p. 55.



who are the two principal members of the Sovereign Council of Quebec,<sup>327</sup> who, it is said, are entirely devoted to the said Jesuits; from whom he will learn what they may know, without, however, letting his object be discovered.”<sup>328</sup>

In 1666, Colbert stressed the urgency with which assimilation policies towards Indian tribes, namely the Algonquian and Huron, should be undertaken in order to increase the population of the colony and thus to strengthen the subsystem of the colony vis-à-vis the system of the metropolis. The means to increase the population in the colony were manifold. One was marriage policy to encourage early marriages and therefore offspring and family formation. There is good reason to believe that a further measure was the shortening of the period of breast-feeding of Indian women as expressed in a letter by Jean Talon. Yet, New France Intendant Jean Talon never explicitly stated that shorter breast-feeding could increase chances for conception. However, although Talon’s motive is not formulated in the source, which mentions this policy, we have reason to assume that it stood in conjunction with overall French policy objectives of augmenting the population. Knowledge about pregnancy was a vital demographic asset to be used in population policy objectives in the early modern period. Breast-feeding policies were part of a métissage design in that they were important in assimilating Indian women to French ways and at the same time in assuring that the chances for conception would be increased. With police measures Talon wanted to prevent Indian women from nursing their children for extended periods. Talon may have wanted to keep Indian babies under Indian influence as little as possible, because it was a widely held belief that mother’s milk transmitted certain characteristics. By exposing Indian babies less to Indian milk Talon may have aimed to encourage them to adopt French manners.<sup>329</sup>

As to breastfeeding practices Indian and Inuit women were rather shy about exposing their breasts whilst feeding in public. Inuit women were described at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as such: “[The women] are well built, although they are mostly flat, but all white, big, fat and chubby. [...] Their breast is always hidden and what they are giving their children one can never see it; in this they are much more reserved than our French women who make a glory of

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<sup>327</sup> It was founded in 1663. See “Edict for the Creation of the Sovereign Council of Quebec”, Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1663, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, 1859, p. 7.

<sup>328</sup> “Memoir of the King to serve as Instruction to Sieur Talon proceeding to New France as Intendant of Justice, Police and Finance”, Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> March 1665, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, 1859, p. 24.

<sup>329</sup> I am grateful for this remark to Robert Slenes at the „Atlantic History Workshop” at Ann Arbor, Michigan in May 2005.

it, especially in the first years of their marriage.”<sup>330</sup> The hope to increase population numbers derived from the fact that shorter breastfeeding increased the chances of new pregnancies, and therefore led to an increase in the number of births. Talon expressly saw extended breastfeeding as an obstacle to the enlargement of the colony: “This obstacle to the quick formation of the colony can be surmounted by some police regulation easy to introduce, and to validate, if the savages do not comply.”<sup>331</sup> The Micmacs, for instance, practiced a ritual whereby women fed their children for up to three years, during which time any potential pregnancy was terminated, and sexual relations were in principle taboo for the mother.<sup>332</sup>

Minister Colbert wrote to Bishop François de Laval on the progress of Christianising the colony. He praised the satisfaction that continued to “make visible the charitable attentions spread to those who subjected to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Church and that bestowed on him the benedictions of wealthy people and the grace of heaven whose best proof was the one it had made to those whose eyes had been opened to the heretics to make known to them their mistakes and to reduce them in the feeling of Orthodox faith.”<sup>333</sup> Colbert stressed the importance of the Bishop’s role that he deemed as necessary as that of the King in the process of colony building, especially in terms of financial provisions for the subsistence of clerics.<sup>334</sup> The minister became more explicit in 1667, and in April he returned to formulating policy objectives. In a letter to Talon Colbert referred to the need to focus on teaching French to already converted Indians living close to French settlements. Colbert’s letter stressed the need for police action in order to enforce French objectives towards the Huron and the Algonquian, whose languages the French were learning in order to deal and trade with them. Colbert held that the French had been negligent in pursuing these objectives and that Indians should be assimilated to the French by bringing Indians to live in French settlements.

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<sup>330</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises, ms 9275, f. 184-200, f. 194, Louis Jolliet, “Journal de Louis Jolliet allant à la découverte de Labrador, des Esquimaux“, 1694. In the French original: “[Les femmes] sont bien faites, or qu’elles sont pour la plupart camuses, mais toutes blanches, grandes, grosses et grasses. [...] Leur sein est toujours cache et quoy qu’elles donnent à leurs enfants on ne le voit jamais; en quoy elles sont plus reserves que nos Francoises qui en font gloire, surtout dans les premières années de leur mariage.”

<sup>331</sup> Public Archives of Canada, C11A, vol. 2, f. 355, *Mémoire sur l’état présent du Canada*, 1667, See also *Rapport de l’archiviste de la province de Québec pour 1930-1931*, p. 63. Olive Dickason believes, however, that this policy was never acted upon since there is no evidence for it in the sources. This policy may have remained a pure policy directive that was never actually implemented.

<sup>332</sup> Katherine J. Brooks, “The Effect of the Catholic Missionaries on the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia 1610-1986“, in: *The Nova Scotia Historical Review*, vol. 6 (1986), 107-155, 109. See L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists* (Vancouver, 1979), p. 6.

<sup>333</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettre N, no 20: Lettre de Monsieur Colbert à Mgr Laval, 5 avril 1666.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

Colbert was convinced that with time, assimilation would result in Indians and French living according to the same law and under the same “master”, and that eventually they would become “one people” with the same blood, i.e. French: ” “I confess (...) that very little regard had been paid, up to the present time, in New France, to the policing and civilization of the Algonquians and Hurons (who were a long time ago subjected to the King’s domination), through our neglect to detach them from their savage customs and to oblige them to adopt ours, especially to become acquainted with our language. On the contrary, to carry on some traffic with them, our French have been necessitated to attract those people, especially such as have embraced Christianity, to the vicinity of our settlements, if possible to mingle there with them, in order that through course of time, having only but one law and one master, they might likewise constitute only one people and one race.”<sup>335</sup> Not only was police action to be introduced in order to detach Indians from their habitual customs and to lead them towards French habits, but also it was further reiterated that Indians were to be assimilated in French communities in order to create one people. Yet, the intention of this measure was not to create a Metis people, but rather to form French communities with assimilated Indians in their midst who would in time wholly accept French culture and would thereby become French. Rather than waiting for the migration of French settlers to the colony to take effect, Talon advised authorities to “civilize” Indian tribes by bringing them to live within French communities and raise their children according to French rites: ”In order to strengthen the Colony in the manner you propose, by bringing the isolated settlements into parishes, it appears to me, without waiting to depend on new colonists who may be sent from France, nothing would contribute more than to endeavour to civilize the Algonquians, the Hurons and other Indians who have embraced Christianity, and to induce them to come and settle in common with the French, to live with them and raise their children according to our manners and customs.”<sup>336</sup> However, not every tribe had the same experience with this policy objective. The Montagnais tribe, for instance, had been warned by a windigo, a non-human creature in Indian mythology, that a cannibal would attack and eat them if they attempted to settle near the French.<sup>337</sup>

In 1668, Louis XIV encouraged his authorities to pursue their assimilation endeavours and claimed that this was the only means “to create one single people, because if we would arrive at that, it would certainly be much easier to make them embrace our religion.”<sup>338</sup> In fact, that

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<sup>335</sup> “M. Colbert to M. Talon”, Saint Germain en Laye, 6 April 1667. In: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 59.

<sup>336</sup> Translation in O’Callaghan, *Documents*, p. 43.

<sup>337</sup> Jesuit Relations 9:115.

<sup>338</sup> Cited in Stanley, *Francisation*, p. 340.

same year Colbert realised that not enough had been done in order to assimilate Indians to French ways, to civilise and to convert them, and to force them to quit their so-called savage way of life. The minister therefore urged his authorities to enforce assimilation endeavours by bringing Indian children to live in French communities. On 20<sup>th</sup> February, Colbert wrote to Intendant Talon instructing him to create religious missions in order to instruct Indians: “It would be necessary to establish some public places under the direction of the Jesuit fathers and missionaries of Montreal to nourish and elevate in the purity of Christianity and in our customs a number of savage children to whom one could add some principal habitants and the most accommodated of the colony would be obliged to maintain one or two according to their means and when some savages would come to be converted one would need the Jesuits or missionaries from Montreal who would instruct them the truths of the Gospel, inspire them at the same time the desire to take on our manner of living and to come live among us in which case it would be good to give them habitations.”<sup>339</sup> Furthermore, Colbert held, “those who have up to now not worked sufficiently enough to civilise the savages while converting them at the same time, be it through joining them in marriage to the French or in attracting their whole families to ours, be obliged make the Savages quit the lazy and passive way of life that they lead and to cultivate the earth in the neighbourhood of our dwellings, be it finally by drawing their children from their hands and their agreement in order to raise them according to our customs and to teach them our language.”<sup>340</sup> Two months later, Colbert instructed Talon’s short-time successor, Intendant Bouterone, who replaced him for two years, to remind the Savages of Cardinal de Richelieu’s offer that every converted Indian would automatically acquire the rights and status of a French citizen.<sup>341</sup> Talon himself admitted that authorities had not worked effectively enough in order to civilise Indians through means of mixed marriages, conversion or assimilation into French communities. Furthermore, these means were not sufficient to encourage Indians to cultivate the land and to learn French. Yet, in 1668 Colbert

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<sup>339</sup> Lettre du Ministre Colbert à Talon, Paris, 20 février 1668, f. 94. The French original reads: “Il seroit necessaire destablir quelques lieux publics sous la Direction des Peres Jesuites et des missionnaires de Montreal pour nourrir et eslever dans la purete du christianisme et de nos mœurs un nombre d’enfans de sauvages, a qui l’on pourrait adjouter quelques principaux habitans et les plus accomodez de la colonie seroient obliges d’en entretenir un ou deux suivant leur facultez et quand quelques sauvages leur viendroient a se convertir il faudroit que soit les Jesuites soit les Missionnaires de Montreal qui leur auroit enseigne les verites de l’Evangile, leur inspirassent en mesme temps l’envie et le desir de prendre nostre maniere de vivre et de se venir habituer parmy nous auquel cas il seroit bon de leur donner des habitations.”

<sup>340</sup> Lettre du Ministre Colbert à Talon, Paris 20 février 1668, p. 95

<sup>341</sup> Colbert to Bouterou, Saint-Germain, 5 avril 1668: “...rappeler aux sauvages, pour les attirer au christianisme, qu’il a été statué par le cardinal de Richelieu que tout sauvage amené à la profession de la religion acquiert tous les droits de la nationalité française dont il pourra jouir au Canada et même en France, s’il y venait résider...”. Cited in Colbert et le Canada, p. 28.

addressed himself to Laval, expressing his contentment that the Bishop had helped to preserve the “purity” of religion in order to bring it to the Savages. The instruction of children was to be continued and it was proposed that the latter be brought closer to the manners and way of living of the French.<sup>342</sup>

In 1668, Sulpician Abbey Gabriel Thubières Lévy de Queylus, who was the Superior to the Montreal Seminary, and his colleague Francois Salignac-Fénélon started to work for the assimilation of Indians within the colony. Up until this point, Sulpician missionaries had not been preoccupied with far away locations; the seminary of Saint-Sulpice had founded its first mission and had remained in Kinté near Lake Ontario. With the support of the authorities, however, Sulpician directors decided to send their missionaries further afield.<sup>343</sup> Increasingly, Sulpician missionaries, especially Abbeys Queylus and Fénélon, became eager defenders of frenchification. At Kinté they hoped to assemble Indians at one spot,<sup>344</sup> and Queylus set apart funds and resources to this purpose. Talon meanwhile mentioned his work somewhat laudably in a memoir to Colbert: “I have to remind you that Abbey Queylus gives a strong application to reforming his clergy, to augmenting the colony in Montreal and to providing subjects to the missions (...) He uses his zeal to take savage children who fall prisoner to the Iroquois out of their hands in order to raise them, the boys in his seminary, and the girls in the company of persons of the same sex (...) who teach them letters and writing.”<sup>345</sup> However, Abbey Fénélon was rather pessimistic regarding the prospects of missionary endeavours: “It is easy to baptise children, elderly and the sick, however, this is not the case with healthy adults; in order not to offend the Black Gowns,<sup>346</sup> they listen to them, but they do not quit their libertine way of life, which is essential to conversion.”<sup>347</sup> Not surprisingly, the mission at Kinté ended in failure, a situation, which may largely be attributed to the lack of coherence in the Sulpicians’ Indian policy.<sup>348</sup>

French authorities came under increasing pressure to look for new ways to advance their *mission civilisatrice*. On 30th September 1670, Bishop Laval reported to Minister Colbert that he was eagerly working in the interests of Christianity. In accordance with the intentions of

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<sup>342</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, no 27, Lettre N, Colbert à Laval, 1668.

<sup>343</sup> Tremblay, *Sulpiciens*, p. 14.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>345</sup> “Mémoire de Talon sur le Canada au Ministre Colbert, 10 November 1670“. RAPQ 1930-1931, p. 12.

<sup>346</sup> This was an expression that was popularly used to designate Jesuits.

<sup>347</sup> Armand Yon, “François Salignac-Fénélon, Sulpicien, 1641-1679”, 1<sup>ère</sup> partie, vol. 33, 1968, pp. 149-150.

<sup>348</sup> Tremblay, *Sulpiciens*, p. 26.

the King, Laval had received Recollect fathers whom he deemed to be good clerics. Laval stressed that he was making all possible efforts to further the education of savage children in his seminary. He reported that he was receiving as many children as possible. Their mothers and fathers, however, were reluctant to give their children away; it was reported that not even the tenderness of the Governor could change this. Finally, Laval promised that he would do everything in order to work against the disorders that befell the colony and to devote all his attention to the instruction of the savages and the French.<sup>349</sup> He stressed that he had spent twice as much for the education of Indian children than for that of the French, but to little effect. Furthermore, Laval reported that many Indians had died of infectious diseases that year.<sup>350</sup>

In 1670, the prohibition of the Recollects from entering Canada was dismissed on the grounds that conversion of Indians required further efforts, but also in order to counterbalance the growing influence of Jesuits, who in the eyes of Governor Louis de Buade de Frontenac had become far too powerful and often acted against the orders of secular authorities. At the same time, it was hoped that a certain harmony with the Sulpicians could also be achieved.<sup>351</sup> Schools were opened in the towns of Québec and Montréal in order to realise her Majesty's wish for further frenchification and assimilation as expressed in 1668.<sup>352</sup> In 1672, Governor Frontenac voiced his conviction that frenchification - which was held to be a programme of humanizing the "Savages"<sup>353</sup> - should precede evangelisation. The idea that frenchification meant humanizing derived from the image of the superiority of Frenchness. To be French was to be human, and Indians, in contrast, were "savages". Frontenac held that once Indians were francized they would turn into French subjects and at the same time be converted to Christianity. Frontenac urged the Jesuits to lead the Indians to become followers of Jesus Christ, while at the same time turning them into subjects of the French King.

Upon his arrival in Quebec, Frontenac found out that the Indians spoke not a single word of French - a failure attributed to the incapacities of missionaries in terms of pursuing a successful language policy. He thus pressed for increased schooling of Indian children. In November 1673, he extended assimilation measures to include the instruction of certain

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<sup>349</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, 15, no 28 bis, Lettre de Mgr de Laval au Ministre Colbert, 30 septembre 1670.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Axtell, *Invasion*, p. 67.

<sup>352</sup> P. A. Dorsey: "Going to school with savages: Authorship and authority among the Jesuits of New France", in: *William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (3), pp. 399-420, July 1998.

<sup>353</sup> Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, letter of 2nd November 1672.

French professions. Adults were to be further sedentarized and abandon their nomadic hunting practices in order to take up agricultural activities, cultivating wheat rather than corn, rearing poultry and pigs, and build dwellings according to a regular plan with French chimneys.<sup>354</sup> In November 1674, Frontenac was so convinced that the teaching of children was “such a good work” that he proclaimed it “the most rewarding towards God and the most useful to the colony”.<sup>355</sup> He decided to raise two young Indians in his private home at his own expenses.<sup>356</sup> Three others had left him after he had equipped them with clothing and although he had granted them every possible freedom, so he thought.<sup>357</sup>

## **6. Involvement of Savages in Catholic Rituals and Education in French Manners**

When the British in Acadia passed the anti-Catholic Test Act in 1673,<sup>358</sup> conversion by Capuchin, Recollect and Jesuit fathers in the region, who had been sent there by Cardinal de Richelieu, was further complicated. The Capuchins’ efforts were limited to opening a school for French and Indian children in Port Royal. In 1675, the Recollect father Christian Leclercq developed a written language of hieroglyphs, which could be understood by the Micmacs.<sup>359</sup> At the same time, Indians were increasingly becoming involved in Christian rituals. In 1675, young Indians were targeted, and were especially elevated by religious congregations with the aid of wealthy colonists.<sup>360</sup> Furthermore, not only were baptism of the “savages” and of their children listed, but also savage chiefs or other members of the tribe were accepted to act as godfathers and godmothers. On 28th January, Jean-Baptiste Le Gardeur de Repentigny had his son François named by Algonquian woman Marie Makatshinghots.<sup>361</sup>

The involvement of “savages” in baptismal rituals was accompanied by a greater influx of missionaries from the metropolis. On 9<sup>th</sup> March 1675, Eustache Maupassant, the Recollect

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid. and letter of 13th November 1673 and later on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1679.

<sup>355</sup> Letter of 14th November 1674.

<sup>356</sup> Letter of 15th March 1675 and of 30th May 1675.

<sup>357</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 5, f. 178, f. 291.

<sup>358</sup> This act enforced upon all persons filling any office, civil or military, the obligation of taking the oaths of supremacy and allegiance and subscribing to a declaration against transubstantiation and also of receiving the sacrament within three months after admittance to office.

<sup>359</sup> L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists* (Vancouver, 1979), p. 22-24. Brian J. Hanington, *Every Popish Person* (Halifax, 1984), p. 29.

<sup>360</sup> Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec 1926-1927, Lettre du 15 mars 1675.

<sup>361</sup> Abbé Cyprien Tanguay, *A Travers les Registres* (Montréal, 1886), p. 60. In the source her name is written as such: “Makats8ing8ots”.

provincial of Saint-Denys, reported to Minister Colbert in the metropolis: “We have at present six priests in Canada with one brother, one of these priests is at Isle Percée, the other in Three-Rivers, the third in Cataracauy (Kingston), and the fourth in Port-Royal, the two others with one brother are in Quebec.”<sup>362</sup> Thus, the Recollect order was successful in spreading its members across the vast country, i.e. to Acadia, the St. Lawrence Valley and towards the Upper Country. On his arrival at Restigouche in Acadia in 1676 Father Chrétien LeClercq was joyful to find the Indians “almost all baptised”.<sup>363</sup> However, LeClercq fell victim to an error of cartography: to him the Savages of Restigouche were “Gaspésiens”. On older maps, however, Gaspésia was used to designate the entire area around the Gulf of St. Lawrence.<sup>364</sup> LeClercq made further observations on the nature of Indians and their reactions to incoming Whites. He held that “they are sweet tempered, peaceable and tractable, having much charity, affection and tenderness for one another...Our Gaspesian women...are very modest, chaste and continent.”<sup>365</sup> He held that they had been corrupted, however, through liquor and trade with Europeans, which had led to all sorts of crimes and disorders.

In 1679, Colbert opted for segregationist population structures and held that entire bulks of Indians should be attracted, while at the same time advising that it would be better if fewer French settlements hosted Indians. A ratio of one Indian to every seventh or eighth White settler would ensure that French colonists would be able to dominate their native neighbours numerically and culturally.<sup>366</sup> Governor Frontenac disagreed and held that segregation, which was favoured by the Jesuits, should be reversed to enforce cohabitation of French and Indians as a means of assimilation of the latter to the former. He held, “they would leave at the first fantasy (...) their true wives (...), their habitations, the missionaries and religion, which would not happen if they would take up our language, our way of life, our laws and our manners.”<sup>367</sup> In the same year of 1679, Frontenac officially declared that the francisation of adults had failed, while he held that the same policy towards children had been crowned with success.<sup>368</sup> In 1681, Governor Jacques Du Chesneau wrote to the King’s advisor Marquis de

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<sup>362</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Mss. Mélanges de Colbert, vol. 171, fol. 52. The whole passage in: Blais, *Dictionnaire Biographique*, pp. XIII-XXXIII.

<sup>363</sup> R.P. Pacifique, *Restigouche, métropole des Micmacs*. Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Québec. Collected with other writings in *Etudes Historiques et Géographiques* (Rimouski, 1926), p. 116.

<sup>364</sup> Bock, *The Micmac Indians*, p. 10.

<sup>365</sup> LeClercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, ed. by William F. Ganong, Toronto 1910 (Paris, 1691), p. 250.

<sup>366</sup> Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Lettre du 8 mai 1679.

<sup>367</sup> Margry, *Découvertes*, p. 301. Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec 1926-27, letter of 6th November 1679, and Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 11, f. 234.

<sup>368</sup> Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Province de Québec 1926-1927, letter of 6<sup>th</sup> November 1679.



Seignelay that “in those of Sillery and Lorette in the neighbourhood of Quebec, all three under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers, the youth is entirely brought up *à la Française*, except in the matter of their food and dress, which is necessary for hunting, which constitutes their wealth and ours. A commencement has been made in all these Missions to instruct young boys in reading and writing; at that of the Montreal Mountain, the Ladies of the Congregation devote themselves to the instruction of the little girls, and employ them in needle-work; the Ursulines at Quebec act in the same way towards those given to them, whom they receive indifferently from all the Missions, whether established among us or in the Indian Country under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers.”

Du Chesneau insisted that mission work be continued: “Those Missions cannot be too much encouraged, nor too much countenance be given to the gentlemen of Saint Sulpice and the Jesuit Fathers among the Indians, inasmuch as they not only place the Country in security and bring peltries hither, but greatly glorify God, and the King, as eldest son of the Church, by reason of the large number of good Christians formed there.” Yet, it was deemed important to introduce other measures, such as present-giving in order to make conversion more attractive and to create incentives for it: “Secondly, his Majesty may, perhaps, have it in his power to increase, essentially, this great good, were he to order me to make, in his name, a few presents to the Indians of the Villages established among us, so as to attract a greater number of them; and where he to destine a small fund for the Indian girls who quit the Ursulines, on being educated to fit them out and marry them, and thus establish Christian families. I shall not fail, My Lord, to exhort the Inhabitants to rear Indians, and shall not be discouraged giving them the example, notwithstanding three have already left me, after I had incurred considerable expense on them, because I would oblige them to learn something. The Jesuit Fathers have been more fortunate than I, and have some belonging to the most distant tribes, such as Illinois and Mohegans (Loups), who know how to read, write, speak French and play on Instruments.”<sup>369</sup> The success of Jesuits was widespread, not the least because they were the

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<sup>369</sup> M. du Chesneau t M. de Seignelay, 13 November 1681, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York*; procured in Holland, England and France by John Romeyn Brodhead, Vol. IX: Transcripts of Documents in the Archives of the “Ministère de la Marine et des Colonies”; of the “Ministère de la Guerre”, and in the “Bibliothèque du Roi” at Paris. Paris Documents, I-VIII (1631-1744) (Albany, 1855), p. 150.

order with the most substantial funding, due to their privileged relationship with the French Court.<sup>370</sup>

On 12th November 1682, Intendant Sieur Jacques de Meulles<sup>371</sup> wrote, “Indian girls may learn to live after the fashion of the French peasants, whereas at the Ursulines they learn only to say prayers and to speak French. They would lead their husbands to such modes of life as might enable them to support and maintain themselves. Upon marriage might be given a cow, a hog, some corn, and a little flax seed, whereby they might subsist. Instruction in reading, writing and in their faith would not be omitted.” However, de Meulles had received no specific instructions on what should happen to “those who have more than 12 children” and he wanted to know what should be done about this issue.<sup>372</sup> Since he considered language instruction as vital, he interfered with choosing the right agents for this policy; he held that the Ursulines were not capable of fulfilling the role of language instructors: “Nothing is more useless than to put the Savages with the Ursulines, since the austerity that they display can in no way accommodate a savage mind; furthermore it is true that once these savages left Ursuline homes they went from one extreme to the other.”<sup>373</sup> The failure in accommodating Indians and in assimilating them with lasting effect was ascribed to the Ursulines. This gave the impression that state authorities wanted to put the blame on religious authorities in order to distract from their own failings in formulating clear policy directives and in providing the necessary means and funds in order to help realise them. De Meulles envisaged francisation as such: first young Indian girls should learn to live in the way of French peasant women, i.e. learn needlework, knitting and sewing, taking care of animals and spinning.<sup>374</sup>

Yet, the French continued conversion endeavours. A general rule was ascribed in 1682 to governors and intendants that were instructed to “invite [the natives] by the mildest of ways to the knowledge of God, and to the light of the faith and the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion”.<sup>375</sup> Besides they had the secular task of upholding law and order. Governor Lefebvre received special instructions in May 1682 from Minister Colbert, who urged Lefebvre to

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<sup>370</sup> Mary Ann La Fleur: „From Missionaries to Seigneurs: The Contributions of the Jesuits to the development of the St. Lawrence River Valley in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century”, in: *The Jesuit Encounters in the New World 1549-1767* (Rom, 1997)

<sup>371</sup> Saliha Belmessous judges him to be the most outspoken advocate of the policy of francisation. See Belmessous, *D'un préjugé culturel*, p. 182.

<sup>372</sup> Abstract of Sieur de Meulles: 12 November 1682, in: Brodhead (ed.), *Documents*, p. 199.

<sup>373</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 193-194.

<sup>374</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 87-88.

<sup>375</sup> Commission of M. de Tracy of Oct. 19, 1663, in: Petit, *Droit public*, p. 27. O'Neill, *Church*, p. 10.

favour religion in the colony, to co-operate with bishops and to support the work of the missionaries. The exercise of influence on the Iroquois, considered by most Europeans to be the principal Indian tribe, was especially encouraged in the hope that English attempts to dominate them be counteracted.<sup>376</sup> Among the missionaries it was the Sulpicians who followed de Meulles' vision of frenchification. He therefore, supported them and tried to campaign in their favour towards Marquis de Seignelay and the King in the metropolis to provide funds.<sup>377</sup> In 1684, one year after Colbert's death the King,<sup>378</sup> in fact, decided to send 500 livres to the Sulpician mission in Montagne, explicitly stating that the money should not be given to the Ursulines.<sup>379</sup> Furthermore, six women were sent from France in order to teach Indian women the virtues of female needlework. The long-term aim was to accustom Indians to manufacturing work of metropolitan products and at the same time develop the economy in the colony. In 1685, further money, 1.000 livres, was sent to the instructors in Montagne, together with some quantities of wool. However, local authorities rejected some of the women sent from the metropolis since they were expecting older, more strong and prudent women; those sent were deemed too young, ignorant and vicious.<sup>380</sup> Therefore, de Meulles proposed that women in the colony should be chosen for this task and to encourage Indian women to take up French ways.

In 1684, Abbey Louis Tronson, who was Superior to the Saint Sulpice mission at the time, wrote to Marquis de Seignelay regarding his work with the Indians. Tronson reported that there were already 155 habitants, i.e. individuals who had become permanent residents, whose 40 children were being taught French by missionaries who at the same time hoped to convert them to Christianity.<sup>381</sup> Yet by 1685, Jesuits and Sulpicians held that the reserves near the towns of Quebec and Montreal should be moved further away from French settlements. Marc Jetten has argued that Jesuits became convinced that gradual frenchification would be more effectively realised through segregationist rather than integrationist practices.<sup>382</sup> It was held that keeping Indians and French separate was more advantageous to spreading French culture than having both groups live together. This change in policy rather seems to reflect the wish

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<sup>376</sup> Public Archives of Canada, C13C, vol. 3, f. 31-32, and B, vol. 8, f. 99.

<sup>377</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 194.

<sup>378</sup> Belmessous interprets the fact of Colbert's death as the end of an official policy of francisation, *D'un préjugé culturel*, p. 186.

<sup>379</sup> Archives Nationales, F3, vol. 6, f. 92.

<sup>380</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol 6, f. 401.

<sup>381</sup> Public Archives Canada, Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice, Montréal, MG 17, A 7-2, série II, vol. 1, p. 000140.

<sup>382</sup> Marc Jetten, *Enclaves amérindiennes: Les "réductions" du Canada 1637-1701* (Sillery, 1994), p. 75.

to reverse earlier métissage practice because, in the face of failure, clerics increasingly opposed the idea of mingling both groups. Through numerous complaints voiced by local authorities, the metropolitan authorities increasingly became aware that their policies had not produced the desired effects. First such remarks were made in November 1685 by Governor Jacques René de Brisay de Denonville, who expressed his disappointment at the failure of assimilation endeavours in a letter to Minister Colbert: “It was believed for a very long time that domiciling the native people near our settlements was a very effective means of teaching these people to live like us and to become instructed in our religion. I notice, Monseigneur, that the very opposite has taken place because instead of familiarizing them with our laws, I assure you that they communicate very much to us all they have that is the very worst, and they take on likewise all that is evil and vicious in us...”<sup>383</sup> Denonville believed that Indians became victims of “our libertines” [meaning the French] who taught them a thousand evils. He was convinced that Indian acculturation was far behind that of the colonists and that socio-cultural effects of cohabitation preserved Indian youth. This segregation necessitated moving non-Christian Indians, who lived in the neighbourhood of Montreal, to the interior of the villages.<sup>384</sup> Denonville was an outspoken admirer of the Jesuit policy of reductions whereby, according to him, social life was regulated in a far better way than in any French village in the metropolis,<sup>385</sup> and where Indians, imbued with Christian fervour, learned French manners.

Jean Bochart de Champigny, intendant from 1687 onwards, preferred the term “civiliser” to “franciser”, yet held that it was generally impossible to civilise Indians: “The difficulty in civilising the distant nations through the example is that we virtually see no Indian that we have instructed among us, and to insist, although they [Indians] are still in their infancy, is a sure judgment that we will not succeed. Up until now missionaries have been obliged to have French servants, because Indians do not like to be dependant nor to be fixed at one place, so that it happens more often that a French turns savage than a savage becomes French.” From this clear verdict of French failure in terms of francisizing Indians, Champigny concluded that it was better to simply and solely pursue evangelisation in order to “fortify the weakness of their spirits” and accustom the Savages to the usage of reason.<sup>386</sup> The equation “religion = reason” was a repeated argument in order to back the view that through religious instruction Indians would learn not only to admire and worship God, but at the same time be freed from -

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<sup>383</sup> Public Archives of Canada, MG1, C11A, vol. VII, Denonville to Minister 13 November 1685, pp. 46-47.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid, p. 91 and vol. 8, p. 146.

<sup>385</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 7, p. 90.

<sup>386</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 15, f. 130.

in the minds of Europeans - “ridiculous” superstitions. Furthermore, it was held that through being impressed by the thoughts and behaviour of missionaries, Indians would more easily become sociable and conciliated towards the French. In 1688, Governor Denonville held that the French King had always supported the plan of establishing missionaries who were chased away by the solicitations of heretics. He reiterated that protection of missionaries was vital and that, as expressed in a letter by Monsieur Dongan to the Governor, nothing was more desirable than the spreading of the Catholic religion, and that it was in the hands of the French to realize this.<sup>387</sup>

It was mainly after 1691, during his second term of office, that Governor Louis de Buade Comte de Frontenac strongly favoured the francisation of Indians with an approach which entailed that Indians be domesticated and conditioned *à la Française*. Frontenac condemned the reserves as instituted by the Jesuits, his lifelong enemies who opposed the selling of liquor to Indians, which the governor himself had authorised. In contrast, Intendant Duchesneau who was in constant conflict with the governor, held that gradual frenchification was desirable and thought that the Iroquois of the Sault St. Louis reserve were a good example. Duchesneau spoke laudably of the successful missions of clerics and glorified their deeds to the effect of increasing the numbers of good Christians.<sup>388</sup> Being aware that Indians could not be led to live like Frenchmen instantly, Duchesneau held that it was sufficient to bring them step by step towards acquiring French habits, and especially that it was important to employ the violence of constraint, a measure which Indians would not give in to anyway because of their strong love of liberty and freedom.<sup>389</sup> Duchesneau further opted to create Indian villages in the heart of the colony, on the model of missions, in order to contribute to the safety and well being of the country.<sup>390</sup> Duchesneau was aware that without this measure Indians would continue to be a military threat; and thus settling them close to French villages was intended as a pacifying and assimilatory measure. The intendant wanted to ensure that Indians would work to the advantage of the colony rather than to its detriment. Integration was therefore vital, and thus every measure, which would bring Indians into French realms, was favoured.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1699, the priest and missionary Buisson St. Cosme vividly reported from Michilimackinac where clerics continued to baptise children and were making every effort at

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<sup>387</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 10, f. 34.

<sup>388</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 5, f. 291.

<sup>389</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 5, f. 317.

<sup>390</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 5, f. 290, f. 317.

preventing libertinage with Indian women. However, they complained that their work with elder people had borne few results. It was reported that the Indian youth was more apt to receiving the gospel and instruction.<sup>391</sup> In one instance, the missionaries were surprised to find a “perfectly good Christian woman” among Chicachas. The Illinois mission was described as the most beautiful of the Jesuit projects in the region on the grounds that in addition to many children being baptized, a range of elderly people had given up superstitions and had started to live as “good Christians”.<sup>392</sup> The Jesuits also met an Indian whom they gave a collier to win his affection and to show their willingness for an alliance with his tribe. The Jesuits urged him, being a good Christian himself now, that it was henceforth his duty to spread religion to other nations and to help facilitate the work of the missionaries.<sup>393</sup>

## **7. Obstacles to Conversion and Competition between Missionary Orders**

In 1704, a cleric in Louisiana tried to list the obstacles to converting Indians. First, he thought that Indians were naturally indolent towards religion, which was probably the greatest impediment to conversion. Secondly, Indians of the Natchez, Tonica, Chatta and Chicachaz tribes were living on such a vast territory that it was impossible for missionaries to do their work and for this reason children were dying without being baptised. The third obstacle referred to the diversity of languages that Indians were speaking, for which the development of grammars and dictionaries was recommended. Fourthly, Indians were mostly polygamous, however this was rare amongst the Chatta and Chicachaz. This could be remedied by putting a sufficient number of French families in every village, since it was held that the progress of religion depended on the advancement of the colony’s population and vice versa. However, it was stressed that the conversion of Indians was all in all neither difficult nor impossible, as was often held in France, where prejudices about the “nature” of Indians were prevalent.<sup>394</sup>

In 1708, La Vente complained, however, that with the new vessels arriving in New France there were no “new troops of Jesus Christ”, i.e. missionaries, although it had been agreed that there should be at least two clerics in every mission. La Vente believed that three or four well-instructed and docile priests could already do good work with the French, but would not

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<sup>391</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettre no 26, Aux Kansas, 2 Janvier 1699, p. 4.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>394</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettre no 77, Louisiane, 20 octobre 1704, f. 1-15.

possess sufficient talent for the savage missions for which other missionaries were needed.<sup>395</sup> Apparently, savage missions required a different approach, of which those clerics serving the French were not capable. Certainly, conversion was a different task than preserving the faith among those already practicing Christian religion. In 1721, Governor Marquis de Vaudreuil sent Father La Chasse, the superior of the Jesuits, to an Abenaki village, where he was well respected.<sup>396</sup> Vaudreuil was convinced that if the King allowed the French to join the Abenakis, they would not ally with the English who would even be forced to give up all their establishments.<sup>397</sup> In May 1722, the Company of the West Indies allotted Capuchins the parish of New Orleans along the Mississippi River.<sup>398</sup> Their contract envisaged that the Capuchins were to be given the right to set up churches under the patronage of the French King. Yet, because Capuchins did not possess sufficient financial capacities, the Company of the Indies decided to reduce their field of activity in Northern Louisiana and to bring Jesuit missionaries to the South towards Yazoo and Arkansas.<sup>399</sup>

Again, strategies were changed; this was the result of the objective of Jesuit superiors who envisaged putting a single priest at the posts whereas the Company of the West Indies asked for a second priest to work in Alabama and with the Choctaw.<sup>400</sup> The stated aim was “to implant religion and harmony between this nation and the French.”<sup>401</sup> First, however, the consent of the Indians had to be sought. Franz-Joseph Post claims that the status of Jesuit missionaries in Louisiana was equal to, or at least not necessarily higher than that of a medicine man and that their influence did not derive from the office that they were holding but from the nature of their personalities.<sup>402</sup> The Commandant General of Louisiana Etienne de Périer recommended to the commandant of the Alabama post that he should persuade the chief of the Coweta nation to receive a missionary. Périer, however, seemed to be aware that this implied a break-up of relations between Coweta and the English in the region. This case shows that in their relations with the Indians the French were greatly aware of competition

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<sup>395</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Quebec, Lettre B, no 79, La Vente, Fort Louis.

<sup>396</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 43, “Conseil, Mr. De Vaudreuil et Begon, 8 octobre 1721”, f°373.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., f. 377.

<sup>398</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 43, pp. 108-111, *Ordonnance servant de règlement pour l'établissement des Capuchins à la Louisiane*, May 16, 1722.

<sup>399</sup> Archives Nationales, F5A3, f. 169, “Commissaire députés, 19 December 1722”; and B, vol. 43, p. 586, “Contract, 20 February 1726”.

<sup>400</sup> Archives Nationales, C13C, vol. 1, f. 313, “Restrictions faites au Mémoire du P. de Beaubois, 1726”. B, vol. 43, pp. 86v-87, “Contract, 20 February 1726”.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

with the English.<sup>403</sup> Furthermore, it illustrates that the French respected Indian customs when such a course of action was in the former's interests.

In 1725, Jesuit missionary and priest Nicolas-Ignace de Beaubois<sup>404</sup> claimed that religion was the only way in which savages induced to imitate European habits: "We cannot attach them to the French side by any bonds stronger than those of religion."<sup>405</sup> Yet, Beaubois expressed criticism on the mixed composition of the colony which he described as "veritable Babylon, full of confusion and trouble... You do not have to be a great statesman to see that it cannot long endure like that, much less flourish. The spirit of industriousness is incompatible with licentiousness. Religion alone can check the latter; a colony cannot grow and endure without the former."<sup>406</sup> Yet, the setting up of bishoprics had vital consequences for church and state, as this was one example of "the long evolution from diffused feudalism to centralized absolutism".<sup>407</sup> It was mainly the increase in the competences of institutions that led to the transition from feudalism in New France to centralized absolutism as represented in the institutions of the French state and the Catholic Church.

Co-operation between company officials and missionaries was extended to searching for suitable nuns to run a hospital in New Orleans. The Ursulines were hired on the condition that alongside teaching in a newly created school, they would eventually oversee the care of the poor in the hospital without any financial aid from the Company of the West Indies. The Company wanted to ensure that the poor could receive treatment free of charge while the wealthier would pay for it.<sup>408</sup> The Company "wishing further, by this new, equally pious foundation, to assuage the suffering of the sick poor, and to provide at the same time for the education of girls."<sup>409</sup> The Ursulines, however, first needed to receive the authorization of their ordinary in Rouen who consented on the condition the French king gave his consent first and held that it "should be assured not only that the King approved, but that the King by his authority would render this foundation sure and permanent, no matter what might happen, and that these nuns would be assured of support for the rest of their days, and that they would not,

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<sup>403</sup> O'Neill, *Church*, p. 183.

<sup>404</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 12, f. 259, "Beaubois, *Mémoire* [last quarter of 1725]".

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 259v.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 259 and v.

<sup>407</sup> O'Neill, *Church*, p. 147.

<sup>408</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 10, f. 98 and v, *Traité*.

<sup>409</sup> Archives Nationales, C13C, vol. 1, f. 313, "Restrictions faites au Mémoire du P. de Beaubois", [1726]. B, vol. 43, pp. 586v-87, "Contract, 20 February 1726".



after long years of work in Louisiana, have to be supported by the convent where they first took their vows.”<sup>410</sup>

The archbishop wanted to make sure that after service in the colony, the Ursulines would not fall back on the treasury of their home convent - again the money argument was reiterated - but would rather find further means of subsistence and resources in New France. The contract that was drafted envisaged a “successful outcome, with the blessing of God, in the work they were undertaking; this work’s pious and charitable principles win for the nuns the promise of the King’s protection.”<sup>411</sup> Yet, the arrival of the Ursulines inevitably increased tension that already existed in relations between male missionaries of the Capuchin and Jesuit orders; not only because women had intruded into a male-dominated field, but also because superiors of the two male orders came to quarrel over competences. The agents finally agreed upon an unusual measure: a Jesuit was to become the Superior of the Ursulines,<sup>412</sup> probably in order to spread Jesuit influence over other orders and to prevent female missionaries from becoming too powerful. This line of action indeed aroused suspicion that Jesuits were trying to out-rule the Capuchins. There seemed to be a clear reason as to why Jesuits were successful in doing this: they had more material capacities and the Capuchins had to admit that they could not supply sufficient missionaries for the field in question.

On 20th February 1726, a new contract between the Company of the West Indies and the Jesuits was set up with royal consent. The contract envisaged that the missionaries would enjoy all possible liberties and complete authority in matters of religion. It was affirmed that both the Council of Louisiana and commandants of posts would respect and support missionaries.<sup>413</sup> Questions, however, remained open: was the missionary supposed to exercise the function of “chaplain” under the authority of the military officer or that of an independent “pastor”? Also, it was not clear if missionaries should have a say in Indian policy or if they should merely receive orders from secular authorities.<sup>414</sup> Such hierarchical issues lay at the heart of much clerical discourse in New France since Catholicism was supposed to be transplanted from the metropolis where Church hierarchies were based upon long established historical structures. Meanwhile, the nuns asked for a similar drafting of contracts and for

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<sup>410</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 10, f. 28-29, “Archbishop of Rouen to Monsieur, 4 September 1726”.

<sup>411</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 43, pp. 639-40, “Beaubois to Ragué, 10 September 1726”. C13A, vol. 10, f. 319 and v.

<sup>412</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 190.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, p.172. Archives Nationales, B, vol. 43, p. 587.

<sup>414</sup> Davion to Dirs., SME, Paris, 12 December 1702, ASME, 344, p. 62.

clarification of their tasks since they feared that their role, already limited, would be further undermined if no written agreements were made.<sup>415</sup>

In 1734, Comte de Maurepas received a report on the deplorable conditions of the Québec seminary: not only was there insufficient money, but missionaries Saint Cosme and Foucault had been killed, two more had died at sea and fires had destroyed parts of the mission.<sup>416</sup> It was unclear how far Indians were responsible for these incidents.

In 1735, with the arrival of father Maillard conversion successes with the Micmac in Acadia increased. Katherine Brooks considers the eighteenth century the most successful missionary period in Acadia.<sup>417</sup> The blending of Christian rituals with Micmac spiritual ceremonies became prevalent: The Catholic tradition of using holy water and holding confessions was introduced into Micmac ceremonies.<sup>418</sup> Furthermore, marriages were increasingly celebrated with the sacraments and where no priest was available provisional leaders were appointed to perform the ceremony.<sup>419</sup> In 1747, officer Boishébert stressed that French-Indian relations were based on the utility of the ingenuous peoples to the colony.<sup>420</sup> Boishébert made unerringly clear that Indians' right of existence depended on their cooperation with the French. After British takeover of New France in 1763, Abbey l'Isledieu, former vicar general in France, complained on 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1765 that the colony of Louisiana contained only Capuchins after the abolition of the Jesuit order. Furthermore, the latter were few in numbers and barely able to fulfil their duties. The low number of French missionaries represented a serious obstacle to the spreading and maintaining of the Catholic religion and to insuring the practice of the sacraments. L'Isledieu drew attention to the fact that marriages that had been legally and validly celebrated by missionaries should not be dissolved. Furthermore, abbey l'Isledieu was concerned that with the arrival of new missionaries from different destinations, ordained by different superiors, chaos would ensue and would lead to an intolerable degree of independence in missionaries.<sup>421</sup> Addressing an Ursuline community and Roman Catholic missionaries on 4<sup>th</sup> March, l'Isledieu reiterated that

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<sup>415</sup> O'Neill, *Church*, p. 175.

<sup>416</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, 5 no 50, Mémoire du Séminaire des Missions Etrangères de Paris sur l'Etat present du Seminaire de Quebec présenté a Monseigneur le comte de Maurepas.

<sup>417</sup> John W. Grant, *Moon of Wintertime* (Toronto, 1984), p. 68.

<sup>418</sup> Bernard G. Hoffman, *The Historical Ethnography of the Micmac of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (California, 1946), p. 454.

<sup>419</sup> Upton, *Micmacs*, pp. 153-160.

<sup>420</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 87, f. 19-20. Cited in Belmessous, *D'un préjugé culturel*, p. 315.

<sup>421</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano, "Abbé de l'Isledieu à Paris, 21 juillet 1766, à Monseigneur", *Missione*, vol. 53.

new French secular clergy were required in place of regular clergy, since the former were more apt to the duty of converting.<sup>422</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> October 1768, the Bishop of Québec wrote to abbe L'Isledieu: "I have sent a priest to Illinois where one would need three, another to Acadia where actually three or four priests would be necessary for the Savages and for the French, but it is not possible to receive permission from the government to send Frenchmen there."<sup>423</sup>

## 8. Conclusion

Edmundo O'Gorman has held that "from this ancient myth [of creation], European culture derived the fundamental notion that distinguishes it from all other cultures, namely, that the world is not something given to man, but rather something which is of his own making..."<sup>424</sup> With this in mind, Christian missionaries set out to evangelise Indians. This self-evidently collided with most Indians' notion that the earth was not of human making, but given by divine grace to be shared, not exploited.<sup>425</sup> Missionary activity in New France was divided between many different religious orders, which often worked against each other. It was therefore ineffective in arriving at the intended aims of the conversion and evangelisation of the Indian population.<sup>426</sup> Furthermore, Indians' polytheistic faith constituted an important impediment to conversion. Also, interactions of missionaries sometimes led to monopolistic aspirations that resulted in the exclusion of other social agents. For instance, rivalry between

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<sup>422</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano, "Abbé l'Isledieu, Paris, 4 mars 1765", *Missione*, vol. 53.

<sup>423</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano, "Lettre de M. l'Evêque de Québec à l'abbé de l'Isledieu, 19 octobre 1768 à Québec", Nun<sup>o</sup>: Ap.<sup>co</sup> in Francia, f<sup>o</sup> 587v.

<sup>424</sup> Edmundo O'Gorman, *The Invention of America. An Inquiry into the Historical Nature of the New World and the Meaning of its History* (Westport, <sup>3</sup>1977), p. 64f.

<sup>425</sup> Yet, different Indian tribes had different creation myths of their own. The Cree, a Western branch of the Algonquian linguistic family, for instance, believed in the following story: After the Creator had created all animals and the first humans, he said to Wisakedjak, a central figure in Cree mythology, meaning flatterer: "Now you shall guard your people and show him how to live. Show the humans the bad seeds, the malicious ones and the deadly ones, and do not allow, that humans and animals quarrel." But Wisakedjak, like Eve in the Genesis, did not obey, and all creatures started to quarrel. The Creator warned Wisakedjak several times, and finally sent rain and floods, so that all creatures drowned, except for an otter, a beaver and a muskrat. Wisakedjak started to cry and asked for help; he wanted to build an island out of mud, but he did not have the capacity; he merely had the capacity to extend existing creation rather than to create something himself. Yet, the creator consoled him by promising to give him the capacity to recreate everything if he was able to snatch a bit of earth from the ground of the water. Wisakedjak instructed first the otter, who was unable to and nearly drowned; then the beaver, who, too, was unsuccessful. Only the muskrat could bring some mud to the surface of the water, and Wisakedjak could start his recreation work and build an island. It is held that he even found some bones and wood in order to construct the female counterparts of the animals with whom he shared the island. However, the Creator finally undid Wisakedjak's power of creation and only left him the capacity to flatter and to deceive. This ending of the story is parallel to the Christian notion of man's evil nature, which destroys, plunders and betrays.

<sup>426</sup> Joelle Rostkowski: *La conversion inachevée: les Indiens et le christianisme*, Paris 1998.

male and female orders was an issue seldom explicitly addressed. Female missionaries often had to insist in order to convince superiors that their contribution in the colony was valuable. In another instance, the Jesuits, partly through systematic eagerness, had been successful in the long-term exclusion of the two other principal male orders: Sulpicians and Recollects. It was mostly due to the Jesuits' sound relations with the French state that they could secure and expand their powerful position in New France. A special attitude towards conversion seems to have played a vital role: because Jesuits believed that they were saving their own soul through the gain of new converts, they had a personal interest in doing effective work.

The economic dimensions of *métissage* in New France were imbued both with interest politics and with spiritual convictions. Both elements became apparent in mutual relations of Indian tribes, Catholic clerics, French authorities and trading company officials. While the French treasury in Paris and the trading companies provided the necessary financial resources, missionaries belonging to various denominations interacted directly with the Indians in the colony. The latter, in cases where they accepted Christianity, were hoping for advantages to be attained from conversion. Missionaries were occupied with seeking Indian consent and with applying constraints, or they were confronted with Indian readiness to be converted and baptized according to Christian rules as a result of failure of indigenous rituals. Missionaries had to demonstrate conversion successes towards their superiors as well as towards their own conscience in order to save their souls. They therefore frequently reported on the progress of their conversion work in the colony to superiors and an interested public in Quebec, Rome and Paris. These cities contained their host institutions from which clerics not only received the necessary resources, but also directives. The link between economic interests and their religious justification becomes apparent in the way in which missionaries were requested to aid the colonial endeavour. Despite being one of the most important representatives and active agents of colonial expansion, missionaries had to manoeuvre between Indian hostility and the dictates of state officials. Governor Beaubois was among those who acknowledged that clerics were confronted with undue treatment in the colony: "Little effort is made to set up missionaries, or, if some be sent [to the colony], they are left, so to speak, in an impossible situation, because of the harsh treatment they have to endure, because of the little respect they are given."<sup>427</sup> At the same time, missionaries knew how to use their position to pursue their own interests and those of Catholicism, how to exercise influence over Indians and how to apply strategies of assimilation and frenchification.

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<sup>427</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 12, f. 259, "Beaubois, Mémoire [last quarter of 1725]".

There is no doubt that the Jesuits held pole position for several reasons. They had good relations with the French state and had sufficient funding, partly due to patronage of wealthy sponsors. Furthermore, they had a special spiritual fervour, which helped them to keep up the mission idea and to do relatively effective conversion work. Yet, Jesuits were more concerned with the idea of saving souls than with propagating the end of the world, a factor that suggests that there was a causal link between these two aims. Furthermore, the belief in the superiority of Christianity and the idea that Indians were savage, barbarous and primitive, and in need of faith in order to become true human beings, gave Jesuits a particular mind set and encouraged them to the pursuit of their duties. In this they did not differ much from other orders; however the Jesuits' particular fervour and engagement is particularly stressed. Matteo Sanfilippo, for instance, holds that Jesuits were successful in exploiting their dominant position towards the French state for their own power political ends.<sup>428</sup> Furthermore, he claims that Jesuits could make decisions in almost complete autonomy because of their geographical distance to the metropolis. However, the question arises how free Jesuits truly were in taking decisions. It has to be differentiated that they had diverging attitudes towards Indians and no consistent image of "the Indian", which led to different education and conversion strategies. Shenwen Li holds that the influence of the Jesuits in general diminished after the French defeat against the Iroquois after the *Grande Paix de Montréal* in 1701.<sup>429</sup> Yet, together with the orders of the Recollects, Sulpicians and Capuchins, Jesuits had such a massive impact on Indian culture that it became difficult for Indians to effectively oppose Christian influence on their culture. However, authors unanimously agree that the number of Indian converts was rather low, compared to the intended aims. In fact, only rarely did Indians completely adhere to the Christian religion. They kept their customs not only as a defence of their identity, but for practical necessities, because European ways did not always address certain problematic issues with which Indians rather than Europeans were faced. In turn, European solutions were sought when Indian rituals turned out to be of no use. For instance, in cases where Indians suffered epidemics or diseases, traditional ways of healing seemed to fail and thus, European expertise and knowledge was sought. Indians' belief in the healing power of baptism can be interpreted as a last resort against certain developments that the Indians themselves could no

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<sup>428</sup> „Missionari, Esploratori, Spie e Strateghi: I Gesuiti Nel Nord America Francese (1604-1763)“, in: I Religiosi A Corte. Teologia, Politica e Diplomazia in Antico Regime. Atti del seminario di studi, Georgetown University a Villa "Le Balze", Fiesole, 20 ottobre 1995, a cura di Flavio Rurale, Roma 1998, S. 287-331.

<sup>429</sup> Shenwen Li: *Stratégies missionnaires des jésuites français en Nouvelle-France et en Chine au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2001).

longer control. This was especially the case with regards to epidemics and diseases whose victims were far more commonly Indians than Europeans.



## C. Marriage Policies and Miscegenation: Mixed and Non-mixed Marriages as Final Colonial Strategy

### 1. Rationale for a Marriage Policy in the Colony

“Dormir, manger, coucher ensemble; c’est mariage, il me semble!”

French proverb

Marriage was seen as a practical arrangement that was held in high esteem in New France. Attitudes of French officials were for the most part tolerant and encouraging when it came to the concept of marriage, mainly because it was considered to be morally sound, stable and long lasting. In fact, the married condition was seen in Canada, as elsewhere during the early modern period, as the normal, prescribed and desired form of human coexistence of men and women. The objective of marriage policy in New France was to alter the composition of the colonial population according to the demands of colony building as envisaged and formulated in the French metropolis.<sup>430</sup> As a general rule, conversion was made a requirement prior to the celebration of mixed marriages. This policy, however, did not follow a consistent course of action in the colony. Rather French authorities in New France treated this issue according to changing circumstances, mainly the colony’s moral climate and its demographic composition. Whenever the atmosphere shifted towards growing *libertinage* and *concubinage* with Indian women, mixed unions elicited disapproval. Non-mixed marriages were favoured whenever libertine ways became prevalent, the latter being considered harmful for population growth in stable circumstances. Incentives that the state created were designed to increase the number of married couples in order to stabilize the colony by helping to establish families as early as possible. From the end of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth therefore, the marriage rate in Canada remained high.<sup>431</sup> Men married on average at age 26 and women at 22.<sup>432</sup> To counteract this development state authorities, however, issued edicts, which held that men should marry at age 20 and women at age 16. This was decided in order to encourage early family-formation. Not only did the state set up certain incentives, but also the marriage partners were requested to fulfil responsibilities. Certain rules were applied to

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<sup>430</sup> Parts of this chapter were published in: Merrill D. Smith (ed.): *The Greenwood Encyclopaedia of Love, Courtship, and Sexuality through History*. The Colonial and Revolutionary Age, Vol. 4, Greenwood Press 2008.

<sup>431</sup> Collectif Clio, *L’histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles* (Montréal, 1992), p. 91, and Hubert Charbonneau, *Vie et mort de nos ancêtres* (Montréal, 1975), pp. 150-166.

<sup>432</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, *The Role of the Church in New France* (Toronto, 1976), p. 136.



marriage: during the *ancien régime* church sacraments were made a requirement, without which the marriage in question was not considered legal and valid. Yet, in order to counter the power of the Catholic Church in matrimonial matters, civil jurists tried to undermine Church influence by extending civil jurisdiction over the institution of marriage.<sup>433</sup>

Marriage contracts, in the realm of civil jurists or notaries, were widespread. According to Quebec historian Louise Dechêne signing a marriage contract was a “normal procedure” and remained a common practice.<sup>434</sup> Marriage was indissoluble, yet separation did occur during the 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Micmacs, for instance, allowed divorce on very practical terms: to the man if within the first three years of marriage the wife did not give birth to a child.<sup>435</sup> At the same time, Micmacs accepted children who were born out of wedlock, which was taken as a sign of fertility of the woman, while also being tolerant to abortion.<sup>436</sup> To French colonists, the matter was rather judicial. The bishop of Quebec, St. Vallier, held in 1701 that, “although the marriage bond cannot be broken, married persons may be separated as to living quarters, as to bed and as to property, but only on the basis of a judicial decision.”<sup>437</sup> Here the function of civil jurists came in, who could decide if separation was justified.<sup>438</sup> Cases of adultery were frequent and mostly occurred between European men and Indian women, the latter often being considered as concubines. Yet, the Canadian judicial system excluded such cases from its agenda, because Indian women were not seen as a threat because the adulterous husband usually returned to his White wife at home.<sup>439</sup> Bigamous cases occurred, too, were the man in question pretended to be free to marry in the colony and yet had a wife in Europe. Such “clandestine marriages” were to be prevented, and therefore rules were introduced which held that the marriage partner should bring proof from the parish priest that he or she was indeed free to marry. From 1664 onwards, with the arrival of the Company of the West Indies in the colony, the *Coutume de Paris* was imposed. It

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<sup>433</sup> André Lachance/Sylvie Savoie: “Violence, Marriage and Family Honour: Aspects of the Legal Regulation of Marriage in New France”, in: *Crime and criminal justice*, ed. by Phillips (Toronto, 1994), 143-173, p. 146.

<sup>434</sup> Louise Dechêne, *Habitants et Marchands in Seventeenth Century Montreal* (Paris/Montréal, 1974), pp. 418-419.

<sup>435</sup> L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists* (Vancouver, 1979), p. 5.

<sup>436</sup> Katherine J. Brooks: The Effect of the Catholic Missionaries on the Micmacs Indians of Nova Scotia, 1610-1986, in: *The Nova Scotia Historical Review*, vol. 6 (1986), p. 111.

<sup>437</sup> Rituel du diocèse de Québec publié par l’ordre de Saint-Vallier, évêque de Québec, quoted in P.-A. Leclerc, “Le mariage sous le régime français”, in: *Revue d’Histoire de l’Amérique Française* 13 (1959), p. 395.

<sup>438</sup> Lachance/Savoie, *Violence*.

<sup>439</sup> Lachance/Savoie, *Violence*, p. 162.

regulated family matters and property questions.<sup>440</sup> It foresaw the supremacy of the husband and the legal incapacity of the wife. She retained the status of a minor even after the age of twenty-five. In practice, however, it was often the wife who took care of anything related to the household, because her husband was usually away in order to pursue his job in the fur trade as *voyageur*, *coureur de bois* or middleman.<sup>441</sup> Still, the role of women was subservient to men, and in mixed relationships; too, Indian women were seen as helpers in the fur trade. Jacqueline Peterson has contradicted this prevalent view and stressed that native wives were no “degraded drudges, commodities to be bought or sold, or the casual purveyors of sexual favours.”<sup>442</sup>

Through the means of mixed marriages it was hoped that Indians would be more easily “francisé”. It was partly with the gain of trade allies that the French hoped to achieve the aim of *métissage* and francisation. Sylvia van Kirk and Jennifer Brown have shown that Indian women were the important link within this web of relations and that they had a central role when it came to building networks: they were given as brides by their *sachems* or taken at will by French *coureurs de bois*.<sup>443</sup> By 1680, around 800 or one-fifth of French Canada’s male population between twenty and sixty years left the “colony” to move towards the interior of the country in order to become active in the fur trade as *coureurs de bois*. There many of them met Indian women without necessarily marrying them. Increasing complaints on the anarchic atmosphere, as both colonial and metropolitan authorities perceived it, led to initiatives to send out French *filles du roi* from the metropolis. This first female contingent to the colony was directed under the auspices of the Company of New France between 1634 and 1662.<sup>444</sup> On the one hand, authorities wanted to increase population numbers in the colony and, on the other, they wanted to entice French colonists to marry French women rather than exposing them to seduction by Indian women. At the face of growing libertinage in the colony, it seems a logical course of action that authorities started to encourage marriage as a way to stop the

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<sup>440</sup> Yves Zoltvany, “Esquisse de la Coutume de Paris“, in: *Revue d’Histoire de l’Amérique Française*, vol. 25 (1971), p. 365.

<sup>441</sup> Boucher and Morel, *Le droit dans la vie familiale*, p. 166.

<sup>442</sup> Apparently these stereotypes were spread in Walter O’Meara’s, *Daughters of the Country: The Women of the Fur Traders and Mountain Men* (New York, 1968). Jacqueline Peterson: “Women Dreaming: The Religiopsychology of Indian White Marriages and the Rise of a Metis Culture”, in: *Western Women. Their Land, Their Lives*, ed. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz and Janice Monk (Albuquerque 1988), p. 52.

<sup>443</sup> Jennifer Brown: “Women as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis communities“, in: *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3, no. 1 (1983), p. 39-46. Sylvia van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society in Western Canada 1670-1870* (Winnipeg, 1980).

<sup>444</sup> Yves Landry, *Les Filles du roi au XVIIe siècle* (Ottawa, 1992). See also Gustave Lanctot, *Filles de joie ou filles du roi. Étude sur l’émigration féminine en Nouvelle-France* (Montréal, 1952).

exercise of free sex which not only led to illegitimate births, but it also prevented young colonists - as Gustave Lanctot has pointed out - from leading the sedentary life of a peasant.<sup>445</sup> Such a lifestyle was regarded by French authorities to be advantageous for the development and growth of the colony as a whole. One of the main objectives of French authorities in the colony was, in fact, to encourage sedentarization and agriculture and the consequent abolition of nomadic practices. Nonetheless, as many Frenchmen sought an adventurous lifestyle of nomadism and the hunt, both rather typical of Indians, they started to neglect their agricultural activities. The French thus showed that they were able to adapt to Indian customs whenever it was in their own interests of adventure and pleasure. Refusing the wife or daughter of an Indian chief, who offered them as an expression of his hospitality, could mean a life danger and would be interpreted by Indians as an insult; seducing an Indian woman without her parental approval, however, could just as well lead to assassination.<sup>446</sup> The best solution was to marry the daughter of a chief in order to become a privileged guest of his tribe.<sup>447</sup>

While it is true to say that the French state valued trade and commerce higher than cultural métissage or racial intermarriage, there is also evidence that the two objectives were closely linked and that French officials were interested in assimilation and francisation of Indians precisely as part of alliance building. Richard White has drawn attention to the fact that the French understood the French word “alliance” to mean “intermarriage”.<sup>448</sup> Dictionary *Le Petit Robert* defines “alliance” as a contracted union by mutual engagement, which establishes rules and decisions. In international law this is affirmed through a treaty (but also in civil law, if one takes a marriage contract to be a treaty) to assist in case of war. *Petit Larousse* speaks of union of sovereigns between states and ignores any mention of treaty, contract or war.<sup>449</sup> In any case, intermarriages were part of alliance building. While Bruce Trigger has held that the will of the French colonizers in itself to mix the groups of Indians and Whites proved that they had cultural rather than racial prejudice,<sup>450</sup> Saliha Belmessous has modified the argument to say that, at the turn of the 18th century, a shift occurred from cultural to racial prejudice in attitudes of colonial officials towards the issue of mixed marriages.<sup>451</sup> Although this shift

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<sup>445</sup> Gustave Lanctot, *Histoire du Canada. Du Régime Royal au Traité d'Utrecht 1663-1713* (Montréal, 1963).

<sup>446</sup> Public Archives Canada, MG1, C11A, vol. 122, “Mémoire sur les Sioux et Nadouessis 1719”, p. 7.

<sup>447</sup> Havard, *Empire*.

<sup>448</sup> Richard White, *The Middle Ground* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 19.

<sup>449</sup> *Le Petit Robert: Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française* (Paris 1990). *Petit Larousse* (Paris, 1972).

<sup>450</sup> Trigger, *The children of Aataentsic*, p. 268

<sup>451</sup> Belmessous, *D'un préjugé culturel*.

marked the beginning in an increase of prohibitions of mixed marriages, precisely because of racial prejudice, this sort of unions was not altogether dismissed. Reservation against mixed marriages increased, but there were still voices in favour of mixed marriages and they were still being celebrated well after the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Not only there happened a shift from cultural to racial prejudice on the issue of mixed marriages, but it was also the case that French politicians were not unanimous on the question of how to achieve their objectives in the colony. A look beyond official declarations and directives shows that French authorities in the colony and in the metropolis not only held opposing views on matters of colonisation generally, but also more specifically disagreed on issues of mixed marriage and intercultural contact. Policies in this respect also differed from tribe to tribe: in terms of mixture some tribes were preferred over others, because they had lighter skin colour, an inclination for agriculture or were more open to mixing. Furthermore, policies were implemented in a discontinuous manner. This may have been related to the fact that the French depended on the co-operating spirit of Indians, and of a multitude of agents such as clerics, merchants and settlers, in order to realise their intended aims of assimilation and francisation. The initial intention on the side of the French in supporting mixed marriages had been to easily assimilate Indians to French ways. Yet, the fact that rather the opposite happened - that Frenchmen assimilated to the Indian way of life - led French authorities to officially dismiss the policy of miscegenation through mixed marriages, especially in those periods in which counterproductive results of the intended aims prevailed. French assimilation to the Indian way of life, the reluctance of Indians to learn French language and to adopt their manners and growing libertinage of Frenchmen with Indian women marked the failure in the colonial policy of métissage. At the face of such failure, this resulted in an increase in racist thinking on the side of French officials.<sup>452</sup> Failure and mismanagement had to be explained, and racism seemed to be an easy exit for an otherwise initially, at least at the surface, anti-racist approach to racial encounter. Ideas on “purity of blood” and on the alteration of skin colour through biological mixing were in their ascent and led to an official prohibition of

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<sup>452</sup> Initially, the French in their first official utterances about mixture made by Samuel de Champlain spoke of “people“, not of “race“. This does not mean, however, that the French excluded the category of “races“ when they intended to bring about encounter and mixture of Indians and Europeans. In fact, there was a long tradition of a language of race in France (as in other European countries), and André Devyver has convincingly shown that it also implied hints of social differences between different classes. The French sometimes also used the term “race” when they were pointing at parts of the peasant population in French provinces. André Devyver, *Le sang épuré: les préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes français de l’ancien régime (1560-1720)* (Bruxelles, 1973).

mixed marriages, increasingly so after the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>453</sup> In fact, Alice Conklin has argued that by the 1870s the idea that intermarriage with indigenous peoples would facilitate France's civilizing mission had largely disappeared from "imperialist discourse".<sup>454</sup> Apart from linguistic and religious aspects,<sup>455</sup> the notion of purity implied on the one hand that "blood" should not be mixed because it was argued that mixture would transmit undesired characteristics, and on the other hand that marrying amongst one's own group, i.e. in the village, town or country to which one belonged, was seen as natural. "Marrying out" was only well considered when it promised material gain or enhanced social prestige.<sup>456</sup> Prohibition of mixed marriages occurred, but it was frequently counteracted: mixed marriages in New France and Canada continued to be celebrated. In the following analysis of the stance of different actors I will differentiate their position towards métissage according to a typology by Pierre-André Taguieff. He proposes four categories to differentiate opponents and supporters of race mixture: *absolute mixophobics*, *unconditional mixophiles*, *moderate mixophiles* and *moderate mixophobics*.<sup>457</sup> The first group sees in métissage itself the cause of infertility and degeneration, which is considered to lead to a decline of elites. By considering "race" as sacred and based on the laws of nature and by propagating the purity of blood, protagonists build an unjustified myth of race and blood. The second group are those who preach the "gospel of amalgamation", i.e. unconditional mixture, holding that mixture is benevolent at all costs. The third group affirms that métissage in order to be considered as

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<sup>453</sup> Saliha Belmessous, *D'un préjugé culturel à un préjugé racial: la politique indigène de la France au Canada*, EHESS (Paris, 1999). Saliha Belmessous has analysed the Indian policy of the French in New France in the period up to 1763. She shows how the aim of "francisation" failed and how the image that colonial agents had of the Indian shaped their policies towards them.

<sup>454</sup> Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa* (Stanford, 1997), p. 20-21.

<sup>455</sup> The concern with "purity" Peter Burke has tried to explain with the obvious fact that it is the actions of purists and their ideas that engenders purism. In modern Italian, French and English the word appears quite early to denote purism of language. In Spain, religious understandings prevailed: the "old Christians" were preoccupied by the problem of the purity of blood and reforms aimed at purifying the totality of the Church while admitting that this was impossible in order to establish pure communities "sans tâches ni souillures", as the Anabaptists described themselves. The French Calvinists, in contrast, saw the Catholic churches as polluted temples full of idolatries. The French writer and preacher Jacques Bénigne Bossuet described the Calvinists as "the most pure of all purists". See Peter Burke: *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (New York/Cambridge, 2004)

<sup>456</sup> Kingsley Davis, "Intermarriage in Caste Societies", in: *American Anthropologist*, vol. 43, no 3 (1941), 376-395, p. 384. Davis acknowledges that scarcity of women, especially in colonial situations, can counteract this, yet he is certain that "intermarriage cannot become the rule." In caste societies, he argues from the viewpoint that intermarriage has to have a certain function since marriage is usually seen as based on the union of equals. Yet, he points at the fact that this is already contradicted if men and women are not considered equal. Then, every marriage would have to be considered as intermarriage, since the pairing of men and women is always unequal.

<sup>457</sup> Pierre-André Taguieff, *La force du préjugé. Essai sur le racisme et ses doubles* (Paris, ???), p. 339-340.

positive has to operate according to a just measure, i.e. in favourable circumstances. The fourth group accepts that a certain degree of new blood in a nation is of great advantage by distinguishing between “good” and “bad” Metis, i.e. when races are too different métissage is not accepted.

On the level of actual historical practice, contemporary discourse described the reality of contacts between Indian women and French men in rather denigrating remarks such as that Frenchmen “took up with slave girls” and that New France “was a wifeless colony of mistresses”.<sup>458</sup> In fact, libertinage and lack of women were a serious concern of authorities, which started to look for ways to remedy the situation. The initial intention as expressed in the 1633 declaration by Samuel de Champlain to the Huron: “our young men will marry your daughters, and we shall be one people”<sup>459</sup> - was a solemn statement, which was difficult to realize in practice. Two years later, in 1635, Francois-Derré de Gand, commissar general of the *Company of One Hundred Associates*, in fact, disappointingly noted with a view to the Huron: “you have not allied yourselves up to the present with our French people. Your daughters have married with all the neighbouring nations but not with ours...not that we have need of your daughters...but we would like to see only one people in all the land.”<sup>460</sup> The statement “only one people in all the land” referred to the official French desire to lead Indians into complete assimilation with the French and to set up a French nation overseas.

Jesuit missionary Paul Lejeune - working to further the Church’s evangelical mission - increasingly directed his attention towards Indian girls that he hoped to assimilate in order to turn them into prospective brides with French and Christian manners. He noted that once the men were married, “to savage girls or women that are used to run the woods, their husbands would not be obliged to follow them and to fall back to barbarity, or to leave them, which would be another dangerous evil.”<sup>461</sup> Policies of migration, assimilation and francisation were considered superior or prior to the idea of mixed marriages, i.e. means other than mixed marriages were probed before this means of acculturation was encouraged: assimilation had been pursued through many schemes including religious conversion, language instruction and

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<sup>458</sup> Charles Edward O’Neill, *Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana. Policy and Politics to 1732* (New Haven, 1966), p. 86

<sup>459</sup> Champlain is reported to have said this on two occasions. See in Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.): *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1896-1901), 5:211; 10:26

<sup>460</sup> Jesuit Relations 9:219.

<sup>461</sup> Jesuit Relation 1633, p. 67.

settlement policies, i.e. the settling of Indians close to French villages and vice versa. This prioritising may have related to the fact that, in reality in the colony mixed marriages were difficult to engineer because Indians were reported to prefer endogamous unions within their own tribes. Officer Tonty observed, “Rarely do the Savages marry outside their nations. The few unions that exist are the cause of this: the hatred and jealousy are at a point where one only seeks to make war to the other, and the French government has sometimes great pains to bring them to live in peace.”<sup>462</sup> Indeed, in the face of Indian hostility and the difficulty to pacify Indians, French authorities had to come up with specific policies in order to create incentives for mixed marriages. Furthermore, in terms of marriage policies French authorities had to choose between providing a sufficient number of French women from the metropolis as brides for colonists or permitting fully legal marriages with Indian women in the colony.

Yet, a continuous French colonial marriage policy never existed. In contrast, Cornelius Jaenen has claimed that the “permissive utterances”<sup>463</sup> of Louis XIV with respect to marriages in the colony at the beginning of the 18th century were an indication for an official French marriage “policy” throughout the period of the Ancien Régime. However, Jennifer Spear has rightly argued that this was “an issue that was never definitively settled.”<sup>464</sup> Whenever mixed marriages were encouraged, the King himself did not propose them, because he lacked the necessary foresight on actual conditions in the colony. Rather, the King’s advisors encouraged mixed marriages when it became necessary to alter the demographic composition of the colony. According to his traditional role and competence, the King only issued edicts, dealing with questions such as marriage between Europeans and Indians and the latter’s conversion and assimilation to French culture and Christian religion as a prerequisite for such marriages. In a 1657 edict by the French King on the establishment of the “Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France”, it becomes apparent that the King was acting on Sieur Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville’s idea to let Frenchmen marry Indian women rather than on his own initiative. “His Majesty has examined the proposal made by the Sieur d’Iberville, namely to allow the French who will settle in this country to marry Indian girls. His Majesty sees no inconvenience in this, provided they be Christians, in which case His Majesty approves of it. His Majesty welcomes the opportunity to let him know with regard to this matter that his intention is that he should apply himself to prevent debauchery and all disorderly conduct, that he should protect the

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<sup>462</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol, 24, f. 240v. Havard, *Empire*, p. 138.

<sup>463</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 83.

<sup>464</sup> Jennifer Spear, “Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana” in: *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 60, no. 1 (January 2003).

missionaries and that his principal aim should be to establish the Christian Religion.”<sup>465</sup> In this edict, the King affirmed his willingness to consent to mixed marriages in cases where the bride was Christian. This stood in conjunction with the principal French colonial aim of spreading the Christian religion within the colony.

## 2. Support and Encouragement of Mixed Marriages

Next to Pierre D’Iberville, it was Minister Colbert and Marquis de Seignelay in the metropolis that had the most influence on policies in the colony. Through their daily business, these agents were kept informed as to the development of the colony and were aware of the practical necessities for furthering the colonial mission. Thus, they used their influence on the King to receive royal consent for the realisation of their plans. Above all, these politicians considered the prevailing circumstances in the colony, namely the shortage of white women, which led them to doubt the survival of the colony. Thus, they began to urge for measures such as mixed marriages or the exportation of French women from the metropolis. The aim was not only to populate the colony, to create new settlements and to bring Indians to live among the French, but also in the long run to achieve a self-reproducing populace which would *faire souche*, as the Quebecois expression went. Those most likely to facilitate this aim were married couples and those young people who would immediately find Indian partners with whom to form unions and relationships.<sup>466</sup> Therefore, French policy objectives had to be directed towards married couples, to persons intending to marry and to persons who could be enticed to marry. Nonetheless, the first mixed marriages in New France occurred without the express approval or encouragement of metropolitan authorities.

A Jesuit called Pierre de Sesmaisons who had entered the Jesuit order in 1607 was the first *unconditional mixophile* to express a favourable opinion on intermarriage between Indians and French to back the prevalent practice.<sup>467</sup> In 1634/35, Sesmaisons thought that there were good reasons for the Pope to permit such marriages even if the Indian spouse was neither baptised as a Catholic nor sufficiently instructed in the Catholic faith. Sesmaisons listed a

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<sup>465</sup> William L. Grant (ed.), *Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604-1618* (New York, 1917), I, p. 323. Edict du Roy pour l’établissement de la Compagnie de la Nouvelle France, Paris 1657, article XVII, p. 13; Le Journal des Jésuites, 7 March 1668; Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Gallia 110, vol. III, fol. 356-357; Archives Nationales, B, vol. 20, f. 279-280, “Instructions to Iberville, 22 September 1699”.

<sup>466</sup> La Potherie, t. 2, p. 308-309.

<sup>467</sup> Pierre de Sesmaisons, “Raisons pour permettre le mariage des Français avec des femmes indigènes,” in Lucien Campeau, S.J., *Monumenta Novæ Franciæ, III Fondation de la mission Huronne (1635-1637)* (Rome/Quebec, 1987), p. 36-39.



range of arguments in favour of Indian-White intermarriage, mainly by pointing at the easy-going nature of Indian women. Yet, in 1635, Paul Lejeune noted in the Jesuit relations with a view to the Hurons that Samuel de Champlain had said “they [the French] will marry their daughters when they become Christians”.<sup>468</sup> In fact, missionary discourse was dominated by the hint at this precondition: mixed marriage at the cost of conversion to Catholicism on the side of the Indian spouse.

In its actual practice, it is relatively easy to identify the first recorded mixed marriages of European men and Indian women as the latter still bore their Indian second name at the time of the marriage. Therefore they can easily be identified as a non-European spouse. Mixed marriages, however, have rarely been recorded in the early period of *métissage*, since the clergy often ignored them, or because the Euro-Indian couple did not sign a marriage contract or could not afford to travel to the next residing priest.<sup>469</sup> Still, we know of some cases where individuals married intercultural. The first mention of a marriage record appeared in Quebec town and referred to the French settler Martin Prévost, who in 1644 married the Indian Marie-Olivier Sylvestre Manitouabeouich.<sup>470</sup> Another recorded marriage was that of Pierre Boucher, Governor of Trois-Rivières, who in 1649 married the Huron woman Marie Ouebadinskoue, later referred to as Marie-Madeleine Chrestienne.<sup>471</sup> Further contracts were those of Pierre Couc dit Cafleur de Coignac and Marie Mitromigoucoué, who were married on 24th August 1657.<sup>472</sup> Another recorded mixed marriage was that between Jean Desnoyers and Marie-Thérèse Ménard, who received the blessing of missionary de Francheville in Boucherville.<sup>473</sup> Allan Greer holds that faced with the rise of intermarriage practice; first voices against it were raised as early as by the 1660s.<sup>474</sup> Still, the documentary evidence suggests the contrary view: In 1666, Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert in the Parisian metropolis expressed his principal motives in supporting mixed marriages in the colony: he hoped that in this manner the colony would be populated more effectively in light of the shortage of white women<sup>475</sup> and of French

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<sup>468</sup> Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, Vol. VIII, p. 47.

<sup>469</sup> Peterson/Brown (eds.), *The New Peoples*.

<sup>470</sup> Dickason, *From one Nation*, p. 27.

<sup>471</sup> *Jesuit Relations* 47:289.

<sup>472</sup> Archives Nationales de Montréal, Fonds de Séverin Aneau, Pronotaire de Trois-Rivières, Greffes de Notaires, 2 Février 1651 au 11 novembre 1694, no. 56.

<sup>473</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 119.

<sup>474</sup> Allan Greer, *The People of New France* (Toronto, 1997), p. 17. He supports his view with the enactment of the “filles du roi”-policy as a substitute for intermarriage practices.

<sup>475</sup> A French woman called Marguerite de Navarre was among the few white women who made an Atlantic crossing. See Olive Dickason, “From ‘one Nation’ in the Northeast to ‘New Nation’ in the Northwest: A Look at

settlers from the metropolis. In fact, according to the statistics of 1663, the colony hosted six to seven white men for each white woman of marriageable age.<sup>476</sup> Until 1701, there were approximately fifteen married French women in the region of the Great Lakes.<sup>477</sup> Next to the reluctance of French women in the metropolis to endure the far away travel and an Atlantic crossing, the shortage of French women in New France seemed also to be due to the fact that, as a general rule, military commanders of the interior posts did not bring their French wives with them to the colony. In the Upper Country, between 1683 and 1701 and throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, officers - with very few exceptions - were unaccompanied by their wives.<sup>478</sup>

In 1667, Colbert hoped to assure mutual commerce as well as the mixing of blood with the effect to create “one same people and same blood”. Sara Melzer believes that Colbert meant this expression to include not only unions between male French settlers and female native Indians, but also the marriage of French women to Indian men.<sup>479</sup> There is reason to believe that the latter form of marriage likely occurred increasingly after 1663, with an augmentation in the number of White women in the colony. Because encounter with Indians generally remained taboo for Europeans, especially for those who later came from the metropolis as settlers and who belonged to higher social ranks, it is more likely that those European women who had sexual intercourse with Indian men preferred to keep it secret. They preferred concubinage or libertinage to a public marriage, which required a priest’s blessing and the participation of village neighbours. In 1667, King Louis XIV therefore promulgated an edict<sup>480</sup> which set up further rules: it held as requirement the reciprocal consent of the contracting parties, consent of the parents or guardians, public celebration of marriage with witnesses, the benediction of the priest at the exchange of the marriage vows; and proper registration of marriages. The church, too, insisted on parental approval,<sup>481</sup> but also made a requirement observance of the canons respecting consanguinity and affinity, the publication

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the Emergence of the Metis”, in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples. Being and Becoming Metis in North America* (Winnipeg, 1985), p. 33. See also Marguerite de Navarre, *Heptameron* (Paris, 1559) and André Thevet, *Cosmographie* (Paris, 1575).

<sup>476</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 596.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid. and Archives Nationales, F3, vol. 2, f. 301-303.

<sup>479</sup> Sara E. Melzer, “Myths of mixture in “Phèdre” and the Sun king’s assimilation policy in the New World”, in: *Esprit Créateur*, vol. 38, no 2 (Summer 1998), 72-81, p. 72.

<sup>480</sup> A previous such edict had been issued in 1639.

<sup>481</sup> One case in which parental approval was not given happened in 1707. A mixed marriage was prohibited because the mother of the groom had not consented: Dubord dit Latournelle wanted to marry an Indian woman from the mission of Saint-François on 27<sup>th</sup> August. Archives Nationales de Québec, 03Q\_E1, S1, P282, “Ordonnance de l’intendant Jacques Raudot, 27 août 1707”.

of banns over three successive Sundays prior to nuptial mass, and having the bride and the groom interrogated and instructed in duties and responsibilities by the parish priest beforehand.<sup>482</sup> Rules regarding sexuality were also set up. Sex was permissible for only two reasons: the procreation of children and avoidance of a “greater sin”. Among other things, the prospective bride was instructed to be at the disposal of the husband and not to avoid pregnancies.<sup>483</sup>

In 1668, Colbert continued to express his hope that once Indians had embraced “civil life”, they would join the French in marriage.<sup>484</sup> Colbert urged Bishop François de Laval that he should work towards keeping the peace in the colony and serving as good example to other clerics.<sup>485</sup> The following year saw the launch of an initiative to provide priests to families with more than ten to twelve children. This initiative, however, was restricted to French families. It was especially stressed that this measure was also meant to provide assistance in case of marriages. Furthermore, the “present du roy”, i.e. a sum of money, was introduced to those (French) boys willing to marry at age twenty. In contrast, a fine was introduced penalising those fathers who would not ensure that their children marry by a certain age, twenty for boys and sixteen for girls.<sup>486</sup> When these measures proved to be unsuccessful, Colbert changed strategy and looked for new inputs from the metropolis to the colony. On 15th May 1669, he wrote to the Intendant Daniel de Rémy de Courcelles that he would send to the colony one hundred and fifty French girls “to be married there”.<sup>487</sup>

On 30<sup>th</sup> September 1670, Bishop François-Xavier de Montmorency-Laval, appointed by Pope Alexander VII as first bishop of Québec in 1674, reported to Minister Colbert that a large percentage of the 150 girls from Paris were already married.<sup>488</sup> On 10th October 1670, Talon specified that of all the girls who arrived in the colony - he mentioned one hundred and sixty-five - thirty had married. Talon expressed the hope that “the soldiers who have come this year will be inclined to marry once they have laboured to make a home; whereof it were well if his Majesty would please send out again one hundred and fifty to two hundred

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<sup>482</sup> Jaenen, *The Role of the Church*, p. 137.

<sup>483</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Manuscrits 147 (b), “Instructions regarding marriage“, fol. 7-8v, cited in Jaenen, p. 138.

<sup>484</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, no 27, Lettre N, Colbert à Laval, 1668.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

<sup>486</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 3: “Arrêt du Conseil donné en faveur des habitants de Canada qui auront dix et 12 enfants vivants non (sans?) prêtres, Religieux et Religieuses“, 3 avril 1669, f. 26-29.

<sup>487</sup> “M. Colbert to M. de Courcelles“, 15th May 1669, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 62.

<sup>488</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec 16, no 28bis, “Lettre de Mgr de Laval au Ministre Colbert“, 30 septembre 1670.

girls.”<sup>489</sup> On 10th November 1670, Talon wrote to Colbert that “all the girls sent out this year are married, except about fifteen whom I caused to be distributed among families of character, until the soldiers, who solicit them, have formed some establishment and acquired wherewith to support them. To promote the marriage of those girls I have made them a present, as is my custom, of the sum of fifty livres, Canada currency, in necessaries suitable for their house keeping, in addition to some provisions.”<sup>490</sup> Furthermore, Talon drew attention to the fact that girls to be sent to the colony should be attractive: “Miss Etienne, appointed their Matron by the Director of the General Hospital, will return to France to take charge of those to be sent this year, should his Majesty have the goodness to let some come; in which case it will be well to recommend strongly that those destined for this country be in no wise naturally deformed; that they have nothing exteriorly repulsive; that they be hale and strong for country work, or at least that they have some aptness for hand-labour.”

Talon further intended that officers might become attached through marriage and asked for allowance to let them marry: “I write in this sense to Mess<sup>rs</sup> the directors. Three or four young women of good family and distinguished for their accomplishments, would tend, perhaps, usefully to attach by marriage some officers who are interested in the Country only by their allowances and the profit of their lands, and who do not become further attached in consequence of disproportion of rank.” Finally, Talon offered proof of the fecundity in the colony by mentioning, “the girls sent last year are married, and almost all pregnant or mothers.”<sup>491</sup> For further such girls to be married, Talon requested that they be equipped with a certificate from their parish priest or the judge of their hometown, certifying that they “are free and in condition to marry”, in order to avoid double or clandestine marriages in the colony, since “without this, the Clergy here object to confer this sacrament on them; indeed, not without reason, two or three marriages having been acknowledged here.”<sup>492</sup> The same precaution was asked of widowers. Talon thought that the need for girls to be married in the colony was satisfied and wrote to the King: “I think it inexpedient to send out girls next year, in order that farmers may marry off their daughters more easily among the soldiers who are settled and disengaged. Neither, is it necessary to send out any young ladies, having this year

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<sup>489</sup> “M. Talon to the King”, Quebec, 10th October 1670, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 64.

<sup>490</sup> “M. Talon to M. Colbert”, Quebec, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1670, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 67-68.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*

received fifteen so qualified, instead of four that I asked for, to form engagements with the officers or principal inhabitants here.”<sup>493</sup>

To bring the colony in proper shape, further marriage measures were enacted. In order to prevent vagabondage, for instance, it was decreed that men arriving in the colony should marry promptly. Talon wrote: “The Edict enacted relative to marriages has been registered, and, proclaiming the intention of the King, I caused orders to be issued that the volunteers (whom on my return, I found in very great numbers, living, in reality, like bandits) should be excluded from the [Indian] trade and hunting; they are excluded by the law also from the honours of the Church, and from the Communities if they do not marry fifteen days after the arrival of the ships from France. I shall consider some other expedient to stop these vagabonds; they ruin, partially, the Christianity of the Indians and the commerce of the French who labour in their settlements to extend the Colony. It were well did his Majesty order me, by *lettre de cachet*, to fix them in some place where they would participate in the labours of the Community.”<sup>494</sup> The new arrivals were not only meant to marry instantly, but they should become sedentary, be productive and show community spirit in order to further colony building as a good example towards Indians.

The same year 1670, Colbert insisted that Governor Daniel de Rémy de Courcelles urge inhabitants in the colony to marry early in order for the system of the colony to become self-sufficient: “That you take great pains to encourage all of them to early marriage, so that by the multiplication of children the Colony may have the means of increase within itself.”<sup>495</sup> In 1671, the French state further regulated marriage practices. Intendant Jean Talon issued an order obliging all single men of marriageable age, to marry instantly, under threat of losing their fishing, hunting and trading rights.<sup>496</sup> This prerogative was repeated to Count Frontenac in 1671: “The King having granted diverse privileges by the arrêt of his Council of the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1668 in consideration of the fecundity of the families, and of the marriage of young men at twenty years and under, and of the girls at fifteen, let Sieur de Frontenac advantageously use these means to prevail on all the inhabitants to get married, in order that the colonists

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<sup>493</sup> “M. Talon to the King. Extracts from the Memoir addressed by M. Talon to the King on the State of Canada”, Quebec, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1671, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 71.

<sup>494</sup> “M. Talon to the King”, 10th November 1670, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 65.

<sup>495</sup> “M. Colbert to M. de Courcelles”, St. Germain, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1670, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 63. At the same time, inhabitants should be led towards marine trade and fishing, encouraged to the exercise of arms, to cultivate the soil and to undertake commerce of the seas, to preserve their property. All this was intended to further colony building.

<sup>496</sup> Pierre-Georges Roy, *Ordonnances, commissions, [...] des gouverneurs et intendants de Nouvelle-France, 1639-1706*, Archives de la Province de Québec, vol. 1 (Beauceville, 1924), p. 104-105.

receive a considerable augmentation thereby.”<sup>497</sup> In fact, in the winter Frontenac requested girls to be sent for marriage with colonists: “This scarcity of workmen and servant obliges me to request you to have the goodness to remember to send us some of all sorts, and even young women to marry a number of persons who cannot find any wives here, and who create a thousand disorders in the settlements [meaning libertinage] of their neighbours, and especially in the more distant places, where the women are very glad to have several husbands, when the men cannot even get one wife.”<sup>498</sup> Frontenac stressed that this could have been remedied had there been enough females available: “Had there been a hundred and fifty girls and as many servants here this year, they would all have found husbands and masters within one month.”<sup>499</sup> Frontenac’s optimism towards the marriageable suitability of French men given a sufficient number of women in the colony probably derived from the fact that he had a vivid desire for stable marriages as precondition for a strong colony. In fact, Intendant Duchesneau followed in this vein and successfully proposed that the King provide the Ursulines with sufficient funds so that they could work towards marrying Indian women, which they supervised, to Frenchmen and to set up Catholic families instead of returning after instruction in Ursuline homes into their Indian villages where they were likely to marry infidel Indians, it was held.<sup>500</sup>

In Detroit, the majority of soldiers were married, either with French or Indian women. Governor François Clairambault D’Aigremont noted that the military personnel there should not be considered as being “habitants“, i.e. permanent residents, “because married soldiers who remain for the most part in Detroit do so for the most part only by force since they have always been part of the company and were “montant la garde”.”<sup>501</sup> With a view to populating specific regions through marriage, officer Antoine Laumet dit de Lamothe Cadillac, who was seigneur in Acadia, captain in the colonial regular troops and later governor in Louisiana, made suggestions to Colbert with a view to “civilising and humanizing the Savages”.<sup>502</sup> A fervent critic of mixed marriages, Lamothe insisted on sending out White settlers and on encouraging French unions. Lamothe reasoned that this could help to remedy the disorder

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<sup>497</sup> “Instructions to Count de Frontenac. The King’s Instructions to Count de Frontenac, whom his Majesty has chosen as his Governor and Lieutenant General in Canada, Versailles 7<sup>th</sup> April 1672“, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 87.

<sup>498</sup> “Count de Frontenac to M. Colbert. Extracts of the Memoir of Monsieur de Frontenac to the Minister“, Quebec, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1672, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 90.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>500</sup> Cited in Belmessous, *D’un préjugé culturel*, p. 181f.

<sup>501</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 89. C11A, vol. 29, f. 38r

<sup>502</sup> Archives Nationales, C11E, vol. 14, f. 34-39.

caused by interracial marriage. In a letter to Colbert, Lamothe suggested that the French immigration to the West, especially around Detroit, should be supported by specific measures and incentives in order to counteract widespread “libertinage” among French and Indians.

Lamothe preferred to speak of the need for reform among Indians rather than of complete assimilation: “It is about reforming these people; how will they receive this reformer? The detracted monks reject their abbey, while he seems severe to them and because he speaks of reform.”<sup>503</sup> Lamothe’s plan was to let soldiers marry French women in order to distract the former’s attention from the attraction displayed by Indian women. Lamothe’s hope that by forcing French soldiers into marriage with French women from the metropolis their attention would be diverted away from the exoticism and liberty that was displayed by Indian girls turned out to be ill founded. The latter were frequently described as open to engage with European men, and thus, it was easier to establish contact with them: “The libertinage of the French with the Savage women, through the means of this establishment, is morally abolished, since the wishes that you have had were to send families, or at least letting marry soldiers who barely amuse themselves when they have their wives.”<sup>504</sup> The hypothesis that soldiers would cease interaction with Indian women once they were married to White ones was proven wrong by the daily practices in the colony. Yet, it would be too simple to ascribe this behaviour to the exercise of free sexuality. Rather libertinage was frequent due to the fact that European men brought goods and manufactures that were lacking or unheard of in Indian communities. Indian women, thus, acted as trading intermediaries to their tribes. Mutual interests, in fact, lay at the heart of intense Franco-Indian relations.<sup>505</sup> In practice, it meant a difficult task on the part of the authorities to break this intricate chain of interdependence.

For the region of the later Louisiana, for example, local authorities started to look for ways to curtail such often-reported disorderliness. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they urged officials in the metropolis to send more *filles du roi* equipped with a dowry from the French treasury “in order to prevent the disorders and the libertinage with Savage women.” The initiative to send French women from Paris had originated from numerous complaints on disorderliness that was assumed to be the result of too much libertinage and interracial marriage. Yet, this influx from the metropolis was not able to remedy the disorder since many of the French women selected were not of bourgeois origins. The initial aim of the French

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<sup>503</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 3, p. 13, “La Mothe Cadillac to Pontchartrain, 26 November 1713”.

<sup>504</sup> Archives Nationales, C11E, vol. 1, f.1r, “Cadillac au Ministre”.

<sup>505</sup> Denys Delâge, “L’influence des Amérindiens sur les Canadiens et les Français au temps de la Nouvelle-France”, in: *Lekton*, 2, no 2 (Automne 1992), p. 103-191.

government in sending out *filles du roi* was to seek ways to increase the number of white brides for the colony's male settlers. Thus, the government played out a two-way strategy: whilst encouraging mixed marriages between Indian women and Frenchmen by specific measures, it at the same time encouraged non-mixed marriages with metropolitan girls. At this stage every means that would add to an increase of the population in the colony was welcome. The women selected from the metropolis were called *filles du roi* in accordance with the expression "les enfants du roi" used to denote orphaned children who were raised at the expense of the royal treasury. The girls were to be financed at the expense of the King and their migration followed a certain order. Under the auspices of the royal administration between 1663 and 1673, females were shipped to the colony and transported with the help of state authorities.<sup>506</sup>

These girls have been described in many different ways. Their role was designated as "girls to be married sent by the royal administration". Ursuline Marguerite Bourgeoys saw them as "young people that the King made raise at the General Hospital in Paris, all derived from legitimate marriages, the ones being orphans and the others belonging to families who had fallen in misery."<sup>507</sup> Through her description, it appears that France intended to get rid of its "surplus population", the wretched and the poor, by sending them to the colony. Officials, however, insisted that these *filles du roi* should not be mischievous and misshapen since this would lead colonists to prefer Indian women for their presumed beauty.<sup>508</sup> Cherokee women, for instance, were described as "when young and at maturity, they are fine-shaped creatures (...) as any in the universe. They are of a tawny complexion, their eyes very brisk and amorous, their smiles afford the finest composure a face can possess, their hands are of the finest make, with small, long fingers, and as soft as cheeks, and their whole bodies of a smooth nature."<sup>509</sup> Pierre Lemoyne D'Iberville appeared to be overwhelmed by the beauty of Indian women and described those that he encountered during his trip to the Mississippi as such: "Fifteen of the most beautiful young girls adorned magnificently in their own way, all naked, just having their *brayes*,<sup>510</sup> on top of which they had some sort of skirts as large as one

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<sup>506</sup> Yves Landry, *Les Filles du roi au XVIIe siècle* (Ottawa, 1992). See also Gustave Lanctot, *Filles de joie ou filles du roi. Étude sur l'émigration féminine en Nouvelle-France* (Montréal, 1952), pp. 9-10.

<sup>507</sup> Étienne-Michel Faillon, *Vie de la sœur Bourgeoys fondatrice de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Villemarie en Canada suivie de l'histoire de cet institut jusqu'à ce jour* (Villemarie, 1853), t. II, pp. 64-65.

<sup>508</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol.2, f. 400, "Le Sr de La Salle à la Louisiane, 12 May 1709".

<sup>509</sup> Cited in John Mack Faragher: "The Custom of the Country: Cross-Cultural Marriage in the Far Western Fur Trade", in: Lillian Schissel (ed.), *Western Women*, University of New Mexico Press (Albuquerque, 1988), 199-215, p. 204.

<sup>510</sup> This was a skirt to cover the sexual organs and the posterior.



foot, made of feathers, (...) face and body painted in different colours, carrying feathers in their hands that served as fan or in order to mark the rhythm, their hair properly braided with lots of bunches of feathers.”<sup>511</sup>

The King instructed officer Lamothe Cadillac to supervise the Atlantic crossing of the *filles du roi*, to punish potential seducers and to urge candidates upon arrival to marry promptly.<sup>512</sup> In the metropolis, Louis-Armand Lom D’Arce Baron de Lahontan has described this marriage policy in a rather denigrating tone because of the selection procedure that was employed: “After the reform of these troops there were sent from France numerous vessels charged with girls of modest virtue, under the direction of old “beguines”<sup>513</sup> who divided them in three groups. The vestals were piled up one on top of the other in three different rooms, where their husbands were to choose their wives in a manner that the butcher chooses his lambs in the midst of a troop. (...) One could see big ones, small ones, blond ones, brown ones, fat ones and meagre ones: finally, each found a suitable pair of shoes.” Baron de Lahontan curiously remarked: “Where one transports the most vicious Europeans, the populace overseas believes in the good faith that their sins will be so effaced through ridiculous baptism of which I already spoke, and that they in turn should become virtuous girls, full of honour and irreproachable manners. Those who wanted to marry addressed themselves to the directors to whom they were obliged to declare their goods and their faculties before they could take into their class those that they found the most according to their taste. The marriage was concluded on the field, by the priest and notary, and the following day, the governor general distributed to the married one beef, one cow, one pig, one turkey, a cock, a hen, two barrels of salted meat, eleven *écus* with some arms that the Greek called *xeras*.”<sup>514</sup> In his description Lahontan criticized the marriage policy and the methods of Louis XIV as foolish. Of Lahontan himself, it has been remarked he was like “a good canonist”, and that no one “respecting the rules of marriage contracted “solo consensu” could have formulated under a more dogmatic form, but also pertinent of protestations as cruel as

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<sup>511</sup> Journal de la navigation de Lemoine d’Iberville aux cotes septentrionales du Golfe du Mexique pour l’occupation du Mississippi (décembre 1698-mai 1699), ed. Pierre Margry, *Découvertes*, vol. 4, p. 176.

<sup>512</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, p. 723, “King to Cadillac, 18 December 1712”.

<sup>513</sup> These were some sorts of nuns who were not tied through sermon to their cloister.

<sup>514</sup> Lettre de Baron de Lahontan, cf. *Nouveaux Voyages*, vol. 1, p. 11 et 12, édition 1703, cited in: Robert Le Blant, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France. Les Sources Narratives de début du XVIIIe siècle et le Recueil de Gédéon de Catalogne* (Paris, 1940), p. 29f. Le Blant claims that Lahontan’s work is useless for historical study since he was no historian but rather wrote with a literary interest: “La valeur des œuvres de Lahontan considérées comme source historique est nulle...Lahontan n’est pas un historien.”, p. 61. Yet, they give interesting insights into details of the “filles du roi” policy.

those of the baron against the unions in despise of formalities carefully observed conserved the annoying character and very pagan of a selling.” Historically, the facts asserted by Lahontan seem correct since during a long period over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> century girls from hospitals in Paris were effectively married principally to soldiers with the quickest rapidity through the intervention of persons prominent in the colony. Marie de l’Incarnation described the girls to be married as gross and very difficult to conduct, detailing that they had remained “similar to true beasts without education given by nuns, even more necessary than for the savages.”<sup>515</sup>

In 1682, King Louis XIV urged intendants in the colony to pursue this policy with rigour and as a further incentive introduced a royal gift, the so-called *présent du roi*: 150 livres were to be given to young girls who were willing to marry a Frenchman. In this scheme, Indian girls in the colony were to be given preference over French women in order to ensure the mixing of the two races.<sup>516</sup> On 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1682, the King issued instructions to Governor La Barre, stressing the need to populate the colony by means of marriage, which was to be encouraged through a fiscal policy. Girls and boys - it was stated - should be encouraged to marry so that population numbers would increase. Furthermore, those girls who were willing to marry in good time and who showed a willingness to have children should receive incentives, since they were contributing to an increase in the population: “Since the aim of all his conduct and service [the governor] that he can render His Majesty in this employ has to be the augmentation and multiplication of peoples in the said country, he has (...) to attract the greatest number, and to multiply those who are already there. To this aim he will keep his hand at the execution (...) in order to bring boys and girls to marriage, and since she makes distribute gratifications to girls who marry, she does not doubt that the protection that he gives to those who marry in good time or would have many children produces the good effect that she expects from this for the multiplication of habitants.”<sup>517</sup> Only those who were willing to marry should be permitted to obtain a license to exercise a profession and to trade with the Savages - another incentive for marriage in the colony.<sup>518</sup> Intendant Jacques de Meulles was convinced that once Indian women were married to Frenchmen they would take up French manners through assimilation to their husbands’ way of life, i.e. get dressed, eat and live *à la*

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<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> Lionel Groulx, *La naissance d’une race* (Montréal 1919), pp. 24-25.

<sup>517</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol.8, f. 99-110, “Instruction que le Roy veut estre mise en Mains du Sieur de la Barre Choisy par Sa Majesté pour gouverneur et son lieutenant en la Nouvelle-France, 10 mai 1682”.

<sup>518</sup> Anon., *Colbert et le Canada* (Paris, 1879), p. 30.

*française*. It was believed that if they were given a cow, a pig, and grains they would build their own homes where they could subsist. Subsequently, it would be easy to instruct them to read and write and to practice religion.<sup>519</sup> Finally, Indians should get the chance to practice a profession since by earning their own living they would adopt French dress and habits more readily.<sup>520</sup> De Meulles was hoping for a multiplying effect: francized Indian women would marry Indian men and they too could assimilate to French ways.

On 5<sup>th</sup> of April 1683, the King wrote to Governor Joseph-Antoine le Fèvre de La Barre in Fontainebleau on behalf of deserted French soldiers to the side of the English. The King hoped that by putting them to trial the atmosphere of libertinage could be brought to a halt since this practice would lead the colony at the verge of ruin: “You have to bring all your attention to arrest the greatest number possible of French deserters who have defected to the English so that the example that you would be giving by putting them to trial before the war council (...) would by some means suppress the spirit of libertinage that establishes itself among the habitants of Canada, and which will finally entirely ruin this colony.”<sup>521</sup> In an edict of April 1684, the King referred to the punishment of French at Manate/Orange and other places in the hands of the English and the Dutch. The King insisted that if these individuals would not give up their libertine way of life, the ruin of the colony would indeed be close: “Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre (...), being informed by many of his subjects established in our country, of New France and who have soil belonging to them, undertake commerce with vagabond French and without admission of guilt who have deserted in order to live in Manate, Oraneg and other places of English and Dutch domination and they are, by this example led to laziness and libertinage to quit the culture and the working of their soil, which inevitably leads to the ruin of this colony, if nothing is done against it immediately.”<sup>522</sup>

As far as money to back this policy was concerned, corruption and mismanagement was frequent. In his response to the King's despatch of 18th of April 1684, La Barre complained that money sent for the support of two nuns in the colony and for the encouragement of marriages had not been delivered to the actual addressees by the beneficiary Jean Talon:

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<sup>519</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 87-88.

<sup>520</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 401-402.

<sup>521</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 9, f. 3-6, “Lettre du Roy à Monsieur de la Barre à Fontainebleau, 5 August 1683”.

<sup>522</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 463-465, and F3, vol. 6, f. 82-83. “Edit du Roy pour la punition des Français de Canada qui se retireront à Manate, Orange et autres lieux appartenant aux Anglais et Hollandais, du mois d’avril 1684”.

“Mister Intendant has refused positively to give 3000 livres, money from France that Her Majesty applied to the dowry of two nuns of the hospital, saying that he has received no order from him, and that the funds being in his hands, he would never quit without good reason (...). It seems to me that he is not content, that in consequence of his letter I speak to him of the fund that Her Majesty had the goodness to make for the marriages of the country, if he has to pay money from France or money from Canada, as he has always done.”<sup>523</sup> Not only had the money, which had arrived in the colony, not reached its proper destination, but also it seemed ineffective. In a letter to Marquis de Seignelay, Govenor La Barre noted that money that had been sent in 1682 to encourage marriages between Indian women and Frenchmen had not triggered the desired effects.

According to La Barre, this plan was gross disinvestment, since none of the Indian beneficiaries had consented to marriage. Therefore, La Barre opted for a change of policy and suggested that the sum of 3.000 livres should go to support the nuns’ work in the colony’s hospital and to increase the number of clerics, as had been initially agreed in 1683.<sup>524</sup> Furthermore, La Barre expressed the hope that the population would steadily grow; especially in light of the women who were coming to increasingly populate the colony. La Barre stressed that financial incentives were necessary in order to encourage the marriage of French women to settlers in the colony. Thus, he proved to be a *moderate mixophobic*, an adversary of mixed marriages: “I have found that you have in total 2.248 men capable of bearing arms, this is the truth presented (...) this will augment with time, the women peopling in this country, and only few children there dying. One should not omit to re-establish the gratification of marriages of French women please.”<sup>525</sup> In a letter to Governor la Barre on 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1684, the King addressed the issue of giving financial incentives that had formerly been reserved for Indian brides to French women. The King, himself a *moderate mixophobic*, affirmed that mixed marriages were necessary under certain conditions, i.e. with the aim to realize assimilation; therefore Indian women should still be given preference over French ones. Louis XIV recommended with a very particular energy that the French marry Savages: “I will make the same fund for the marriage of French women, that was made earlier, for the Savage women, but do observe that if there are savage women in a state to be married with French, since it is very important to accustom them, I want you to prefer them to French women.” Le Blant

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<sup>523</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 340-354. Extraits: C11A, vol. 6, f. 334-338. “Mémoire de La Barre au Roy en Réponse de sa Depesche du Dixième avril dernier, 13 novembre 1684”.

<sup>524</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 6, f. 134-144, “Lettre du Gouverneur La Barre au Ministre Seignelay”.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid., pp. 102-103.

believes that these Franco-Indian marriages, as recommended not only by the King but also by the Jesuits,<sup>526</sup> were not very successful in terms of assimilation to French culture because “coureurs de bois found it more preferable to adopt the much freer customs of the savages.”<sup>527</sup> In 1687, the King finally issued statements on the permission for military marriages and the need to allow soldiers to settle in the colony in order to provide them with a basis of living and in order to augment population numbers: “It would be desirable if the officers who wish to marry in Canada be able to settle down there to the advantage of the colony; and even if they are not at all in that condition there is no reason for preventing them. It even appears (...) that it is useful to the colony to give them this permission in order to increase the numbers of the inhabitants; and he deems it especially necessary to compel those who wish to marry to take new grants in order to clear the ground to find, in the future, a living in that country.”<sup>528</sup> There was no mention of mixed marriages, yet marriages among military personnel and Indian women constituted a perfect tool for Euro-Indian integration as they often happened at strategic points, such as the many military posts scattered around Indian villages. Next to Tonty and Cadillac, examples included officers La Plante and La Chauvignerie who were both “married without permission against the orders of the King, while...(they) have suffered during their imprisonment at the Iroquois tribe, where they have learned their language.”<sup>529</sup> Officer Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt married an Onondaga woman and his colleague Louis-Thomas Chabert de Joncaire, who had his French wife in the colony,<sup>530</sup> preferred to live with his Seneca concubine.<sup>531</sup> The prototype of an officer’s marriage with an Indian in Acadia was that of Baron de Saint-Castin.

Governor Frontenac tried to convey a favourable image of the colony at home by pointing to the fact that only a few persons actually led a libertine way of life. Frontenac reassuringly wrote to Colbert in 1696 that the prevalence of libertinage was widely exaggerated and that

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<sup>526</sup> “Mémoire du Père de Sesmaisons“, in: Campeau, *Nova Francia*, t. IV, p. 143f.

<sup>527</sup> Robert Le Blant: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, p. 31. Louis XIV quotation from: Lettre à de la Barre du 10 avril 1684, see also Archives Nationales, C11A 6, fol. 244; and C11A, vol.6, f. 244-249 (and B, vol. 11, f. 5-13), J. Edmond Roy: *Le Baron de Lahontan*. Imprimé à la revue du Notariat, Lévis 1903. “Lettre du Roi au Gouverneur la Barre à Versailles le 10<sup>e</sup> avril 1684“.

<sup>528</sup> Archives Nationales, “The King to Denonville and Champigny”, March 30, 1687 [AN, C, B, vol. 13, f. 16-34, C, extract; printed in part in N.Y.C.D., 9:322].

<sup>529</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A vol. 20, f. 167v, “Callière au Ministre, Québec, 4 novembre 1702“.

<sup>530</sup> “In the colony“ means westwards of the St. Lawrence Valley.

<sup>531</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 2, f. 565, “Mémoire sur l’état présent de la colonie de la Louisiane suivant ce que j’en ay appris par Mr de la Vente supérieur des missions de cette colonie 1710“; C11E, vol. 15, f. 27v, “Cadillac au Ministre, Détroit, 15 septembre 1708“; Cadillac, in: Margry, *Découvertes*, t. 5, p. 161, p. 170; C11A, vol. 17, f. 103; pour Deliette, in: Jesuit Relations 64, 200-202; Robert-Lionel Séguin, *La vie libertine en Nouvelle-France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Montréal, 1972), p. 47; White, *Middle Ground*, p. 69.

complaints of French attachment to Indian women never resulted in actual disorder: “This pretended libertinage is much exaggerated and refers maybe to five or six men, who during the time of the government of La Barre (...) have remained in the woods, and lived with the Savages, this not being extended further. If some Frenchmen have had attachment towards the women, I hope that you will render me the justice, Monseigneur, to believe that I have never suffered similar disorders, when they have been complained of to me or to the commandants at the posts.”<sup>532</sup> In 1698, Intendant Jean Bochart de Champigny sent a lengthy report on the overall situation at western posts to Minister of Marine Jérôme Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain. Champigny noted that the King’s annual payments for the marriage of poor girls should help to encourage a sedentary way of life in the colony: “The payments that the King grants each year to marry off sixty poor girls at the rate of 50 livres each are of great help because they permit their getting settled, but it would be highly desirable for the King’s charity in this area to be more widely distributed, and, if it were possible, for the number to reach one hundred, because only a part of those girls who need it share in it.”<sup>533</sup> In 1699, Louis XIV sent a letter to d’Iberville in which he reiterated his tolerance of mixed marriages, stressing that the sole requirement for such unions should be that the future Indian spouse had to be Christian: “His Majesty has studied the recommendation formulated by Sieur d’Iberville according to which it should notably be allowed to marry young Indians. His Majesty sees no inconvenience, provided they are Christians, in which case His Majesty gives his entire approbation.”<sup>534</sup>

### **3. Adversity because of Libertinage and Prostitution**

The tide turned against the marriage encouragement policy towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the growing rise of disapproval in view of counterproductive results of previous métissage strategies. While initially Frenchmen had discriminated against Indians in cultural ways in their everyday lives and by denying them sovereignty in political terms, the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw discrimination expressed more frequently in racial terms, i.e. by reference to unalterable characteristics such as the quality of blood and the colour of their skin. That is, the French were no longer guided by the fact that the Indians were seen as culturally different in behaviour, but they were perceived as a distinct race, with all the characteristics of difference

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<sup>532</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 14, f. 160-161, “Frontenac au Ministre, Québec, 25 octobre 1696”.

<sup>533</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 16, f. 102-126, “Champigny to Pontchartrain, Quebec, October 14, 1698”, also quoted in: Joseph L. Peyser, *Letters from New France. The Upper Country 1686-1783* (Chicago, 1992), pp. 69-70.

<sup>534</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 20, f. 7-280, “Instructions à d’Iberville, 22 septembre 1699”.

in “blood”, “quality” and “mentality”. Racism is prevalent when ethnocultural differences are declared to be innate, indelible and fixed. It is essential to note that in contrast to intolerance or cultural discrimination, racism negates any possibility for assimilating or integrating the discriminated through a change in identity, religion or customs.<sup>535</sup> Furthermore, racism fosters prohibitions that undo prior liberal practices. In New France, this set in with authorities in the colony increasingly complaining to Paris about libertinage and anarchic circumstances in which Euro-Indian contacts occurred. Therefore, first steps were taken to punish those who had engaged in mixed marriages without the explicit consent of the King or the Governor in the colony. Governor Frontenac reported to Colbert on this behalf: “...I have already forced some that the missionaries have themselves married to Savage women without my permission to abandon this way of life (...); the guilty ones have been punished on the simple report of their fathers, which could no longer be done once all the commandants will be called back.”<sup>536</sup>

In 1699, an anonymous writer made some propositions in order to advance the colony. One of the reasons for the deplorable state of the colony he listed was the libertinage between Frenchmen and “savage women”. The author deemed his suggestions “necessary to provide the necessary means that can contribute to the conservation, and the re-establishment of the affairs of trade of New France, in what appears since a certain period of time to contribute to its ruin and to its loss, in the state where the affairs at present by their derangement which discourages the subjects in a way that everybody rather works at destroying himself than to conserve the means of settling down, through the precautions that they take to abandon this country to retire to France, to engage for distant places of their homeland, or to desert with a view to trade with the savages in the deep forest, under the pretext to join to the pretending new establishment, and to finally live in libertinage with the Savages which can only cause great deregulation after which at least through the precautions they would no longer hesitate to the mildest discontentment that they would have to throw themselves on the side of the enemy of the state...”<sup>537</sup> The author thought that libertinage was a form of self-destruction rather than a means of subsistence, and that it led to unruly circumstances which could even lead to desertion to the enemy side.

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<sup>535</sup> My understanding of racism is mostly owed to George Fredrickson who holds that through history biologist racism was replaced by an ethnocentric ideology of the incompatibility of cultures. See George Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (New Jersey, 2002). Just to the contrary, Jean Benoist has tried to show that “métissage”, in fact, meant the coming closer of cultures. See Jean Benoist, “Le métissage”, in: *L'homme, son évolution, sa diversité*, ed. by Ferembach, Susanne, Chamla (Paris, 1986), pp. 539-541.

<sup>536</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 14, f. 160-161, “Frontenac au Ministre, Québec, 25 octobre 1696”.

<sup>537</sup> Archives Nationales, M 204, doss. 4, no 26, p. 1, Anonymous: “Propositions pour travailler serieusement a ce qui peut contribuer au bien & a l'avantage des Interests du Roy, et de ses sujets au paix de la nouvelle France”.

Three years later, on 30th of April 1702, Jesuit priest and missionary Etienne de Carheil was, in fact, concerned about the activities of soldiers and wrote to Minister Colbert regarding their sexual conduct in Michilimackinac, which he was too ashamed to call “prostitution”: “[Their] occupation is to turn their fort into a place that I am ashamed to call by its proper name, where the women have learned that their bodies could be merchandise, and that they serve even better...the soldiers keep open table between the women and their acquaintance in their houses: from morning until evening, they spend their days...one after the other sitting down at the fireside and often on their beds engaged in conversations and actions suitable for their commerce, ordinarily for some nights the masses would be so big during the day that in order to achieve it, they would leave their houses empty of people in order not to differ until night.”<sup>538</sup> These descriptions of the behaviour of soldiers were most likely meant to arouse indignation at home, since the descriptions proved that morality in the colony was generally lax, which led to anarchic circumstances that authorities found difficult to control. On the other hand, the descriptions created the impression that those who decided to immigrate to New France would find the perfect environment to exercise free and immoral sex. Against this sort of libertinage, Carheil advised: “His Majesty would find it feasible that one gives leave of absence [to the traders] who would, by being distributed in the posts and doing their trade, prevent the libertines from doing theirs and through this means it would cost nothing to his Majesty.”<sup>539</sup> By stressing the money argument, the French Court insisted that the peaceful pursuit of trade would prevent libertinage. Yet, in reality this was not the case. Libertinage was something that authorities were for the most part unable to control, since this way of life was attractive to men who were used to more rigorous morals at home.

Toward the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in the face of growing libertinage among Frenchmen and failure to assimilate Indians to French ways, authorities started to devise stricter rules for the celebration of marriage. On 5th May 1706, recollect missionaries in Acadia received instructions that they were to celebrate marriages of officers only with the approval of the Governor.<sup>540</sup> This was turned into a royal ordinance on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1706.<sup>541</sup> Increasingly, racist

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<sup>538</sup> Archives Nationales, M 204, doss. 4, no 3, Michilimackinac le 30 d’avril 1702, “Etienne de Carheil à Monseigneur“, pp. 4-5.

<sup>539</sup> Archives Nationales, M 204, doss. 4, no 2, p. 3, “Lettre commune Ecrite a la Cour par Messieurs de Callieres gouverneur de la Nouvelle France et de Beauharnois Intendant de Justice, police et finances aux Pays/ et de Champigny. Québec, le 3 Octobre 1702“.

<sup>540</sup> Archives Nationales, C11D, vol. 5, f. 221-221v, “Lettre du ministre au provincial des Récollets de la province de Bretagne, 5 mai 1706“.

<sup>541</sup> Archives Nationales, C11D, f. 224, “Ordonnance du Roi, 22 mai 1706“.



motives came to the fore in prohibiting mixed marriages. In 1706, Governor Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, an *absolute mixophobic* par excellence, urged Officer Lamothe Cadillac in Detroit to prevent libertinage by prohibiting marriages between French and Indians because of the latter's presumed "bad quality of blood". However, in the order of words that Vaudreuil used, it could be deduced that the bad quality of blood rather referred to the French: "[not] to let marry French with Savages (...) persuaded that one should never mix a bad blood with good (...) The experience that we have in this country that all the French that have married Savage women have become lazy libertines and of an insupportable independence, and that the children that they had have been of an insolence as big as that of the Savages themselves, makes it imperative that these sorts of marriage are prevented." Governor La Vente rejected biological arguments and objected, "the blood is not altered" by this sort of behaviour. In 1708, he tried to counteract these racist arguments by stressing: "We do not see that the blood of the savages does any harm to the blood of the French. As we see in the children of Frenchmen married to Savage women, the whiteness of these children is fully equal to that of the French themselves."<sup>542</sup> This was not altogether true, since in reality Metis children were, in fact, often described as having darker complexion.

La Vente reported from Fort Louis in Louisiana that adulterous behaviour among Indians was so widespread that it brought them to the grave and that their taste for polygamy was difficult to change.<sup>543</sup> In the same year, Governor Bienville had tried to persuade officials in Versailles to approve marriages between French and Indians. Yet, the practice itself was against orders of the metropolis.<sup>544</sup> That is, there were many mixed marriages without the consent of state or church officials. Bienville himself had witnessed a marriage that had been celebrated by a priest without the approval of authorities.<sup>545</sup> The real conflict, however, did not concern the controversy over the legality of mixed marriages, but the competition between agents who tried to pursue their subjective interests. In Louisiana, for instance, the Minister of Marine looked to a change, not in policy, but in personnel, i.e. the exchange and replacement of persons who prevented the smoothness of daily business.<sup>546</sup> The legitimacy of mixed marriages, however, was indeed an issue that was continuously discussed in the colony as well as in the metropolis in later years. Again in 1708, La Vente reminded authorities that

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<sup>542</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres, R 83, p.20, "La Vente to Brisacier, 4 July 1708".

<sup>543</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettre B, no 83, p. 11, "La Vente, Fort Louis in Louisiana, 4 juillet 1708".

<sup>544</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres, R 83, p. 19-20, "La Vente to Brisacier, 4 July 1708".

<sup>545</sup> O'Neill, *Church*, p. 72

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

girls had been urged to start families. This was made impossible, he thought, because most boys preferred taking Indian women to legitimate marriages with French girls. La Vente thought that this behaviour derived from the example set by military officers who had liaisons with Indian women. In most cases it was thought that these women were not sleeping in their own homes, but in special houses, which again insinuated the existence of brothels in the colony.

In October 1710, La Vente took up Bienville's initiative that was at pains to persuade metropolitan authorities to issue ban on intermarriage. Yet, he had no success in this.<sup>547</sup> In fact, La Vente observed in Louisiana that many people had contracted public marriages out of their concubinages with Indian women.<sup>548</sup> La Vente, thus, explicitly asked for the Royal Court's stance with regard to mixed marriages with those Indian women that were sufficiently instructed in French and Christian manners. La Vente received a positive reaction from Henri-Jean Tremblay, procurator of the Seminary in Quebec and director of the Seminary of the Missions Etrangères in Paris, on whose short encounters La Vente did not want to make any legitimate decisions for the future. La Vente had far too many Indian women to instruct in the hope that they would be married to French. As a *moderate mixophile* La Vente insisted that there were no grounds for the belief that French blood would be negatively altered through mixture with Indian blood.<sup>549</sup> He therefore asked the Royal Court to drop their prohibition of mixed marriages. His stance was backed by Sieur de Rémonville, an *unconditional mixophile*, who urged Minister Pontchartrain to approve La Vente's position on the necessity of mixed marriages: "...The wedding of Frenchmen with Indians, which I think, however, to be something quite necessary in order to have a closer union between these nations, and which would dispose them more easily to become good Christians, and faithful subjects of the King, all the more since the blood is in no way altered, and since the French who have settled here lack wives."<sup>550</sup> Thus, Rémonville combined the argument of the lack of women with the acknowledgment that mixed marriages would help to foster alliances. La Vente, on the other hand, held that "undesirables" should be chased away and be replaced by morally upright people from the metropolis. As a further remedy, La Vente suggested to the King that either more *filles du roi* should be allowed to leave the metropolis for New France or that mixed

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<sup>547</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>548</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres B, no 83, p. 18, "La Vente, Fort Louis in Louisiana, 4 juillet 1708".

<sup>549</sup> Ibid., p. 19f.

<sup>550</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 2, p. 565, "Mémoire sur l'état présent de la colonie de la Louisiane suivant ce que j'ai appris par M. de la Vente qui en est party le 21 juin 1710".

marriages in the colony should be permissible by law.<sup>551</sup> The King criticized Governor Vaudreuil and Intendant Raudot because he partly held them responsible for the high numbers of unmarried young people.<sup>552</sup>

In 1711, Jesuit father Marest, who was missionary in Kaskaskia, reported: “Disorders of numerous Canadian merchants who, under the pretext to do commerce, are openly committing many scandalous crimes, by debauching the girls and women in Illinois, and by distracting them from converting to the faith of our religion.”<sup>553</sup> In fact, libertinage - that is sexual relations in the absence of a religiously sanctioned marriage - was such a widespread phenomenon in Louisiana that inspector d’Artaguiette who had especially been sent from the metropolis to observe the state of the colony in 1712, wrote a “Memoir to prevent libertinage in Louisiana as much as possible”.<sup>554</sup> As a remedy, d’Artaguiette proposed to send out French families and women from the metropolis since he held that peopling of the colony was vital in order to change its “moral composition”. Furthermore, d’Artaguiette thought that the “ideal” governor and priest would be those who helped to restore order through gentle persuasion rather than punishment.<sup>555</sup> In 1712, Pontchartrain agreed and explained some of the selection criteria of the *filles du roi*: “Those must be chosen who have been brought up in proper homes from their tenderest youth, because the others who have at one time lived in disorder bring their vice everywhere, and are usually vain and idle - this must not be had in a new colony.”<sup>556</sup> Meanwhile, upon the arrival at Québec of Monsignor de Saint-Vallier in 1713, he was made aware of the problem of clandestine marriages<sup>557</sup> in his diocese and, through his mandate of 24<sup>th</sup> May 1717, he condemned and excommunicated those who dared to contract marriage in this manner and those who collaborated in it.

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<sup>551</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 3, pp. 393-95.

<sup>552</sup> Jaenen, *The Role of the Church*, p. 136.

<sup>553</sup> Margry, *Découvertes*, t. 5, p. 488, Relation de Pénicault. The French original reads: “Désordres de plusieurs marchands canadiens qui, sous prétexte d’y commercer, y commettoient ouvertement plusieurs crimes scandaleux, en desbauchant les filles et les femmes de Illinois, et les detorunant de se convertir à la foy de notre religion. “

<sup>554</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, p. 799, “Mémoire pour empecher autant que possible le libertinage en Louisiane, 8 Septembre 1712“.

<sup>555</sup> Ibid.

<sup>556</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 34, f. 423v, “Minister to Clairambault, 19 Octobre 1712“.

<sup>557</sup> During a certain era, because of certain impediments, some future spouses declared their mutual consent in the presence of two witnesses and in the presence of a priest, but without his knowledge, while he was celebrating mass. Such a marriage is called *à la gaumine* in honour of the French notary Gaulmin. Being clandestine, these marriages were not known and could have led to marriages of a certain person to other spouses still living. This situation could happen in the case of a soldier changing region or country. In addition, a minor child could easily marry without the consent of one's parents.

The women to be sent to the colony had to show that they were willing and able to live and work in a harsh environment and in the countryside. Given that many *filles du roi* were chosen in the Parisian metropolis, next to some of the Western provinces of France, the capacity to adapt to a wild environment was hardly an attribute, which could be assumed. In fact, in 1713, the French state's policy of sending out *filles du roi* was further pursued. Of twelve girls sent to the colony, however only two were married and the local male inhabitants rejected the others as too ugly. Yet, certain criteria were made a precondition in the selection of the girls. Minister Pontchartrain demanded that naval commissary François d'Aigremont Clairambault at Port Louis in Louisiana picked out "the most industrious, those most willing to work".<sup>558</sup> Pontchartrain obviously preferred those women who would add to productivity in the colony. In addition, the financial commissary Jean-Baptiste Du Bois Duclos drew attention to the girls' physical characteristics. In a letter to Versailles, Duclos pointed out: "M. de Clairambault should pay attention rather to the figure than to virtue, the Canadians and especially the voyageurs of whom we have found here a considerable number are all well-built people, are not very scrupulous about the kind of conduct the girls have had before they marry them...instead they have all gone away assuring us that they still preferred the native women with whom they marry, especially in the Illinois country..."<sup>559</sup> Still, La Vente repeated in 1714: "In order to populate the colony [we need] to permit marriages between Frenchmen and Catholic Indian women."<sup>560</sup>

Yet, commissaire-ordonnateur in Louisiana Adjutant Pierre D'Arguette as a *moderate mixophobic* denounced the instability of mixed marriages in 1715, and explained away their failure with the widespread libertinage in the colony. He mainly referred to the free spirit of Indian women who left their French husbands "au moindre chagrin".<sup>561</sup> It remains unclear if this agent regretted Indian women's volatile behaviour or if he opposed mixed marriages in principle. His successor to the post of Commissaire-Ordonnateur in Louisiana Duclos added that the disappointment of those Indian women who had left their French husbands led them to remarry Indian men in nearby villages: "It happens (...) often that they leave their French husbands and go remarry in other villages of the Savages."<sup>562</sup> Duclos criticized intermarriage

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<sup>558</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 34, f. 425-26, "Ministre à Clairambault, 5-16 November 1712".

<sup>559</sup> Public Archives of Canada, MG1, F3, vol. 24, pt. 1: "Memorandum of Duclos 1713", 184-185. Cited in Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 93.

<sup>560</sup> Cited in Jennifer M. Spear: "Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana", in: *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 60, no.1 (January 2003).

<sup>561</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 2, f. 545, "D'Arguette au Ministre, Fort St. Louis, 20 juin 1710".

<sup>562</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 3, f. 819-822, "Duclos au Ministre, 25 décembre 1715".

mainly for its counterproductive results as far as assimilation was concerned. Rather than leading to the frenchification and assimilation of Indians, he observed that the French went native as a result of living in close proximity to Indians: “It is not that they have been francized, but (...) those who have married have turned themselves almost savage, by remaining among them, by living according to their mode, so that these savages have changed nothing or at least very little in their way of life.”<sup>563</sup> Duclos was an *absolute mixophobic* at the face of the failure of policies to encourage mixture.

In the same year, Duclos joined in the racist discourse of his contemporaries and made comments on how mixed marriages led to an alteration of skin colour through the “impurity” of mixed blood. Duclos further claimed that, “few Indian girls want to enter into a permanent, stable marriage with Frenchmen. If there are cases in the Illinois country, it is more because the Frenchmen have taken to the Indian way of life. Even there - and the missionaries have not succeeded in correcting the practice - the girl is likely to go off later on with an Indian.”<sup>564</sup> Indian women would never accustom to that sort of life with the French and even less would like to spend their whole life with them. Examples of contracted mixed marriages showed that savages who had married French had not been “francisé”, but rather the French had become savage. Secondly, Duclos claimed that there were even fewer French who would be willing to marry an Indian. Among those who lived according to a savage lifestyle among Indians, there were very few who wished to take a Savage woman as their wife. Thirdly, it was very difficult to instruct the savages since no missionary could speak Indian languages.<sup>565</sup>

In order to receive instruction the Savages needed to speak and understand French. Before they could do so sufficiently, many years would pass, so that when a French person wanted to marry an Indian and they could indeed marry, it would take at least four to five years so that no single marriage would actually be contracted. But the Savages were not “docile” enough to wait that long. Fourthly, mixed marriages would alter the white skin of Europeans and thus endanger their presumed purity of blood.<sup>566</sup> Children born of mixed marriages were extremely dark skinned, he held, so that in time the French would cease to come to Louisiana and the colony would become populated by mulattoes who were described as being “naturally lazy”, libertine and even more mischievous than those in Peru, Mexico and other Spanish colonies.

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<sup>563</sup> Ibid.

<sup>564</sup> Ibid.

<sup>565</sup> This was a false statement, however; it was mainly Jesuit missionaries who had set out to learn Indian languages, such as, for instance, Huron.

<sup>566</sup> See footnote 554.

Duclos used his arguments in order to convince authorities that La Vente's plans were not practicable and of no utility for the augmentation of families. Furthermore, no settlers and soldiers should be sent to the colony before sufficient funds were set up in the metropolis for their subsistence.<sup>567</sup> Duclos could convince Admiral Louis-Antoine de Bourbon and Maréchal d'Estrées at the Conseil de la Marine. Together they decided in September 1716 that, "this sort of marriage must be prevented insofar as possible, and, when we can, we will send girls from here [in France]."<sup>568</sup> La Vente had been unsuccessful in trying to convince authorities at the Conseil de la Marine that they should officially encourage mixed marriages between Frenchmen and Catholic Indians as a means to populate the colony.<sup>569</sup> In the North of the colony he had thought of the Indian tribes of Acancas, Toniens, Chicachas, Chachoumans, Kascoukias, Tamarouas, Illinois and Missouri whose women were considered to be whiter than those of other tribes.<sup>570</sup> Yet, La Vente's idea was rejected because it was countered that Indian women were accustomed to a libertine way of life and would leave their husbands if they were discontent. Furthermore, Frenchmen who stayed in the wife's Indian village were liable to turn into "Savages". Indian women would often decide to take another Indian husband instead, and Jesuit missionaries could do nothing in order to prevent this. The argument about the lack of language skills among missionaries was reiterated and it was feared that mulattos would increasingly populate the colony. Duclos' argument was taken up that these children turned out to be lazier and more libertine than their parents.<sup>571</sup>

Finally, Duclos got his way. His initiative turned out to be successful and led to a further consideration of sending out *filles du roi* as a remedy against too much mixing of blood. The King Louis XV, as an *absolute mixophobic*, insisted that local authorities should rigorously pursue his directive on the prohibition of mixed marriages: "It is (...) His Majesty's intention that Messieurs de l'Épinay and Hubert [at the Conseil de la Marine] prevent this sort of marriage insofar as it shall be in their power."<sup>572</sup> In 1717, when marriages *à la gaumine*, i.e. clandestine marriages, were prohibited, the Church declared: "... (we condemn) numerous

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<sup>567</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 4, f. 820, "Duclos to Minister, 25 December 1715".

<sup>568</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 4, pp. 542-543, "Cadillac to Minister, 23 January 1716".

<sup>569</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 2, f. 565, "Mémoire sur l'état présent de la colonie de la Louisiane suivant ce que j'en ay appris par Mr. De la Vente, supérieur des missions de cette colonie 1710". On the refusal of the conseil de la marine see Lugan, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, p. 81.

<sup>570</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 4, f. 255, "Mariage des Français avec les Sauvages, la Louisiane, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1716".

<sup>571</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 4, f. 255-257, "Mariage des François avec les Sauvages, la Louisiane 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1716, signed Amiral de Bourbon and Maréchal d'Estrée".

<sup>572</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 38, f. 334, "Mémoire du Roy, 28 Octobre 1716".

young people, who despising civil and ecclesiastical laws, and contrary to the respect due to the church and their parents, have found at the instigation of the devil a detestable manner to contract marriages, which they call *à la gaumine*.<sup>573</sup> This, however, did not result in this custom not being practiced further, which led church authorities to take action on three occasions in 1724, 1727 and 1754. However, the Church remained rather inactive on the issue of “little savage slaves” kept in houses; only the Conseil de Marine devoted a session to discuss the problem.<sup>574</sup>

On 12<sup>th</sup> January 1719, Vaudreuil towards the Duc d’Orléans repeated his complaint that the Bishop of Quebec was still marrying officers and soldiers without the permission of the governor general, a complaint he had already made by February 1716.<sup>575</sup> This time Vaudreuil urged for a royal ordinance on that matter.<sup>576</sup> On 16<sup>th</sup> May 1719, the Conseil de Marine reacted and issued a deliberation.<sup>577</sup> On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1720, Maréchal d’Estrée recommended that 30 girls be sent every year from France, however not those who would add to disorder in the colony but rather those capable of stable marriages with soldiers.<sup>578</sup> On 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1721, the Conseil de Marine issued a recommendation as a reaction to Vaudreuil’s complaints and held that the Bishop should have permission from the governor general for marriages of soldiers and officers. The Bishop reacted and held that Vaudreuil had prohibited soldiers to marry for eight or ten years, which would cause the continuation of disorders and libertinage in the colony, leading to a “infinity of illegitimate children”. The Bishop claimed that many officers would marry *à la gaumine* and much below their status, such as shown in the example of Bégon La Cour who allied himself to “a family well below his own”.<sup>579</sup>

As for mixed marriages among Indian tribes, Vaudreuil observed on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1723 that the Sakis were not living far from the Renards with whom they held strong ties through marriage with their women and vice versa. Furthermore, Vaudreuil observed that the libertine way of life of Abenaki chief Nenaugoussik was the reason why he moved to the mission of St.

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<sup>573</sup> *Mandements*, vol. I, 24 May 1717, p. 493-494.

<sup>574</sup> Cited in Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 155.

<sup>575</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 36, fol. 124-141v, „Mémoire de Vaudreuil au duc d’Orléans“, Février 1716.

<sup>576</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 40, f. 164-165v, “Lettre de Vaudreuil au Conseil de Marine”, 12 janvier 1719.

<sup>577</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 124, fol. 396-397v, “Délibération du Conseil de Marine sur une lettre de Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, Québec 16 mai 1719“.

<sup>578</sup> Archives Nationales, C11B, vol. 5, f. 75-77, “Arrêt du Conseil sur une lettre de M. de Mézy, 23 août 1720“.

<sup>579</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 43, f. 320-331v, “Résumé d’une lettre de Vaudreuil datée du 6 octobre 1721 et délibération du Conseil de Marine, 23 Décembre 1721“.

Louis where he hoped to be able to live in greater sexual freedom.<sup>580</sup> In the same year of 1723, the Indian Nescambegins gave up his libertine way of life in order to marry the woman he loved in front of the church.<sup>581</sup> On 15<sup>th</sup> September 1727, Beauharnois reminded that Dupuy had issued an ordinance on the matter of marriages, which was contrary to a previous notice of 12<sup>th</sup> April 1610. The intendant had decided to have an arrêt of the Conseil de Marine which prohibited to boys to marry before the age of thirty, and girls before the age of twenty-five.<sup>582</sup>

The debate over the legality of mixed marriages reoccurred among the state authorities at the beginning of the 1730s. In 1732, an anonymous author issued a memorandum in which he used the argument that mixed marriages led to corruption and thus, he urged for a prohibition of such marriages: “to prohibit to the missionaries in the future from making such marriages, in order to undo the mixed blood of the métis who are established and whose heart is corrupted.”<sup>583</sup> However, before prohibitions of mixed marriages were expressed, authorities started by restricting the right of Indian women to inherit their French husband’s property, in contradiction with article 17 of the Charter of the Company of New France.<sup>584</sup> On 16<sup>th</sup> May 1735, Governor Bienville wrote from New Orleans to Paris that a savage Illinois woman with whom he had been married had killed an Illinois habitant. Her tribe agreed that if she were found she should be punished. This affair led to discussions over mixed marriages. In light of the incident, it was held that missionaries too readily celebrated mixed marriages anyway, that the offspring were coquettish; dishonourable to the nation and that a revolt on the side of the Illinois could occur. The judge decided to send an order of the King on this issue.<sup>585</sup> On 8<sup>th</sup> October 1735, Jesuit Father Joseph-François Lafitau wrote to Abbey Brisacier, one of the directors of the Seminary of Missions Etrangères in Paris, that the Louisiana governor and the commandant-ordonnateur had informed him that marriages between Frenchmen and savage women had become frequent in the Illinois Country. This development was again ascribed to the fact that the missionaries too easily gave in to them and even encouraged them.<sup>586</sup> As a result, a royal edict was passed, prohibiting intermarriage except in those cases in which

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<sup>580</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 45, f. 148.

<sup>581</sup> Ibid., f. 150.

<sup>582</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 49, f. 91-92v, “Lettre de Beauharnois au Ministre, Québec 15 septembre 1727”.

<sup>583</sup> Archives Nationales, F3, vol. 24, f. 236, “Mémoire concernant les Illinois 1732”.

<sup>584</sup> Cited in Olive Dickason, “Amerindians in the French New World”, in: *ibid.*, *Canada's First Nations. A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto, 1992), p. 172.

<sup>585</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 20, f. 90-91, “Letter by Bienville from New Orleans, 16 May 1735”.

<sup>586</sup> In the French original it reads: “s’y prêtent trop facilement et les excitent très souvent”.



governor and commandant of the post in question gave their consent.<sup>587</sup> Because these marriages would lead to libertine children, were dishonourable for the nation and could have dangerous consequences for the tranquillity of the colony, they were in the future only to be performed with the approval of these authorities.<sup>588</sup>

In 1738, Jesuit father Tartarin as a *moderate mixophile* took up the debate and reiterated that the Royal Court no longer wished Illinois missionaries to celebrate mixed marriages of Indians and French. Tartarin stressed that missionaries would willingly comply without waiting for further orders. However, he insisted upon making some reflections on the issue. First, he thought that the missionaries gave in to such marriages due to the scandalous way of life of the majority of the population, which hindered the proper establishment of religion - and which was in itself the rationale for the existence of missions. Missionaries held the belief that Savages could only improperly judge religion, in the face of the immoral behaviour that the French displayed in their country. Marriage was seen as a disagreeable means of improving the situation, and on this issue, Tartarin believed, the missionaries and the Court were unanimous. Tartarin held that attention, however, had to be paid to two points: one should give the Savage women to those libertines who were living with them for longer than three months in concubinage, especially to those who had children with their mistresses. The second point referred to preventing unjust trade with savage slaves in Missouri, which led to conflicts and wars. D'Artaguiette, it was claimed, had already tried to stop this trade, but it had been taken up again the following year when marriages were prohibited and slave women given to the French to entice them. This trade proved to be unfruitful and ruinous, even for the French, since some slaves died of disease, others deserted at the risk of giving information to the enemy, and the rest simply stayed on with the French out of a taste for scandal.

Tartarin's second reflection was whether mixed marriages were really to the disadvantage of the French state. What would, in fact, happen if mixed marriages were not celebrated and at the same time nothing was done against the disorders that prevailed and led to numerous complaints of missionaries? Tartarin believed that the country would be filled with bastards even more dangerous than legitimate "Métifs", since the latter were at least fixed, i.e. settled, among the French, through education and the heritage of goods of their fathers, and their majority would behave like Frenchmen. Tartarin reminded authorities that in twenty years

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<sup>587</sup> Dickason, *A look at*, p. 28; Balesi, *The time of the French*, pp. 193-194.

<sup>588</sup> Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, p. 206; Provost, p. 50. See original in: Archives Nationales, B, vol. 62, f. 88v: "M. l'abbé de Brisacier, 8th October 1735", signed Père Lafitau.

only one single Metis had retired to live amongst the Savages. The commandants of the posts, in fact, did not want to remove them in order to preserve the Metis youth. Bastard Metis, however, had in large numbers disappeared into Indian tribes, without any education or hope for heritage. Their savage nature prevailed and they could not enter French families. This multitude of bastards would lead to disorder in the colony and produce a more dangerous nation than that of legitimate Metis. The Metis would find every day someone to marry in French families and would lose insensitively the genius and inclination of their first, i.e. mixed, birth.

Thirdly, Tartarin reflected on downplaying the horrors that the Court imagined. Tartarin stressed that Illinois Indians no longer gave their daughters to the French in large quantities anyway, and that the French no longer thought of taking them anymore. Thus, marriages would be abandoned, leading to huge inconveniences that the missionaries apprehended in great measure, knowing the close liaison of these married Indian women with Frenchmen and their savage parenthood - a liaison that the French nearly entirely made them abandon and lose altogether. However, when the French boys mingled too much with the nations of the Missouri and those of the Lower Country, missionaries had no other choice than to celebrate their marriages in order to prevent disorder from persisting. Their wives would be without any assistance and would live too far away from their nations and parents. Tartarin fiercely argued against leaving these Indian women in concubinage, “sans foy, sans loy, sans bien”, and being exposed to public scandal to the shame of religion. Tartarin concluded that the only remedy against this sort of marriage was to not tolerate young people living alone with these sort of slaves, to prevent the slave trade that one wanted to renew, and to declare void the liberty given to these slaves by their masters, since in liberty they would abandon it for other Frenchmen to whom the missionaries would again be forced to marry them. In a country without police, Tartarin asked that missionaries be given permission to authorise commandants to remove slaves who were living with boys or in concubinage.<sup>589</sup>

In the same year that Tartarin wrote down his reflections, Charles Hamelin married a Saulteaux woman in Michilimackinac after she had borne four children. In 1746, one year after his wife's death, he decided to remarry “after the fashion of the country” and to have another child with a new Saulteaux wife. One of Hamelin's sons, Louis, continued his father's preference for exoticism and married an Indian with whom he had five children. In this case,

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<sup>589</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 23, f. 240-243, “Mémoire sur les Mariages des Sauvages avec les Français, La Louisiane 1738”.

the children were born before a local missionary could even be found to perform the marriage ceremony.<sup>590</sup> Often, a couple had to find a suitable priest who was willing to do this duty, and in some cases the priests themselves asked colleagues to perform the marriage rite, because they encountered opposition within their own village, either from Indian chiefs or the village population. Yet, on 6th July 1746, Minister of Marine, in charge of colonies, above the governor and below the King in command, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de Maurepas was convinced that missionaries were too easily consenting to celebrate mixed marriages and thought that missionaries' power should be restricted in order to prevent them from being too liberal in this respect.<sup>591</sup> However, in Louisbourg, Acadia on 9<sup>th</sup> July, in the same year, Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren on the English side precisely recommended that mixed marriages with Indians should be encouraged.<sup>592</sup> Two years later in 1748, Bishop Henri-Marie Dubreil de Pontbriand gave instructions on marriages to the superior of the missions in Michilimackinac Jesuit Father Pierre-Luc Du Jaunay, who had been in charge of the mission St. Ignace since 1742.<sup>593</sup> On 14<sup>th</sup> May 1749, Roland-Michel Barrin, Comte de La Galissonnière, who was governor of New France, wrote a letter from Montreal to the bishop of Quebec stating that, even more than the previous autumn, he thought that mixed marriages were harmful to the state and ineffective in terms of spreading Christianity. According to Galissonnière being an *absolute mixophobic*, it would be easy to push through a prohibition of the Court in this matter, as it had already done in Louisiana. However, Galissonnière preferred to instruct the Bishop to give the order to the missionaries to perform as little as possible such marriages and above all never to perform them without the approval of the commandants of the posts.<sup>594</sup> An officer in Acadia, however, married an Indian woman without the consent of the local commandant: Bogard de Lanoue encountered the daughter of a French-Metis couple, and "in spite of the expressed interdiction of Mr. d'Aillebout, Cap Breton commandant, he managed to marry her, the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 1755. This marriage was declared invalid, in the name of the King, because it was against the law for officers to marry girls of mixed blood; it resulted in a very scandalous debate." In the same year, French officer Jean-Baptiste

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<sup>590</sup> Public Archives of Canada, MG1, C11A, "Mémoire sur les Sioux et Nadouessis 1719", 22; Laurence J. Burpee (ed.), *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and his sons* (Toronto, 1927), p. 340; Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 92.

<sup>591</sup> Public Archives of Canada, C11C, vol. 16, pièce 28, unsigned letter, 6 July 1746.

<sup>592</sup> Public Archives of Canada, C11C, vol. 16, pièce 28, Louisbourg, 9 July 1746.

<sup>593</sup> Provost, *Mariages*, p. 51.

<sup>594</sup> Archevêque de Québec, G III, 102, Provost, *Mariages*, p. 51.

d'Aleynac observed Huron Indians and claimed, "...two or three of their number have married Canadian women."<sup>595</sup>

A year later, on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1756, Marquis de Montcalm became concerned about commandants' prohibition of officers' marriages with Indians and wrote to de Bourlamaque: "The answer [of Marquis de Vaudreuil] has been that all the laws of France were the same for Canada, with the exception of the sons of habitants; that there has been tolerance and abuse, which could never concern our officers, because of the distinction of domicile of which he was struck; that he believes that these marriages made with his permission, would be valid for the state of these persons, but we would not prevent disinheritance, if the father and the mother wanted to pronounce it; that we would be blamed in France, and as much as I had to refuse permission to the persons in paternal power; that he did not want to consult the tribunal, but according to him, he would talk to the intendant. The only thing that you would have to do, Monsieur, is to drop a vague word, as I have done here towards Monsieur de Roquemaure and de Fontbonne, that the principles of Marquis de Vaudreuil on this matter are totally different from those of last winter, and it is following to this prudent commandant to make usage of it, he realised that some officer inclined to marry like last year. And you, Monsieur, with a moderation and a discretion that you are most capable of taking than someone else and than myself, if, by chance, one would treat this matter, even the bishop, that you have reasons to believe that Marquis de Vaudreuil thinks differently, that there has been maybe last year circumstances that have determined him, and that this year, he can be it through others, and if through a natural consequence, one would bring doubts on behalf of the other marriages, do not fail to sustain the validity of the basis of this permission, and that you doubt that one accords it that year. I am sending you a little bulletin of our news, surely the intendant already has them, in any case, tell it to him."<sup>596</sup>

In 1763, the expertise of jurists at the Sorbonne was sought on the issue of marriages of religious nature in Canada.<sup>597</sup> Marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics were discussed after the British seizure of Montreal and later of the whole French colony in Canada. The debate revolved not only around Indians (as non-Catholics) and Whites (as Catholics), but

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<sup>595</sup> Coste, 1935, 27.

<sup>596</sup> Marquis de Montcalm à M. le Commandant de Bon, Montréal, le 24 novembre 1756, in: *Lettres du M. de Bourlamaque au Chevalier de Lévis*. Publiées sous la direction de l'abbé H.-R. Casgrain (Québec, 1891), p. 136f.

<sup>597</sup> Archives Nationales, M 75 no 5<sup>1</sup>, "Cas de Conscience proposé en Sorbonne au Sujet des Mariages au Canada, et Consultation des Docteurs sur ledit Cas", délibéré en Sorbonne le 21 avril 1763, signé de Culture Bruget, pp. 1-10.

also marriage between English or Dutch and French subjects, since Catholics were living everywhere without separate territory or quarters, as did French and English people. It was decided that marriages celebrated in front of a Protestant minister, as opposed to a Catholic priest, should be regarded as null and void and should be classified as concubinage.<sup>598</sup> The entire debate had been initiated because it was believed that under a Protestant government, the mixture of Catholics and non-Catholics would lead to a huge quantity of prohibited and clandestine marriages.<sup>599</sup> This may be the case of marriages of Catholics who would encounter difficulties at the Church, or who would renounce to the Catholic religion. Furthermore, marriages of non-Catholics, those who held a different communion than that of the Church, and marriages of a non-Catholic with a Catholic, were considered as a mixed marriage. In conclusion, the jurists recommended that should someone want to enter into a prohibited marriage, he should do so in a manner that was least dangerous for his well being, without detailing, however, what this well being was.

#### **4. Conclusion**

During the French regime in New France, Euro-Indian mixed marriages constituted a politico-military-commercial tool in the hands of the French state and the Catholic Church. The aim was Indian assimilation to Frenchness and Christianity with parallel augmentation of the colonial population. Despite Samuel de Champlain's sentence of 1633 towards the Huron Indians, "our sons will marry your daughters, and we shall be one people", mixed marriages were not easily put in practice. Therefore, the French started to complain that the Hurons did not ally themselves to the French through marriage. At the same time, French individuals entered into mixed marriages whenever it pleased them, either celebrated by missionaries or priests, but sometimes also without state or church sponsorship or support because they either fell in love with Indian women of various tribes or because they hoped for advantages to be gained for their trade with Indians. In 1657, the Christian religion was made a precondition for mixed marriages: an edict of King Louis XIV stated that marriages of French and Indians should be officially allowed, provided that the latter turned Christian. The spreading of Christianity through missionaries was seen as vital, and mixed marriages were seen as either being performed on the basis of Christian rules or precisely as being a means to lead towards

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<sup>598</sup> From 1898 onwards any savage woman who decided to leave her husband in order to live in concubinage with another was made punishable. Furthermore, she was deprived of any immobile propriety. See "Acte modifiant de nouveau l'Acte des Sauvages, sanctionné le 13 juin 1898", chapter 34, article 73.

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

assimilation to Christian values. Consequently, in cases where French and Indians engaged in relationships without marrying according to Christian customs, contemporaries commented in denigrating tone: it was claimed that Frenchmen “took up with slave girls” and that New France was “a wifeless colony of mistresses”. Therefore, authorities started to look for ways to remedy the chaotic situation, which they saw as anarchic in contrast to the Christian order in the metropolis. Growing libertinage and the lack of white women became a serious concern of colonial authorities, which were faced with the choice of either permitting fully legal marriages with Indian women in the colony or providing a sufficient number of white women from the metropolis in order to marry them to French colonists in New France. Initially, authorities had favoured the first option with the objective of creating a single French nation overseas through assimilation with Indian tribes. In this scheme, military marriages with Indian women were controlled through regulations that made the approval of authorities a precondition. However, such marriages constituted a perfect tool of integration as they often occurred at strategic points close to Indian villages. Among Indians, it was the chief who held pride of place within his tribe and who was the one to decide, for instance, if an Indian bride was to be given in marriage to a French trader. In return, Indian women did refuse to consent to the chiefs’ rules whenever they did not agree with the groom, preferred Indian partners or wanted to remain within their own tribe. Many officers married intercultural without the necessary approval, however. It is difficult to judge, if diplomatic considerations - such as aiming at an understanding with Indians - followed or preceded French sexual activities with Indians. In any case, the diplomatic advantages to be obtained from good relations with Indians were an important factor in fostering politico-military-commercial alliances that secured French presence in the country. While the military elite was subject to restrictions, ordinary settlers were enticed with financial incentives for marriage. Such was the second solution - the sending out of the so-called *filles du roi* from France at the expense of the royal treasury. This initiative was favoured whenever the moral climate in the colony became libertine, i.e. when Frenchmen increasingly started to live in concubinage with Indian women. The parallel strategy to send out girls from the metropolis was enacted for two principal reasons: first, this strategy was meant to counteract the undesired effects of mixed marriages, i.e. the mixture of the races, which was seen as a danger to the purity of blood. Secondly, this strategy was supposed to support the policy of trying to augment population numbers in the colony as much as possible and at the same time to get rid of parts of the home population that was considered an unnecessary burden and could be more useful in building the colony. The *filles du roi* received a *présent du roi*, a sum of money, as incentive to embark for the colony

and to enter into marriages with male French colonists. This female migration was meant to counteract the rise of mixed unions, which authorities viewed with increasing suspicion. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, racist views came to the fore, which saw assimilation through the means of métissage as counterproductive to population growth. It was argued that skin colour was altered through biological mixing of blood and that mixed children were dangerous to the colonial order.<sup>600</sup> From 1735 onwards, marriages of military personnel in Louisiana, where most scandalous cases were reported of, henceforth were to be celebrated only with approval of the governor and the commandant of the military post. Yet, in practice mixed marriages continued being performed against the wishes of French authorities or of Indian village chiefs throughout New France.

Those who favoured mixed unions did so because they were expecting an increase in the population of the colony, or because they were hoping to gain and to pacify Indian allies or to facilitate conversion work with Indians. Furthermore, agents in favour of métissage saw in mixed unions a means to foster military and trading alliances, to populate the colony, to spread Catholicism or to encourage legitimate unions “before the church” in order to prevent widespread savage customs that were reported throughout the country. However, the means of mixed marriages played a secondary role in France’s colonizing scheme and constituted a follow-up measure to previous means, which had failed to assure the survival and building-up of the colony. This may have had to do with the fact that measures such as populating the colony and leading Indians into a sedentary way of life were seen as being easier to control and direct with specific policies than forcing individuals through state pressure into possibly lifelong marriages between partners of different ethnic backgrounds. Marriage policy was closely linked to system stabilization and differentiation. In the New France colony and the Parisian metropolis as well as in their White and Indian communities, there were negotiations on the part of political and social agents with competing, but also complementary interests. These could be partly extrapolated from official policy schemes of metropolitan authorities and from utterances of agents in the colony. Yet, there existed neither an “order of things” nor a “list of priorities”: schemes were set up in rapid succession and with little time to await the consequences. The measures that were introduced overlapped, contradicted one another, were sometimes initiated but not followed through to the end and were subjected to modifications and sometimes to complete rejection by those in charge of putting them into practice. Furthermore, in these policy schemes money was always a delicate issue: While metropolitan

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<sup>600</sup> Belmessous, *D’un préjugé culturel*.

elites were keen to spend as little as possible with respect to the colony since they rather wanted to make profits from the colony, colonial agents, through lack of resources, were eager to profit as much as they could from the metropolitan treasury. Furthermore, money and resources did not always reach their proper destination: misuse, corruption and failure to distribute funds were prevalent. Such incidences enhanced and, at the same time, were an integral part of system stabilization. Measures and resources sometimes evaporated without direct effect or results and thus hindered system stabilization as intended by French agents.

Up to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, French authorities had enacted policies that implied a strategy of mixed unions, of which both metropolitan and colonial agents such as ministers, governors, intendants and the King approved. Mixed marriages were favoured whenever agents wanted to ensure survival of the colony and the increase of population numbers. The means of mixed marriages had been initially introduced only after authorities had realised that all other measures to populate the colony with French from the metropolis and founding trading and military posts at the proximity of Indian villages had failed in adding to the numbers of settlers and to the growth of the colony in the long run. As to allowing mixed marriages, agents fundamentally disagreed for different reasons. While some agents supported mixed unions out of consideration for the development of the colony and the spreading of French culture therein, others searched for alternative or parallel means of colony building, assimilation and francisation.<sup>601</sup> Motives of agents in favouring or opposing mixed marriages were manifold: those who opposed mixed marriages were hoping to stop the disorderliness that they ascribed to be caused by race mixture. For fears of “racial degeneration” opponents of mixture were keen on preventing Indian “disorderly” influences on Europeans. In addition, they were concerned that the intention to populate and Christianise the colony according to French ideals would be jeopardized through massive intermarriage since the French rather adopted Indian ways than vice versa. At the same time, mixed marriages had a vital social rather than merely a racial dimension. Judith Evans-Grubbs<sup>602</sup> has rightly pointed at the social aspect of mixing: already in Antiquity relationships between slaves and mistresses were considered in late Roman law as “mixed marriages”. Roman law was in disfavour of sexual relationships between freemen and slaves. Even the legitimate marriages between these two groupings were seen as unwanted - as by philosopher Seneca, for instance -, since such unions were seen as constituting a threat to the traditional gender hierarchy. Roman marriages were

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<sup>601</sup> As was shown in previous chapters.

<sup>602</sup> Judith Evans-Grubbs, *Roman Law*.



considered legitimate only when they formed a union between so-called “equals” in terms of status and cultural background. Furthermore, Roman law disapproved of unions in which the wife had more wealth or greater rank than the husband.<sup>603</sup> Thus, one can discern a parallelism between Ancient and Modern discourses. In its fear of chaos and degeneration for established order Roman discourse on mixed marriages strikingly resembled 19<sup>th</sup> century biological-anthropological discourses on intermarriage. Social fear of “degeneration” seemed to echo these concerns. Evans-Grubbs has thus contributed to the view that mixed marriages did not merely imply cultural and racial, but also social components. As a consequence, rather than seeing the concept of “mixed marriage” and its outcome of “Metis” in relation to notions of race, nation or origin, it has to be seen as a social and legal category, and as such being adjusted to the social prejudices prevalent in the society and epoch in question. In its broadest understanding, one could assume therefore that a Metis did not only designate a mixed-blood or mixed-race individual or one with many cultural identities, but also that it referred to a descendant of marriage partners who were considered to be of so-called different social status and different cultural “worth”.

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<sup>603</sup> Ibid. p. 125f.

## D. From Frenchification and Mixed Marriages to Métissage: Geographical, Social and Tribal Contexts and Practices

### 1. Realities and Practices of Métissage

“On few matters in life is the gap so great as between a dry, antiseptic statement of policy by a well-spoken man in a quiet office and what happens to people when it is put into practice.”

**John Kenneth Galbraight**

In the literature, métissage as a socio-anthropological phenomenon on the encounter of peoples belonging to different cultures, nations and religions has been described for numerous regions. Also, other epochs than the early modern one had already witnessed race mixture. In fact, the encounter and mixture of different peoples had started from the beginnings of human history.<sup>604</sup> Consequently, historian Magnus Mörner has held with a view to the Middle Ages that for centuries [Iberians, Celts, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths, Jews, Arabs, Berbers, Gypsies and slaves of different origins] had been involved in “strange mixture between savage warfare and pacific exchange, including miscegenation, between intolerance and tolerance in interethnic relations.”<sup>605</sup> To hold that peace and war as well as tolerance and intolerance coincided is an appropriate explanation for interethnic dynamics dominated by an almost stop-and-go logic of human rapprochement and alienation. Explicit usage of the term *métissage* or its variants to describe mixture, however, is rather sparse in the sources. This may have to do with the fact that for most historical processes contemporaries coined terms from hindsight, without proper knowledge at the time what was underway in terms of path-breaking upheavals. Only with the modern period social agents and authors acknowledged racial mixture to the degree that they started to coin terms for the phenomenon. For the early modern period, “mestizaje” in South America was for the first time described in 1615.<sup>606</sup> In the modern period, the concept of “métissage” appeared in printed form in France

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<sup>604</sup> For the Roman context, for example, Frank Tenney: “Race mixture in the Roman Empire”, in: *American Historical Review*, vol. 21 (1916), p. 705.

<sup>605</sup> Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston, 1967), p. 14.

<sup>606</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 94 and 104. Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink is probably thinking of the letter “Prime Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno” by Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala to the Spanish King, in which he argued for preventing miscegenation in order to preserve an indigenous “kingdom” in Peru. See Catherine Poupeney-Hart: “Mestizaje: ‘I understand the reality, I just do not like the word’: Perspectives on an Option”, in: *Critical Studies*, vol. 13 (2000), “Unforeseeable Americas”, ed. by Rita De Grandis and Zilà Bernd, 34-55, p. 39. See *Le Petit Robert*, p. 1192. Yet, the dictionary does not give references as to by whom the term was used in which context. See also Serge Gruzinski/Carmen Bernard, *Les métissages (1550-1640)* (Paris, 1991).

in 1834/1837 in *Dictionnaire de l'industrie manufacturière commerciale et agricole*<sup>607</sup> which stated that métissage referred to the “crossing of races”.<sup>608</sup> Its English equivalent - “miscegenation” - was used in a satirical pamphlet of 1863 written by a reporter of the *New York World* called David Goodman Croly. The author had invented the word “miscegenation” by putting together the Latin verb “miscere” (to mix) with the noun “genus” (race/type) as he held that it sounded more scientific - and therefore more authoritative - than the word “amalgamation”. Croly was an *unconditional mixophile*<sup>609</sup> to argue in an enlightened way for the promotion of race mixture during a period of heightened racism and xenophobia against Blacks in the USA. The pamphlet was strategically launched during the US elections of 1864 as representing the views of the Republican Party, intended to urge President Abraham Lincoln to solve the “negro problem” by allowing the amalgamation of the two races with the aim to give way to “the most perfect and highest type of manhood”, as the pamphlet held. The whole incident turned out to be the “miscegenation hoax” enacted in order to mislead the public about the true stance of the Republican Party, in the hope on the side of its author to advance his campaign for race mixture.<sup>610</sup>

The French term “métissage” in turn etymologically translates into “mixture”, too, derived from the verb “métiser”, deriving from the Latin word “miscere”. Still, métissage is more than mixture, since it includes a whole range of practices that range from sexual acts, to the birth of mixed offspring and the formation of syncretistic communities. It thus has many discursive dimensions. One of its by-products is the term “mixed marriage”. It was understood in the Antic period mostly in order to designate unions of partners who did not belong to the same social class.<sup>611</sup> In later centuries, it came to signify marriage of partners of different religious confessions, before it pointed at racial or ethnic differences among them.<sup>612</sup> In New France,

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<sup>607</sup> Ed. by Baudrimont, vol. 6, p. 198. The year 1834 is favoured by Lüsebrink and in *Trésor de la Langue Française, Dictionnaire de la langue du XIXe et XXe siècle* (1789-1960), tome onzième (Paris, 1985), p. 743.

<sup>608</sup> *Trésor de la Langue Française*, p. 743.

<sup>609</sup> See the systematisation by Pierre-André Taguieff.

<sup>610</sup> George Fredrickson: „Mulattoes and métis. Attitudes toward miscegenation in the United States and France since the seventeenth century”, in: *International Social Science Journal*, no. 183 (March 2005), pp. 103-112. Fredrickson holds that this hoax was invented in order to mislead the Democrats during the election of 1864. See also Sidney Kaplan: “The Miscegenation Issue in the Election of 1864”, in: *Journal of Negro History*, vol. 34, issue 3, July 1949, pp. 274-343.

<sup>611</sup> Judith Evans-Grubbs: “Marriage more shameful than adultery: Slave-Mistress relationships, ‘Mixed Marriages’, and Late Roman Law”, in: *Phoenix* XLVII, no 2 (Summer 1993), pp. 125-154. As to foreigners, Antics remained rather unimaginative as to designate them; they were often generally subsumed under the term “barbarians”.

<sup>612</sup> Duane G. Hunt: *Guidebook for instructions in mixed marriages for the use of the clergy* (San Francisco, 1936); anon., *The Church on non-Catholic and mixed marriages* (Portland, Ore.: Catholic Truth Society of

mixed marriages were a practical arrangement and formed part of French assimilation policy. However, historical protagonists never used the concept of “métissage” in order to name or to justify their policies. Yet, to speak of a métissage *avant la lettre* seems appropriate. Although it may be anachronistic to employ this concept in respect to prior policies in the colony, it nevertheless best describes what happened between Indians and Whites during the colonial period and after, formed part of a concept of building up a colony and subsequently a new state and of bringing the groups of Indians and Whites to a sort of co-operation through the prospect of assimilating the former to the latter group.<sup>613</sup>

In scholarly discourse there is a tendency to use the concept “métissage” with reference to colonial contexts.<sup>614</sup> *Trésor de la Langue Française*, in fact, states that it was slavery, war and Islam that led to métissage, especially between Arab peoples and those from Borneo.<sup>615</sup> More prominent historical usage of “métissage” in the French intellectual sphere appears in writings of the late François-René Comte de Chateaubriand in the 1830s.<sup>616</sup> In 1835, French official Edme Rameau de Saint-Père used it in a report destined to authorities in the French metropolis.<sup>617</sup> Comte Arthur de Gobineau wrote about it in the 1850s and, finally, it appeared in 1944 in Henri-Victor Vallois’ book entitled *Les Races Humaines*.<sup>618</sup> While de Gobineau and de Chateaubriand reduced the phenomenon of métissage to an intellectual polemic,<sup>619</sup> Rameau de Saint-Père used the concept in practical intent to describe marriage practice and family formation in colonial Acadia. In genealogical manner, he denoted the mixing of Acadian native tribes, above all Micmacs with immigrant French families. In 1944, Vallois employed the term “métissage” in African contexts in order to describe biological and cultural

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Oregon, [without date]). See also *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, Artikel: “Mischehen”, F.A. Brockhaus, Wiesbaden 1979, p. 592.

<sup>613</sup> See also S. Bonnemaïson: “The aesthetics and politics of French métissage”, in: *Ecumene* 4 (4), pp. 435-457, October 1997.

<sup>614</sup> Jocelyne Dakhliya, *La langue franque méditerranéenne: asymétrie de la frontière et illusion du creuset*, unpublished manuscript of a talk at EUI Florence, with permission of the author.

<sup>615</sup> *Trésor de la Langue Française*, p. 743. This selective perspective is typical of dictionaries which tend to single out specific cases of métissage that have probably been most prevalent in the author’s mind or that of the public in the year of publication, thus leaving out a whole array of different cultural encounters in other parts of the world.

<sup>616</sup> Joseph Artur de Gobineau, *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* (Paris, 1853-55).

<sup>617</sup> Edme Rameau of Saint-Père, *Remarks about the Registers from Belle-Isle-en-Mer*, unpublished paper, by courtesy of Martin Dunn. Rameau was an Algerian hired by the French government in the mid 1800s to examine the genealogy of the first Acadian families that the French wanted to settle on Belle-Isle-en-Mer. In this text Rameau stresses the significance of métissage among early migrants, but connotes it negatively. See also by Edme Rameau de Saint-Père, *Une colonie féodale*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1889).

<sup>618</sup> Henri-Victor Vallois, *Les Races Humaines* (Paris, 1944).

<sup>619</sup> See also Jean Benoist/Jean-Luc Bonniol: “Hérédité plurielles. Représentations populaires et conceptions savants du métissage”, in: *Ethnologie Française*, tome 24, (1994), pp. 58-69.

mixing of tribes in Guyana with *Boni Blacks*.<sup>620</sup> Common to these usages is the prominence given to the notion of “race” as a supposedly undisputable truth in explaining varieties of human populations as being distinct in cultures, languages, religions, bodily characteristics and mentalities. Inequality inherent in such views on the human condition was taken as given, in need of explanation, however, in order to make sense to warfare, conquest, supremacy over and exploitation of conquered groups of peoples. In modern-day usage, *métissage* appeared mostly in book titles of francophone provenience. The French authors Jacques Audinet, René Duboux<sup>621</sup> and Roger Toumson have analyzed the phenomenon in philosophical, mythological and political perspectives respectively. Audinet, for instance, has drawn attention to the power political impact of *métissage* and its sexual implications. He holds that “to have peoples mixed or, to the contrary, to prohibit this or that union, turns into an instrument of power used for precise ends. Human desire, the attraction between man and woman, the interplay of bodies and the child that is its fruit, are controlled, valorised or rejected according to what one judges its authority and in function of the will that it imposes to the group.”<sup>622</sup> In fact, the sexual bias inherent in discourses on *métissage* led to accusations towards protagonists of advancing immorality, licentiousness and libertinage. Our relative modern-day freedom in choosing the sexual partner that one desires regardless of race, skin colour or religion the environment in colonial context did not grant to early modern agents who were attracted by the exoticism displayed in the “otherness” of women encountered in an unfamiliar setting. To males who had come to the “New World” not only to discover new territories and customs, but also to leave behind what they felt was morally and economically restrictive at home, prohibitions, value judgements on moral behaviour and regulations to advance colony building were viewed as part of a design to limit their personal freedom. Rules on sexuality and marriage rituals were not unknown to Indian women neither from what they experienced within their own tribes, but with the arrival of Whites they acquired a new

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<sup>620</sup> See the multitude of Anglo-American and French titles which use the concept either to denote subjects as diverse as religious syncretism, intellectual debates of multiculturalism and race mixture or the policy of mixed marriages. See also Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, “Métissages. Les littératures de la Caraïbe et du Brésil”, in: *Etudes Littéraires*, vol. 25, no 3 (Hiver 1992-1993), p. 94. See also by the same author: “Métissage – outlines and stands of a melting-point concept within the French-speaking world”, in: *Etudes Littéraires* 25 (3), pp. 93-106, Winter 1992.

<sup>621</sup> René Duboux, *Métissage ou barbarie* (Paris, 1994).

<sup>622</sup> Jacques Audinet, *Le temps du métissage* (Paris, 1999), p. 50-51. For latest literature on the topic see Gabrielle Varro: *Sociologie de la mixité, de la mixité amoureuse aux mixités sociales et culturelles* (Paris/Berlin, 2003), Laurier Turgeon: *Patrimoines métisses. Contextes coloniaux et postcoloniaux* (Paris/Québec, 2003), Louise Bénoit Tachot/Serge Gruzinski: *Passeurs culturels: mécanismes de métissage* (Paris, 2002) and M. Thomas: “Children of the French Empire: Miscegenation and colonial society”, in: *English Historical Review* 115 (463), 1028-1029, September 2000.

quality, which interfered into people's private lives, preferences and tastes in a way that they had not been accustomed to before.

Métissage as a frenchification device for measures of assimilation in New France as formulated in “a quiet office” had not led to the officially desired outcomes, however. While the intention had been to assimilate Indians to Frenchness, the result was that the French seemed to increasingly assimilate to Indian ways. How can it thus be explained that many European men were attracted to Indian life, married Indian women and thus perpetuated métissage and gave birth to Metis children? One reason has to be seen in the attraction that Indianness exercised on the European mind, which ranged from an admiration for physical beauty, the lust for freedom and adventure connoted with Indian tribal life and the enthusiasm for exoticism displayed in Indian ways.<sup>623</sup> Another reason is the high degree of adaptability that many Europeans showed towards Indian ways. French colonial official Edme Rameau names the example of Petitpas, born in France, who came to Acadia at a very young age and at a period when French families were far and few in between. Petitpas acquired a taste for adventure and had frequent relations with the Micmacs. His sons, too, grew up with Metis, and they thus had a romantic image of an adventurous life in mind, which gradually led them away from European customs and towards Indian and Metis traits. Rameau holds that their drive was so irresistible that they never came back.<sup>624</sup>

Furthermore, unexpectedly by French authorities more and more Metis individuals were born and Metis communities formed, of various ethnic groups. As to their origins, Canadian métissage has been described as a mixing of White men with Indian women - mostly Ojibwa, Chippewya<sup>625</sup> or Cree - in New France, including Acadia, the Pays des Illinois, Louisiana and, to a lesser extent, the Saint Lawrence Valley. Recent approaches laid emphasis on the mixture of many European nationalities, including English, Scots and Irish, with a whole range of further Indian tribes.<sup>626</sup> With reference to a report by Pierre de Sales Laterrière in 1766, historian Cornelius Jaenen proposes that métissage could also refer to the mixing of Indian tribes among themselves. Laterrière, who was an observer of the annual distribution of the French King's presents to the tribes of the Iroquois, Micmacs, Montagnais and Abénakis, reported, “it happens almost every year that such a meeting produces many marriages

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<sup>623</sup> Jennifer Dyar: “Fatal Attraction: The White Obsession with Indianness”, in: *The Historian*, vol. 65, no 4 (June 2003), pp. 817-836.

<sup>624</sup> Edme Rameau de Saint-Père, *Remarks about the registers from Belle-Isle-en-Mer* (1800s)

<sup>625</sup> Ojibwa and Chippewya were also called “Anishinabe” meaning “the first people”.

<sup>626</sup> See above all Peterson/Brown, Foster and Dickason.

between different tribes.”<sup>627</sup> Métissage happened through numerous encounters, which took on different forms: seduction, kidnapping, rape, imprisonment, adoption, casual encounters, illicit sexual relations and mixed marriages. Cornelius Jaenen has subsumed these encounters in two categories and differentiated between *miscegenation*, i.e. processes and circumstances of racial encounter; and *mixed unions*, i.e. types of marriages and relationships. As to the first category, Jaenen has proposed cases of imprisonment, kidnapping, rape, and “illicit” sexual relations, i.e. encounters that were undertaken without explicit consent either of the individuals in question or of state or church authorities. As to the category of *mixed unions*, Jaenen has referred to a) marriages that were celebrated “before the church”, i.e. according to Catholic rituals; b) marriages “à la façon du pays”, i.e. celebrated according to Indian customs; and c) casual encounters, mostly brought about by sexual needs of soldiers and *voyageurs*.<sup>628</sup> Incidences of such encounters, in fact, appear in sources which refer to the numerous military and trading posts, missions and reserves or to nearby Indian villages. In contrast, Denys Delâge has proposed a métissage according to social and gender roles. He holds that the group most affected by métissage were European men since they were most in contact with Amerindian women. On the side of women, Delâge believes that it was nuns, who were teaching “de petites élèves amérindiennes”, who were exposed to métissage (and as such being agents of métissage). Finally, according to Delâge it was Indian slave women serving in French colonial houses, where they influenced their mistresses.<sup>629</sup> Denys Delâge’s perspective on métissage is cultural and social: it looks for the imprints and marks that one culture or group left on the other.

Many métissage encounters were called “illicit relations” that did not remain at the level of sexual contact. They eventually led to the celebration of marriage and/or to the birth of mixed-blood children. The order of things was twofold: either the births of metis children, gave rise to social pressure or the need to marry; or sexual contacts led to the celebration of marriage which was a precondition for giving birth to children. In fact, many of the so-called illicit sexual relations led to Métis offspring, subsequent to or as a result of the celebration of marriage. Many such cases were the result of sexual violence. Yet, we find seldom mention of them in travel literature, the Jesuit Relations or other European documents. There is, however, evidence that Metis did, in fact, result from incidences of rape. For example, French military

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<sup>627</sup> Pierre Favre (dit Laterrière), *Mémoire de Pierre de Sales Laterrière et de ses Traverses* (Ottawa, 1980), p. 55.

<sup>628</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 82.

<sup>629</sup> Delâge, *L’Influence*, p. 137.

agents were reported to frequently rape women of the Choctaw tribe. As a result, relations between these groups deteriorated by the mid-1740s. Indians complained that French “chiefs [officers] and other Frenchmen (...) behaved badly towards them [Choctaw chiefs] and their wives.”<sup>630</sup> Robert-Lionel Séguin states, however, that seduction and illicit sexual relations happened more often than rape and kidnapping in New France. He claims that young white men more frequently raped and kidnapped Indian women, than was the case of Indian men towards white women. Séguin points to statistics to prove his point: according to these there were 15 to 16 incidences of rape of Indian women by young white men (recorded as such in the sources), of which nine cases involved female minors, while there were only 2 to 3 incidences of an Indian man raping a white woman: “It happened that males who were immature, obtained by force the caresses that they desired. In numerical order, rape immediately came after libertinage and seduction. One exception: the Amerindian seemed hardly interested to recur to this brutal expedient to conquer the white woman.”<sup>631</sup> Séguin has tried to explain the frequent occurrence of rape and kidnapping partly as a result of the lack of regular and efficient police forces in the territory of New France, but mostly as a result of the promiscuity of Indian women. This explanation, however, calls the notions of “rape” and “kidnapping” into question, since it assumes that the respective partners consented to sexual intercourse. Thus, it is more correct to speak of “casual” or “illicit sexual encounters” in reference to the occasions on which Indian women willingly engaged in relations with Frenchmen without marrying them.<sup>632</sup> In geographical terms, Séguin believes that incidences of rape were less frequent in the St. Lawrence Valley, than in other parts of the country. If one accepts Séguin’s police argument, one might assume that this was the case because police

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<sup>630</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 20, f. 267, “Diron to Minister, 29 April 1735”; and C13A, vol. 35, f. 328, “Michel to Minister, 20 July 1751”. See also Patricia Galloway: “Louisiana Post Letters: The Missing Evidence for Indian Diplomacy”, in: *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* V (1922), p. 111.

<sup>631</sup> However, what exactly these numbers mean is difficult to judge since Séguin does not give the total population number for the period to which he refers, nor does he specify his sources. It is difficult to judge if these numbers denote a high or a low prevalence. The French original reads: “Il arrivera que des males trop verts, obtiendront par force les caresses qu’ils désirent. Dans l’ordre numérique, le viol prend immédiatement place après la débauche et la séduction. Une exception: l’Amérindien ne semble guère intéressé de recourir à ce brutal expédient pour conquérir la femme blanche.” Robert-Lionel Séguin, *La vie libertine en Nouvelle-France au dix-septième siècle*, 2 vols. (Ottawa, 1972), p. 504.

<sup>632</sup> „Tout recours à la violence n’implique pas nécessairement le viol, mais parfois le rapt. Comme il est difficile d’exercer une bonne surveillance policière dans un pays aussi vaste que la Nouvelle-France, d’aucuns penseront qu’on peut y ravir à son gré et fantaisie la femme convoitée. Pourquoi pas, dira-t-on, quand il suffit de gagner le prochain bois pour se dérober à toute recherche ? Erreur. Les choses ne se passent pas si facilement. Et puis, à quoi bon tant risquer quand on trouve satisfaction amoureuse en territoire indigène ? C’est sans doute pourquoi le rapt ne se pratique à peu près pas sur les bords du Saint-Laurent, où les annales judiciaires ne mentionnent que quatre ou cinq aventures du genre. Et la plupart du temps, la belle est plutôt complice que victime. Que de fois ne s’est-elle pas prêtée avec complaisance au jeu de son ravisseur?“, in: Séguin, *Libertinage*, p. 504.



forces in the Saint Lawrence Valley worked more efficiently or were simply more numerous. Yet, the police argument appears rather artificial since the mere presence or existence of police in itself cannot necessarily guarantee the prevention of sexual violence.

Métissage on the level of official policy markedly differed from métissage on the level of actual historical practice. One can discern the factors, which favoured métissage and others that hindered métissage. With regard to the general geographical occurrence of métissage in Canada historians have taken various positions. Denys Delâge, for instance, has provided insight into areas with the highest degree of cultural contact. He claims that closest interaction between Indians and Europeans took place at Indian settlements and villages, i.e. where French *coureurs de bois* encountered Indian women. These were places where a natural proximity between these two groups existed, and thus, it provided the ideal environment for intense intercultural and sexual contact. Delâge holds that there were two possible outcomes of Euro-Indian contact: the unions between *coureurs de bois* and Indian women either led to complete assimilation of Europeans into traditionally existing Indian societies (*incorporation thesis*), or led to the creation of new syncretistic, i.e. Metis communities. A third possibility might be that metis individuals oscillated between either White or Indian communities rather than forming their own groups or assimilating into either group. Delâge's description serves as useful orientation through the often scattered and complicated geography of Euro-Indian contact. According to Delâge, contact was most intense in the American Mid-West at French posts situated close to Indian villages. Delâge gives the example of a group of Canadian emigrants from Montreal in the 18th century, who went to cultivate the soil near Detroit and Cahokia at the rivers of the Mississippi. Delâge further identifies another smaller group of French settlers in the Saint-Lawrence Valley, who cultivated the soil on territories, which had presumably been populated by the Iroquois tribe until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>633</sup> Gilles Havard agrees with Delâge's description, believing that the number of mixed marriages was low in the Saint-Lawrence Valley and higher where close ties with Indian nations existed. Havard has included the region of Acadia, where he has found that mixed marriages were most frequent from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Havard believes that from the 1660s onwards, mixed marriages extended to the Pays d'en Haut where the living conditions were more

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<sup>633</sup> Delâge, *L'Influence*, p. 104 with reference to Charlevoix (1744), vol.1, p. 532 and vol.3, p. 89, to Perrot (1973), pp. 130-131 and to Giraud (1945/1984), pp. 379-383, pp. 405-419.

conducive to mixing of Indians and French, due to the numerous trading activities, political alliances and intercultural exchange in the area.<sup>634</sup>

Martin Dunn holds that Metis communities can first be identified in Acadia, i.e. La Hève and Île de Royale.<sup>635</sup> Furthermore, he claims that the whole of the Upper Great Lakes country was populated with Metis communities, especially Green Bay, Michilimackinac, Sault Ste. Marie, Detroit and Chicago, i.e. at places where the French had founded principal trading posts.<sup>636</sup> With a view to generalizing outcomes of cultural contact, Cornelius Jaenen contends that in the Laurentian Valley the politics of assimilation of Indian tribes failed, whereas in the Pays d'en Haut the French resisted assimilation endeavours.<sup>637</sup> There is a widespread view that the French in the interior of the country generally went native, rather than sustaining French habits or assimilating Indians to French ways. The strong intercultural contacts in the area and the dependency of French traders and voyageurs towards Indian helpers and intermediaries have been offered to support this view. The regions therefore, in which métissage was prevalent, were Acadia, the Saint Lawrence Valley, the Pays des Illinois and Louisiana.<sup>638</sup>

## 2. Métissage in Acadia

Acadia saw the first and the highest degree of mixture. The principal tribe were the Micmacs who lived in an area surrounding the Gulf of the St. Lawrence River, including most of present-day Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and the Gaspé district of

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<sup>634</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 595. Gilles Havard has taken an interdisciplinary approach, combining ethnohistory, anthropology and geography. Havard shows how the region of the *Pays d'en Haut* came into being through the intense Franco-Indian relations of that region. The author sheds light on the ways in which the Pays d'en Haut has been embedded into the French Empire, i.e. Havard tries to connect the development of a region within the colony of New France to its relations with the metropolis, and shows how it has gained particular importance as a strategic location. Havard analyses the genesis of this particular French North American area through the use of the three geo-historical key concepts of *the frontier, periphery and region* and through an analysis of spatial, cultural and geopolitical interactions of *l'entre-deux*, i.e. Upper and Lower Canada. For this purpose, Havard extends the meaning of métissage to imply cultural, diplomatic, religious and military spheres. In this complex of relations, Havard outlines the crucial role that Indians have played in the construction of a French overseas empire and emphasizes their importance as agents in the colonial period. Havard's central argument is that métissage developed at the margins in the context of the fur trade.

<sup>635</sup> He gives reference for this from N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Acadians*, in: Dictionary of Canadian Biography Vol. IV, p. 206.

<sup>636</sup> Peterson, *Ethnogenesis*. Martin Dunn, "The Metis and the Non-Status Indians as an Aboriginal People with a right to self-determination", 30 April 1984 for the First Ministers Conference, unpublished paper, p. 23.

<sup>637</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, *Les Relations franco-amérindiennes en Nouvelle-France* (Ottawa, 1985), p. 175.

<sup>638</sup> The North West Territories, especially at the Red River, later saw the greatest concentration of Metis where they formed, next to the Great Lakes region and Acadia, communities of their own. See more on this in chapter F.

Québec.<sup>639</sup> The Micmacs were a “typical migratory people who lived in the woods during the winter months hunting moose, caribou and porcupine, then moved down to the seashore in spring to gather shell-fish, to fish at the mouths of the rivers, and to hunt seal near the coast.”<sup>640</sup> French officials chose Acadia in the early times of their colonisation endeavour in order to realise their goals in the North American territories, i.e. the increase in population through the settlement of French individuals and communities. According to the *Dictionnaire du moyen français* the word “micmac” was used in France at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to designate a rebellion or an intrigue, which probably referred to French experience with resistant Micmacs.<sup>641</sup> However, by the 1500s, contact had been established with matelots, fishermen, hivernants, but also trading adventurers, soldiers, artisans and cultivators who had come to the country with some French explorers who set out to colonise the newly found territories.<sup>642</sup> Contact continued well towards Jacques Cartier’s voyage in 1534, when the eastern bands of Micmac certainly had some contact with the Europeans who came to explore the area or to exploit the fisheries of Newfoundland.<sup>643</sup> According to Alfred Bailey, there was “an almost steady infiltration of European traits into the culture areas of the Atlantic provinces”<sup>644</sup> and it was necessary for the Micmac to become accustomed to European ways that had been alien to them, such as specialized conceptions of property and a new religion.

Métissage not only led to mixed unions, but it was also accompanied by disappearance of Indian tribes who were either amalgamated in a Metis identity or died in warfare or through more systematic extermination.<sup>645</sup> In 1616, Jesuit missionary in Acadia Pierre Biard wrote: “They [the Acadians] are astonished and often complain that, since the French mingle with and carry on trade with them, they are dying fast, and the population is thinning out.”<sup>646</sup> In

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<sup>639</sup> Bock, *The Micmac Indians*, p. 3.

<sup>640</sup> Diamond Jenness, *The Indians of Canada, Ottawa: National Museum of Canada*; Bulletin no. 65 (Ottawa, 1958), pp. 267-268.

<sup>641</sup> *Dictionnaire du moyen français*, sous la dir. De Algirdas Julien Greimas/Teresa Mary Keane (Paris, 1992).

<sup>642</sup> For an exemplary description of how lands in Acadia were settled with French see Paul Surette, *Atlas de l'établissement des Acadiens aux trois rivières du Chignectou 1660-1755*, Les Éditions de l'Acadie, Moncton 1996. See also L.F. S. Upton, “Contact and Conflict on the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of Canada”, in: *Acadiensis* (1980), vol. 19, no 2, pp. 3-13.

<sup>643</sup> Philip K. Bock, *The Micmac Indians of Restigouche: History and Contemporary Description* (Ottawa, 1966), p. 7.

<sup>644</sup> Bailey, *Conflict*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>645</sup> Franz Boas did indeed argue in the 1930s that intermarriage would eventually cause the Indian population to disappear. In fact, in the social sciences there is a prevalent view, which sees intermarriage as equivalent of assimilation, which yields extinction of cultural traits of one of the involved parties.

<sup>646</sup> Pierre Biard, *Relation de la Nouvelle France de ses terres, naturel du pais, et de ses habitations* (Lyons, 1616), pp. 66-67. See the English version in: *The Jesuit relations and allied documents. Travels and explorations*

1691, a Recollect missionary agreed with Biard and wrote on “the decadence of the Gaspesian [Micmac] nation, formerly one of the most numerous and most flourishing of Canada”.<sup>647</sup> At the time of contact, Virginia Miller estimates a figure around 16.000 Micmacs, which after the 1600s dwindled to a total of 3.000.<sup>648</sup> Thus, métissage was accompanied by destruction rather than merely by assimilation, mixture or amalgamation. The peculiarity of contact at the East coast, Upton has described as rather short-term encounter: “Europeans travelled in boats. The people in these boats were male, were still domiciled in their country of origin, were in America for a short time, and were employees answerable to an authority they had to recognise since they would be returning home in a matter of weeks. Their boats were their homes in America and they had no need to establish settlements.”<sup>649</sup> This was the case especially because the soil of the forests that provided the Indians with what they needed, were too poor to attract Europeans. The latter were, in turn, regarded as “suppliants from distressed as well as distant lands”, since it was they who approached the Indians and who came on their own initiative. In order to trade with Indians, Europeans knew where the Indians were and there was no need to establish trading posts in order to concentrate the Indians for the convenience of trade, as was done in the interior of the country. Although initially no permanent settlements were envisaged, frequent mixture between Indians and Europeans occurred on occasional bases.

This mixture became apparent in language habits, for instance. There existed an argot of Micmac, Basque and French along the Acadian coasts.<sup>650</sup> Later on, French colonial official Edme Rameau de Saint-Père remarked: “Everything makes us think [...], that the unions with savage women were much more frequent among them [the Acadians] than among the Canadians.”<sup>651</sup> In fact, Arthur Bailey holds that “there were few Acadian families with no

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*of the Jesuit missionaries in New France, 1610-1791*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (73 vols., Cleveland 1896-1901), III, p. 105.

<sup>647</sup> Chrestien Le Clercq, *New relation of Gaspesia, with the customs and religion of the Gaspesian Indians*, ed. William F. Ganong (Toronto, 1919), first published in 1691, p. 402 (translation, p. 234). Cited in John G. Reid: *Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland. Marginal Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* (Toronto, 1981), p. 4.

<sup>648</sup> Virginia P. Miller, “Aboriginal Micmac Population: A Review of the Evidence“, in: *Ethnohistory* 23 (1976), pp. 117-127.

<sup>649</sup> Upton, *Contact*, p. 5.

<sup>650</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>651</sup> Canadians here meant those living west of Acadia. Edme Rameau de Saint-Père, *Acadiens et Canadiens. La France aux Colonies. Étude sur le développement de la race française hors de l'Europe* (Paris, 1859), p. 24. Rameau distinguishes between “Acadians” and “Canadians”. He identifies Acadians as living on île de Cap-Breton, île du Prince-Edouard/Saint Jean, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Maine and the coasts and islands of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. To Rameau Canadians are those who populate Lower Canada and some areas of Upper Canada, New York, Michigan and Illinois, parts of the Western US and the majority of the European population in the Northwest. See Rameau, *La France aux Colonies*, p. 11.

Indian blood in their veins” in the period from 1607 to 1675.<sup>652</sup> Bailey holds that the first Metis were offspring of women from the Malecite tribe who came into contact with French fishermen from St. Malo.<sup>653</sup> The Malecite-St.Malo mixture can thus be considered as the first Indian-French métissage on Canadian territories. Cornelius Jaenen also claims that Acadia was the region where the highest degree of racial intermixture in Canada occurred.<sup>654</sup> Mixture was believed to be so widespread by Abbé Pierre Maillard that in 1753 he assumed that within fifty years time the Indian tribes who were most involved in Acadian intermarriage with the French, i.e. the Micmacs and the Malecites, “will be so mixed up with the French colonists that it will be impossible to distinguish them”.<sup>655</sup>

According to Rameau de Saint-Père, there were 400 colonists in Acadia in 1671, with an increase in the following twenty-four years of another 200 emigrants.<sup>656</sup> Rameau’s estimates as to the degree of métissage in Acadia refer to a low statistical basis, yet they provide valuable insights into early Euro-Indian mixture.<sup>657</sup> Charged in the mid-1800s to examine the results of French colonial strategy in Acadia, Rameau attempted to trace genealogies of families in Belle-Isle-en-Mer, where the French had hoped to establish French settlements as part of their colonising endeavour in North America. Rameau held that “as long as there will be coming bachelors, adventurers to this country, we can say that all those who definitely fixed themselves, gradually assimilated the Micmacs’ customs to their preoccupations, to their pleasures and practices; several of them founded their families with mixed blood; which scarcely differ from their savage parents.” Rameau held that in education and manners Metis children, “brought up by squaws” [i.e. in the tribe of the mother] did not differ from Micmac children. Especially in the first generation of settlers between 1630 and 1640 Rameau found that there was a tendency to mix and live with Indians, and thought that this became rare after 1760 when French families were solidly constituted and multiplied themselves. Rameau identified a whole range of families who either married Indian or Metis as a demand of tradition. However, as soon as members of one family married Indians or Metis they

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<sup>652</sup> Bailey, *Conflict*, p. 112

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113; Abbé J.-A. Maurault, *Histoire des Abénakis* (Québec, 1866/1969), p. 6; Lucien Campeau, *La Première Mission d’Acadie 1602-1616* (Québec, 1967), p. 118.

<sup>654</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*.

<sup>655</sup> Gaston de Bosq de Beaumont, *Les Derniers Jours de l’Acadie* (Paris, 1899), “Maillard to Surlaville, 21 February 1753”, p. 85. Antoine-Simon Maillard was a Catholic missionary to the Micmac Indians at Restigouche on the Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, from 1735 to 1762, the year of his death. Abbé Maillard is considered the first Frenchman to master the Micmac language. He collected extensive grammatical and linguistic notes, which were edited, arranged and published by Rev. Joseph M. Bellenger in the 19th century.

<sup>656</sup> Rameau, *La France aux colonies*, p. 25.

<sup>657</sup> Rameau, *Remarks*.

disappeared from the registers. Rameau still found in the registers that in the 1630s French settler Charles de Latour married a Metis girl named Jeanne de Latour, who was “born of an Indian squaw”. She later married Martignon d’Aprendistigny, Lord of Jemsek, with whom she had a daughter called Marianne who was half Metis, half French. The latter, in turn married another French settler called Guillaume Bourgeois. Yet, the Latours preserved their name for more than 150 years.

Rameau claimed: “Their alliances with Acadian families have been so numerous that a great number of Acadians are related to them.” The first-born French on Acadian soil was Mathieu Martin, of a French father and a French mother, in 1636. The Martin family had two branches. That of Pierre Martin disappeared in the census, because “several of them settled among Metis families.” Pierre himself had married a Native, either Micmac or Metis (Rameau was uncertain) with whom he had four sons. One of them was named, Pierre, too. He became a farmer and married the daughter of widow Godin. Among their children were four boys, whom Rameau described as “twice Metis” (...) “because we have every right to believe that Godin Chatillon was himself from mixed extraction.” Of three of the boys “we lose track” which could mean that they married into Metis communities. Thus, it is fair to assume that the Chatillon and Martin families had strong ties to Metis. Furthermore, the Piset (or Piset) family, being Metis, was the result of illegitimate births. Others gave birth to natural children such as the d’Entremonts. Rameau holds, “if we add to these families, those who were created and established among Metis, this [their] number would more than double.” He held, “we can already appreciate<sup>658</sup> here the influence Indian life and Metisage [sic] had among the first European emigrants.” The three children of Pierre Lejeune, Pierre, Martin and Jeanne, seemed “perfectly accustomed there [La Hève], and live familiarly with the Metis of this township, where they frequently figure in the religious acts.” In La Hève, the custom was apparently to live half of the year European style, i.e. in huts and the other half “absolutely Indian style”.

Rameau found that after 1640 of 47 families he had examined 15 proved to have Indian ancestors. Among them were the most ancient families of Acadia, which in Rameau’s dictum are called “the most primitive families of Acadia”. Rameau was among the first writers to acknowledge the distinct character of Metis communities in Acadia, as opposed to “purely European populations” and “Micmac peoples”. Yet, Rameau referred to métissage in negative terms: “The reader can already foresee the very evident traces of this unfortunate influence which practiced on the primitive families, the training of savage life.” Rameau denounced the

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<sup>658</sup> “Appreciate” here seems to be used in the sense of evaluate/estimate or understand rather than value.

“bad influence” Indian women were presumed to have on Frenchmen, since the former were seen to lure the latter away from their established families. Indian women were accused of causing Frenchmen’s neglect of their responsibilities towards their own kin. Rameau made statements to this effect in the case of one specific family: “Early all François Gautherot’s sons deserted the paternal home.” The sons mixed increasingly with Metis women and formed unions with them. The daughters, however, were described as being more obedient to paternal power and more apt to behave in traditional ways, which would explain the lower frequency of marriages between white women and Indian men. Thus, here it were males that perpetuated the process of métissage: “We can, on the contrary, observe that, all the Gautherot daughters stayed around the paternal home, and married French.” Only three of Gautherot’s children settled among agriculturers of “pure European blood”. Rameau concluded, “it is always more difficult, being a girl rather than a boy, to be allied to an inferior race.” He either meant that it was more difficult and less accepted for women to marry Indians or Metis, or that they simply chose to do so less frequently. Rameau provided no further insights into the influence of gender preferences on métissage.

In Acadia, observers noted that intermarriage was a vehicle for exercising influence on the population, not only with respect to religious orientation, but also in general terms. After the British takeover of Acadia in 1713,<sup>659</sup> English Governor in Port Royal, Samuel Vetch, noted in 1714, that through marriage with converted Indians local Acadians could influence the Indians.<sup>660</sup> Métissage was useful as a vehicle of exercising influence since through pretended mixture one group, the dominant and powerful one, could try to impose its values and characteristics on the other. And, in fact, Upton holds that the closing of French power ended Micmac resistance.<sup>661</sup> Yet, métissage as envisaged through mixed marriage was difficult to realize: Sir Brenton Halliburton, who was army officer and later a judge in Halifax, Nova Scotia, described the marriage behaviour of the Acadians as being rather endogamous: “They never marry with their Protestant neighbours. Among themselves they speak French, but there are some mixed words derived from Indian and English therein [...] the Acadians have a particular attachment for their language and their customs, and although their affairs lead

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<sup>659</sup> Olive Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians: A Study in Imperial Race Relations, 1713-1760* (Ottawa, 1976).

<sup>660</sup> Abbé H. R. Casgrain, “Coup d’œil sur l’Acadie”, in: *Le Canada Français* 1 (1888), pp. 116-117.

<sup>661</sup> Upton, *Contact*.

them frequently to the English, they never marry with them, they never adopt their manners and they never leave their own villages.”<sup>662</sup>

However, a case of an Acadian being sent away in order to be educated occurred in 1722. In a letter dated the 17<sup>th</sup> October from Quebec to the Council of Marine, de Vaudreuil and Begon mentioned the father of a Metis called Petitpas. The father was said to be from Port Royal and to have married a “Squaw” woman. The son was sent to Boston for three years at the expense of the English, who wanted to make him a clergyman because he had mastered the Micmac language well and it was hoped that he could help to convert the Micmac to Christianity. In the French authorities’ words, the Englishmen’s intention was to make “him [...] win over the Mikemaks and make them change their religion.”<sup>663</sup> The French thought Petitpas was even more dangerous than his father since he “had always sided with the English during the last war”,<sup>664</sup> and, since he spoke English, French and Micmac very well, he would presumably be the perfect interpreter or spy. Apparently, de St. Ovide took Petitpas out of the hands of the English by placing him in the Seminary of Quebec and making him a French priest. Petitpas himself, however, wanted to become a navigator instead. Yet, it was decided - without his approval - to send him to France.<sup>665</sup> Petitpas’s story demonstrates that mixed bloods were faced with manipulation or loss of control over their own lives, because they were viewed as dangerous. It was difficult for Metis, despite obvious talents and qualities, to enter the ranks of established society: clerical positions were usually reserved for Whites and some positions required proof that one was a loyal subject or citizen.<sup>666</sup> As mixed bloods were assumed to belong to two ethnicities, their loyalty towards a single crown was doubted. The question of loyalty, in fact, constituted the stumbling block for professional success. Not surprisingly, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française du Seizième Siècle* states that “mestif” is someone with a “double character” and of an “equivocal nature”.<sup>667</sup> Michel de Montaigne mentioned “mestis” in the same context as a supple and ambiguous man.<sup>668</sup> Honoré de Balzac

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<sup>662</sup> Cited in Rameau, *La France aux colonies*, p. 53. Halliburton, *History and Statistics of New-Scotia*.

<sup>663</sup> Ibid.

<sup>664</sup> “Messrs. de Vaudreuil and Begon to the Council of Marine. Quebec, 17 October 1722”, in: O’Callaghan (ed.), *Documents*, p. 912.

<sup>665</sup> Ibid.

<sup>666</sup> The first Metis being ordained as a priest was Edward Cunningham in 1890.

<sup>667</sup> *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française du Seizième Siècle*, Tome Cinquième, éd. Edmond Buet (Paris, 1961), p. 416.

<sup>668</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, tome II, livre 16 and II, 10.



described a metis “in two words, it is a métis, in morals, neither totally righteous nor totally mischievous.”<sup>669</sup>

In 1731, the French population in Acadia numbered around 6000.<sup>670</sup> Rameau claimed that Acadians were so fertile, usually having 12 to 15 children that the population could easily have doubled every 15 to 16 years.<sup>671</sup> Many authors have described Acadian métissage as an elite phenomenon<sup>672</sup> according to which intermarriage in Acadia occurred mostly between some of the leading French families, such as the Denys, the d’Entremonts and the Saint-Castins, and the members of the Indian tribes of the Abenakis, Micmacs and Malecites. The Saint-Castins<sup>673</sup> founded a whole dynasty of Metis chiefs who acted mostly as middlemen and *capitaines des sauvages* in Anglo-French and Euro-Indian relations. In 1755, French officer Pierre de La Coste described his encounter with third generation Saint-Castins as follows: “They possessed nothing more outstanding than the other natives. I danced with their daughters in the native fashion. All the men and women felt honoured to descend from a French nobleman and called me their cousin.”<sup>674</sup> In 1744, the Acadians feared that the high prevalence of intermarriage with Indian tribes in Acadia could lead the British administration to treat “all who had Indian blood in them (...) as Enemys.”<sup>675</sup> In 1758, an anonymous letter was published in London, purporting to be from Governor de la Varenne, in which Metis were described as strong, and at the same time obedient, individuals: “We employ besides a much more effectual method of uniting them (Acadians) to us, and that is, by the intermarriage of our people with the savage women, which is a circumstance which draws the ties of alliance closer. The children produced by these are generally hardy, inured to the fatigues of the chase and war, and turn out very serviceable subjects in their way.”<sup>676</sup> The author argued that intermarriage was conducive for the forging of alliances and that it led to strong children who

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<sup>669</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Peau Chagrin* (Paris, 1831), p. 138.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>671</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35. According to André Vachon, Acadia counted approximately 4.000 inhabitants in 1746, plus 4.730 Indian and Black slaves. André Vachon, avec collaboration de Victorin Chabot et André Desrosiers: *L’enracinement. Le Canada de 1700 à 1760. Les documents de notre histoire*. Public Archives Canada, Ottawa: Ministère des Approvisionnement et Service 1985, p. 49.

<sup>672</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*.

<sup>673</sup> See Rameau, *La France aux colonies*, on Bernard de Saint-Castin’s reputation, pp. 25-26.

<sup>674</sup> Coste, *Aventures militaires d’Aleyrac*, 29; *Journal des Campagnes du Canada de Malartic* (Dijon, 1890), p. 220; Kip (ed.), *Early Jesuit Missions*, “Sebastien Rasle to nephew, 15 October 1722”, pp. 13-14; Public Archives of Canada, MG1, B, vol. 29 (1), “Minister to Vaudreuil, 30 June 1707”, p. 167.

<sup>675</sup> D. B. Ferguson (ed.), *Minutes of His Majesty’s Council at Annapolis Royal, 1736-1749* (Halifax, 1967), pp. 55-56.

<sup>676</sup> *An Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmakis and Maricheets Savage Nations* (London, 1758), pp. 89-90. See Dickason, *A look at*, p. 23.

would be useful for colony building. La Varenne referred to Anglo-Indian intermarriage as well, but thought that mixture with French was more widespread. Another 18<sup>th</sup> century Acadian observer referred to “children of the country accustomed to going with the savages”.<sup>677</sup>

Questions of loyalty to the state or the metropolises were accompanied by considerations of the proper church affiliation. In Louisbourg, to where many Acadians relocated after the British conquest of New France in 1763, Governor de la Varenne described their mixed community in his “Letter from Louisbourg” as follows: “They are a mixed breed, that is to say, most of them proceed from marriages, or concubinage of the savage women with the first settlers who were of various nations, but chiefly French, the others were English, Scots, Swiss, Dutch, etc. The Protestants among whom, and especially their children were, in process of time, brought over to a conformity of faith with ours [the Catholic one].”<sup>678</sup> Thus, Protestant and Catholic clerics, who were initially trying to convert only the Indians, also extended their endeavours to the Metis. Religious conversion that started as an attempt to assimilate pagan Indians later turned into a policy of converting as many individuals as possible, regardless of the purity of their blood, their tribal affiliation or their nationality. As far as attempts at Christianising Acadians were concerned by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Quebec Church officially stated that the Acadian Micmacs were all Christianised. Since this was an official statement, the reality that lay behind it might be called into question. In any case, conversion successes reduced the barriers towards intermarriage, or in more explicit terms, to the celebration of marriage by Catholic priests, since conversion was a prerequisite for a Christian wedding ceremony.<sup>679</sup>

### 3. Métissage in the Upper Country

Robert-Lionel Séguin has described the promiscuous climate prevalent in the Upper Country as a consequence of the free sexuality of Indian women: “Outside the colony,<sup>680</sup> there existed for years a movement of adventure and love that one has left in shadow. It is a movement, in the periphery of the chase for furs that pushes the youth towards the search for

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<sup>677</sup> Public Archives of Canada, Preconquest Papers, J3:39, Memoir of Gregoire (or Robert) Challe, 1716, in: Dickason, *A look at*, p. 23, p. 34.

<sup>678</sup> Donavon: “Letter from Louisbourg, 8 May 1756“, p. 122.

<sup>679</sup> Dickason, *A look at*, p. 26. More information on Acadia will be found in following chapters. See more on the clerics’ attitudes in chapter B.

<sup>680</sup> “Hors de la colonie“ meaning westwards of the St. Lawrence Valley, i.e. in the broadest sense the region of the Upper Country and the Great Lakes.

the easy favours of the Savage women. Since, according to the ethics of the tribes, the young Indian woman is free to dispose of her body until marriage, which alone imposes her fidelity. It is, for the most part, the attraction towards this libertinage, which puts the wood runners in action and unfortunately takes away hundreds of young people from the cultivation of the soil.<sup>681</sup> The Illinois records mention an incident of métissage in the second degree in 1692, when the Metis woman Madeleine Couc married the French interpreter Maurice Ménard in Michilimackinac. This French-Metis marriage led to the birth of a first child in 1695. Madeleine's sister Elisabeth also married intercultural: she chose voyageur Joachim Germano, probably a German, as husband.<sup>682</sup> As far as the factors for métissage are concerned, historian Jacqueline Peterson holds that the lack of women in the colony did not play an important role. Rather she thinks that voyageurs were making strategic choices in terms of finding partners and, thus, were furthering métissage according to their own needs. The existing statistics indicate that in Michilimackinac, for instance, prior to 1795, 22 of 27, or 81 percent of all male householders, married Indian and Métis women.

In the Upper Country, there was also métissage among Indian tribes. The majority of Indian tribes were patrilineal, but not necessarily patrilocal, i.e. a married Indian man would move to live in the village of the wife who might belong to another nation or tribe.<sup>683</sup> In some instances Indian tribes were bilocal. Such bilocality was significant in intertribal marriages, which Jesuit father Perrot, for instance, saw as creating a larger community of interest among refugees - those fleeing from warfare with the Europeans. Yet, Indian intermarriage had negative effects on patrilineal organization: Charles Callendar holds that first, men left their village in order to join the tribe of the Indian woman. Secondly, children born of such tribal intermarriages also remained with the mother's clan and in questions of loyalty the children often opted to remain with the mother.<sup>684</sup> However, as to marriages between Creeks and Savanhaugay, for instance, John Swanton claims that when a Savanhaugay married a Creek

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<sup>681</sup> The French original reads: "Hors de la colonie, il existe depuis des années un courant d'aventure et d'amour qu'on a laissé dans l'ombre. C'est un courant qui, en marge de la chasse des fourrures, pousse la jeunesse à la recherche des faciles faveurs des sauvagesses. Car, selon l'éthique des tribus, la jeune Indienne est libre de son corps jusqu'au mariage qui seul lui impose fidélité. C'est, en majeure partie, l'attraction de ce libertinage qui met en route les coureurs de bois et malheureusement enlève des centaines de jeunes gens à la culture du sol." Robert-Lionel Séguin, *La vie libertine en Nouvelle-France au dix-septième siècle*, 2 vols. (Ottawa, 1972), i, p. 33.

<sup>682</sup> Faribault-Beauregard, *La population*, t. 1, p. 129, p. 154.

<sup>683</sup> Charles Callender, *Social Organization of the Central Algonkian Indians* (Milwaukee, 1962), pp. 25-27, p. 35.

<sup>684</sup> Nicolas Perrot, "Memoir on the Manners, Customs and Religion of the Savages of North America", in: Emma Helen Blair (ed.), *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes*, 2 vols. (Cleveland, 1911), p. 69, p. 188, p. 270 and Callender, *Social Organization*, p. 23, p. 26.

woman, he had to follow the laws, customs and usages of her tribe, while the reverse case, a marriage of a Creek man with a Savanhaugay woman, did not require such an adaptation.<sup>685</sup> This probably indicates that the Creek nation was more powerful and hence was more successful in imposing its laws. In fact, métissage not only meant marriages between Indians and Whites; among Indian tribes, too, there was considerable métissage. In the 1650s, Jesuits were surprised to find whole mixed Indian villages in which métissage among several tribes had been a common occurrence. At Green Bay, Negaouichiriniouek, Kiskakou, Ottawa, Petun and Indians lived together close to a village of Potawatomi Indians and a village of Menominees, Winnebago, Noquets and Ottawas. In the 1670s, Jesuits discovered mixed settlements of Sauk, Fox, Potawatomi and Winnebago Indians and described the atmosphere as a “Babylon of tribes and dialects”.<sup>686</sup>

In 1703, a diplomatic incident occurred between French and Indians: At the French trading post of Kaskaskia, an Indian chief offered his daughter to a white man. Chief Rouensa wanted his 17-year-old daughter Marie to marry French trader and explorer Michel Accault who was well known for his debauching lifestyle “in all Illinois country”<sup>687</sup>. Marie initially refused to marry Accault. Her reasons for her refusal were unclear until Jesuit Father Jacques Gravier, who was to celebrate the ceremony, reported on Marie’s refusal to marry Accault: “Many struggles were needed before she could be induced to consent to the marriage for she had resolved never to marry, in order that she might belong wholly to Jesus Christ. She answered her father and mother when they brought her to me in company with the Frenchman whom they wished to have for a son-in-law, that she did not wish to marry....”<sup>688</sup> Marie Rouensa is described as a woman who was so fascinated by the Christian religion that she initially chose the life of a nun.<sup>689</sup> She eventually gave up this idea and consented to marriage with Accault under pressure from her father because he was hoping to gain trading advantages through this marriage. Marie gave birth to two children by Accault and after his death, she took another French husband, the trader and militia captain Michel Philippe, with whom she had six children.<sup>690</sup>

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<sup>685</sup> John R. Swanton, *Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy* (New York/London, 1970), p. 47.

<sup>686</sup> Richard White, *The Middle Ground. Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650-1815* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 14. Jesuit Relations 44:245-249, 55:199 for the descriptions on mixed Indian villages.

<sup>687</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 98.

<sup>688</sup> Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXIV, pp. 193-195.

<sup>689</sup> See the example of Katarina Tekakwhita, the first Indian saint.

<sup>690</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 92.

In Illinois Country, marriages “before the church” were not necessarily a rare occurrence: church documents on Kaskaskia mention French grooms Jacques Bourdon, Louis Delaunis, Jean Laviolette, Pierre Chabot and Nicolas Migneret. Although their unions with native women began as “illicit” sexual contacts or as cohabitation with Indian slaves, they resulted in marriage and/or in Metis children. Kaskaskia seemed, in fact, to constitute a fruitful territory for a “debauching” lifestyle. Because it belonged to the Pays des Illinois, between 1703 and 1718 it remained outside the control of the French Empire. As such, it became the refuge for several dozens coureurs de bois and voyageurs whose sexual behaviour was difficult to survey: there were only few Jesuit missionaries in the region that could exercise church influence on the inhabitants of the vast region of Illinois. According to the census of 1708, there were “60 wandering Canadians in the savage villages situated along the Mississippi River without permission of any governor, and [they] destroy through their bad libertine way of life with the savage women everything that the fathers of the *Missions Etrangères* have taught them.”<sup>691</sup>

Parish records at Cahokia mission, at Fort de Chartres, and at the villages of St. Philippe, Prairie du Rocher and Ste. Genevière show that during the 1730s the children born of unions in these areas were largely Métis. In fact, the parish records at Fort de Chartres in Ste. Anne indicate that for the years 1725 to 1726 there were seven baptisms of children whose fathers were French and mothers Indian.<sup>692</sup> By 1750, however, the French population was in the majority. In Kaskaskia and Fort de Chartres for the period 1695 to 1730, there was an average of one French-Indian couple for every French couple, i.e. the ratio of mixed to non-mixed was 1:1. Until 1715, French-Indian marriages outnumbered the French by seven to one. This change was due to the migration of French and German women into the region.<sup>693</sup> The social spectrum of those who were involved in mixed marriages was diverse: coureurs de bois, company employees, royal officials, but also “solid citizens” took Indian wives. Two such cases of the latter category are reported of in Kaskaskia: Parish vestryman Louis Turpin married an Indian after the death of his first wife.<sup>694</sup> Remarriage with Indians after the loss of

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<sup>691</sup> The French original reads: “60 canadiens herants qui sont dans les villages sauvages cituez le long du fleuve de Mississipy sans permission d’aucun gouverneur, qui détruisent par leur mauvaise vie libertine avec les sauvagesses tout ce que Mrs des Missions Etrangères et autres leur enseignent. “ Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 2, f. 226, “Dénombrement de claue sorte de gens qui composent la colonie de la Louisiane, 12 août 1708”.

<sup>692</sup> Kimball Brown, Margaret/Laurie Cena Dean (eds.), *The Village of Chartres in Colonial Illinois, 1720-1765* (New Orleans, 1977), pp. 5-20.

<sup>693</sup> Kaskaskia Parish Records, SLUA, Fort de Chartres Parish Records, St. Joseph Parish, Prairie du Rocher, Illinois. See in O’Neill, *Church*, p. 253.

<sup>694</sup> 11 September 1724, Kaskaskia Parish Records, SLUA. See O’Neill, *Church*, p. 253.

a French partner was a common occurrence among those Frenchmen who decided to remain in the colony. The second case of mixed marriage of a “solid citizen” in the region was that of Nicolas Michel Chassin, head agent and royal notary of the Company of Kaskaskia. He married the granddaughter of Indian chief Rouensa. This marriage dispelled the belief that marriage with an Indian could lead to disadvantages in one’s professional life because of social stigma: Chassin was made provincial judge in 1726.<sup>695</sup> The fact that his spouse was a relative of an important Indian chief provided him with more advantages than a marriage with a White could have ever done. The fostering of Euro-Indian alliances was rewarded with material gain for both sides. In another instance in Kaskaskia, rather than encouraging métissage, land was divided between the French and the Indians, i.e. the French drew a line in order to set aside a region for the Indian tribes. Trespassing individuals were faced with sanctions. In 1724, Jesuit Fathers Joseph Kereben and De Beaubois denounced Charles Naut who had crossed over to the Indian side. In another instance of trespass, the French had been forced to quit their site and to build churches and lodgings for the population of the area.<sup>696</sup>

#### 4. Métissage in Louisiana

Louisiana had the most notorious reputation of libertinage. Contemporaries often reported that Frenchmen frequently engaged in relationships and concubinage with Indian women and that missionaries were at pains to prevent this sort of “disorder” from prevailing.<sup>697</sup> Yet, French authorities in the region used this anarchic moral climate in order to play out the Indians against the British in order to safeguard French dominance. Co-operation of company traders, state officials and missionaries was vital to keeping the Indians under state and church control. A contract between the *Company of the Indies* and the missionaries stated “the most solid foundations for the colony of Louisiana are those institutions which tend to the advancement of the glory of God and to the inspiration of the people.” Further, it stated that mainly the Jesuit and Capuchin missionaries gave “great hope for the conversion of the natives.”<sup>698</sup> These missionaries played a vital role in Louisiana as “intelligence agents and diplomats in the Indian villages and (with) their ability to influence the Indians”.<sup>699</sup> Since missionaries were important intermediaries in maintaining trade activities, Indians themselves

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<sup>695</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 254.

<sup>696</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 169.

<sup>697</sup> Spear, *Colonial Intimacies*.

<sup>698</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173, and Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 10, f. 88v, “Contract”.

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

wanted to have at least one missionary in every village.<sup>700</sup> Among the Montagnais tribe, for instance, the presence of a missionary was highly prestigious. In return, missionaries could augment their influence on Indians by threatening to leave their villages.<sup>701</sup>

In 1711, Jesuit Father Pierre-Gabriel Marest, who was priest and missionary in Kaskasia, reported of “disorders of numerous Canadian merchants who, under the pretext to doing commerce, openly commit scandalous crimes by debauching the girls and the women from Illinois and prevent them from converting to our religion.”<sup>702</sup> Libertinage was so widespread a phenomenon in Louisiana that adjutant Pierre d’Artaguiette, who had especially travelled from the metropolis to make observations in the colony in 1712, wrote a report, in which he recommended as remedy that French families and women be sent from the metropolis. He believed that the peopling of the colony was vital in order to change its “moral composition”. Furthermore, d’Artaguiette thought that the “ideal” governor and priest would be those who helped to restore order through persuasion rather than punishment.<sup>703</sup> In 1717, the Pays des Illinois came under the auspices of the government of Louisiana. To benefit the *Compagnie d’Occident*, the owner of Louisiana, wished to exploit the mining resources of the colony.<sup>704</sup> On two occasions “disorder” caused by mixed unions and the complaints about them resulted in French troops being sent from Louisiana to “restore order” among traders. Most complaints came from priests who were concerned that mixed marriages were corrupting Indian converts and that such unions would jeopardize the clerics’ evangelical mission in the long run.<sup>705</sup> “Disorder” referred to the atmosphere of free sexuality that reigned in the colony and seemed to prevent Catholic marriages. Clerics, however, were especially keen on encouraging them and wanted to promote them at the expense of libertinage in order to institute Catholic morals and customs in Indian country. At the same time, *filles du roi* were sent from the Parisian metropolis and had to match Governor Pontchartrain’s criteria: “Those must be chosen who have been brought up on proper homes from their tenderest youth, because the others who have at times lived in disorder bring their vice everywhere, and are usually vain and idle - this

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<sup>700</sup> Jean Delanglez, *The French Jesuits in Lower Louisiana 1700-1763* (New Orleans, 1935).

<sup>701</sup> Franz-Joseph Post, *Schamanen und Missionare. Katholische Mission und indigene Spiritualität in Nouvelle-France* (Münster, 1996), p. 139.

<sup>702</sup> Margry, *Découvertes*, t. 5, p.488, *Relation de Pénicault*.

<sup>703</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, p. 799, “Mémoire pour empêcher autant que possible le libertinage en Louisiane, 8 September 1712”.

<sup>704</sup> Archives Nationales, A, vol. 21, fol. 95v, “Arrêt du Conseil d’État du roi qui incorpore le pays des Illinois au gouvernement de la Louisiane, 27 septembre 1717”, and in: Vachon, *L’enracinement*, p. 125.

<sup>705</sup> Nathalie M. Belting, *Kaskaskia under the French Régime* (New Orleans, 1975), pp. 74-76.

must not be had in a new colony.”<sup>706</sup> The women wanting to come to the colony had to demonstrate their willingness and ability to live and work in a harsh environment in the countryside. Next to the numerous *filles du roi* equipped with a dowry from the French King, all sorts of individuals were sent to Louisiana, among whom “salt-smugglers, deserters from military ranks, vagabonds, and deportees of every type - including some hapless kidnapping victims.”<sup>707</sup> Charles O’Neill believes that “one can say that here there is nothing more than the piled-up dregs of Canada, jailbirds who escaped the rope, without any subordination to Religion or to Government, steeped in vice, principally in their concubinage with savage women, whom they prefer to French girls.”<sup>708</sup> However, Lamothe Cadillac thought, “If he had to expel all the women of evil life from the region [of Louisiana] there would be no women left.”<sup>709</sup> Apparently, policy objectives conflicted with actual circumstances: rather than trying to further colony-building in the interests of New France, metropolitan authorities saw the colony as a dumping-ground and kept the colony dependent on the metropolis as long as it served the latter’s interests well. This created a system of dependency that was to last for a considerable amount of time. The increase of interests on the side of the Parisian metropolis towards its colony in New France went hand in hand with the increase in royal power. The state was the decisive factor in guaranteeing a political and economic stability, which resulted in enlargement of the colony’s frontiers.<sup>710</sup> Sometimes, however, habits in the colony served as an example in the metropolis. André Pénigaut saw that in Louisiana newlywed neighbours were supported with charitable donations and he claimed that if metropolitans would imitate this habit there would be fewer poor families and fewer dowry-poor girls sent to convents by their fathers in order to provide them with a source of subsistence.<sup>711</sup>

## 5. Métissage in the Lower Country

Métissage also took place in the context of adoptions. One of the first such cases is mentioned in 1634, when the wife of Robert Giffard, Norman colonizer from Autheuil in Perche, baptized a six-month old Indian child in Québec. The Jesuits noted that the child was

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<sup>706</sup> Archives Nationales, B, vol. 34, f. 423v, “Minister to Clairambault, 19 October 1712”.

<sup>707</sup> O’Neill, *Church*, p. 247

<sup>708</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, vol. 3, p. 13, 26 October 1713.

<sup>709</sup> Archives Nationales, C13A, p. 460, “Cadillac to Minister, March 1714”.

<sup>710</sup> Cornelius Jaenen: “Colonisation compacte et colonization extensive aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles en Nouvelle-France”, in: Alain Saussol et Joseph Zitomersky (eds.), *Colonies, territoires, sociétés. L’enjeu français* (Paris, 1996), 15-22, p. 15.

<sup>711</sup> Pénigaut, *Relation*, in Margry, *Découvertes*, t. 5, p. 492. See O’Neill, p. 255.



believed to be: "...so close to death that one should have called us." Giffard's wife breast-fed the child and is reported to have looked after it like her own.<sup>712</sup> One of the most well known cases of adoption occurred on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1658, when the founder of Montréal Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve adopted a ten-month old Indian girl, whom he named Marie.<sup>713</sup> Samuel de Champlain, too, had the intention of adopting three Montagnais girls in exchange for paying 1000 livres to their tribe. The girls, however, returned to their people.<sup>714</sup> Imprisonment and kidnapping occurred on 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1664, after two vessels had set sail to Canada in the previous year, bringing over 300 persons to colonize New France. Among these new settlers, seventy-five were left at Plaisance, Newfoundland, and 60 died at sea. Thirty-eight girls were dispersed in Québec, Trois-Rivières and Montréal. They were instantly married with the exception of three, one of whom was captured as a prisoner by the Iroquois tribe at Île d'Orléans.<sup>715</sup> Army officer Louis Franquet claimed that mixed marriages occurred more frequently in "reductions" explicitly designed for Indians, than in parishes and villages.<sup>716</sup> Franquet referred to the presence of "bâtards français" at the end of the French regime in the Kahnawake reserve southwest of Montréal. At such "reductions", primarily Algonquian, Huron and Iroquois tribes were gathered close to colonial towns of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At these places, commercial and military ties between Europeans and Indians were particularly strong, and, thus, there is reason to believe that these places provided favourable conditions for high numbers of mixed marriages and unions.

In 1664, the nun Marie de l'Incarnation wrote that there were only one-twentieth of the Amerindians in Quebec City than when she had arrived in 1639.<sup>717</sup> The Montagnais had lived there and mingled with the French in trade activities and exchanges. While the French grew in numbers, the Montagnais shrank and retreated to the hinterland.<sup>718</sup> Many of the Algonquian and Nepissingue tribes of the region had been killed: "of eight to nine thousand men that they were, there remained not more than nine hundred, and the others died gloriously for the

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<sup>712</sup> Jesuit Relations 1634, cited in: "Perche-Canada. Du nouveau sur Robert Giffard, promoteur de l'émigration percheronne", in: *Cahier perchérons*, Trimestriel no 25 (1<sup>er</sup> trimestre 1967), p. 33, in: Archives Départementales de l'Orne à Alençon.

<sup>713</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 39.

<sup>714</sup> See Bruce Trigger, "Champlain Judged by His Indian Policy: A Different View on early Canadian History", in: *Anthropologica* 13 (1971), 85-114, pp. 108-110.

<sup>715</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 48. Extract of a letter of the Conseil Souverain, 13<sup>th</sup> June 1664, Québec.

<sup>716</sup> Franquet, *Mémoire*, p. 38.

<sup>717</sup> Denys Delâge, "Indian-White Relations in New France", in: *Encyclopaedia of North American Indians, Native American History, Culture and Life from Paleo-Indians to the Present*, ed. by Frederick E. Hoxie (New York, 1996).

<sup>718</sup> Ibid.

service of the King.”<sup>719</sup> In the 17th century, imprisonment and kidnapping sometimes resulted in further cases of adoption as in the case of Jeanne Baillargeon in November 1665. The four-year-old girl was kidnapped and imprisoned by the Huron tribe with whom she lived for five years. Apparently the Huron lifestyle was so appealing that she decided to remain with the tribe. Jeanne even stayed despite an order that all French captives should return to their home country. A nun tried to convince her to return to the French by threatening to chastise her. Tracy finally gave Jeanne fifty *écus* in order to entice her to marry. Before that, however, he wanted her to be re-educated at the Ursulines in order to make her familiar with Christian customs again.<sup>720</sup>

Towards the 18th century, mixed marriages increased. On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1699, St. Cosme reported to the bishop of Quebec that he was impressed by “the piety” of the converted Indian girls who had married French.<sup>721</sup> In 1703, Laurent Dubosq of St. Maclou from the diocese of Rouen in Normandie had married Huron woman Marie-Félix in Quebec, daughter of Joachim Arontio, Huron chief turned Christian by Jesuit father Brébeuf.<sup>722</sup> The couple had four metis children of which one, Marie-Anne, became Ursuline nun and was henceforth named Sainte Marie-Madeleine.<sup>723</sup> On 25th of September 1730, the procurator of the King, reported from Montreal, “...in the hands of the mentioned Fontaine there is an illegitimate child” that he should “nourish and maintain, raise and instruct until it has reached the age of eighteen.”<sup>724</sup> Blonde women were reported among Cree Indians in 1719, indicating the rather improbable result that the genetic influence of European fathers had led to blonde metis offspring raised by the mother’s tribe. Métissage was also recorded in Trois-Rivières in the St. Lawrence Valley. Two “métisses” were born to the French-Algonquin couple of Pierre Couc and Marie Metissamegssksse.<sup>725</sup> For the Prairie region, the Metis Fleurimond was born around 1735 to a Sioux mother. His French father sent him to school in Montréal, but he returned to live in the Dakota region.<sup>726</sup> Fleurimond is considered to be the first identified Metis in the Prairies. In 1739, officer and explorer Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye mentioned a “tribe

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<sup>719</sup> “Lettre de Beauharnois à Mgr, Québec, 5 novembre 1741“, p. 330. Cited in: Perrault, *Le métissage*, p. 83.

<sup>720</sup> “Lettre de la Mère de l’Incarnation aux Ursulines de Tours, Novembre 1668“, in: Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 56.

<sup>721</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres R 26, p. 4.

<sup>722</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 91.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid.

<sup>724</sup> Archives Nationales du Québec, Centre régional de Montréal: “Marché par lequel le substitut du Procureur du roi remet...“, Minutes du notaire Joseph-Charles Raimbault.

<sup>725</sup> The official spelling as it appears in the records is “Meti8ameg8k8e”.

<sup>726</sup> A. G. Morice, *La Race métisse. Étude critique* (Winnipeg, 1938), p. 13; Bruce Sealey/Antoine Lussier (eds.), *The Métis. Canada’s Forgotten People* (Winnipeg, 1975), p. 7.

of whites” and of “mixed bloods, white and black”.<sup>727</sup> It remains unclear, however, if the latter designated a tribe of white-black mixture or a tribe, which was constituted of Metis, Whites and Blacks. In 1746, the Saint-Laurent Valley hosted slaves, mostly Blacks, but also Panis, Renard and Padoucas Indians, to a much lesser extent than in Louisiana, however. Due to the work of missionaries there were domiciled Indians, the Hurons of Lorette, near Québec, Abenakis de Bécancour and St. François, near Trois-Rivières, Iroquois of Sault-Saint-Louis, and Algonquians, Népissingues and Iroquois at Lac des Deux-Montagnes, near Montréal, all of whom were adherents of the Catholic religion.<sup>728</sup>

After the British conquest of New France in 1763, most of the French in the Upper Country choose to remain in the West, i.e. west of the colony of the Saint Lawrence Valley. Some authors hold that this was the reason why intermarriage with the various tribes in the region increased. For instance, the Potawatami tribe in the St. Joseph River area maintained their alliances with the French in this way.<sup>729</sup> In the upper Missouri region, some Frenchmen preferred to take Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara women. French traders René Jesseaume, Joseph Garreau, Toussaint Charbonneau and Maurice Ménard seemed to owe much of their trading successes to these mixed marriages.<sup>730</sup> On 24th January 1774, the Bishop of Quebec, Jean-Olivier Briand, wrote to Abbey Jean-Marie Verreau, Pastor of the Parish of Beauce, on the matter of a mixed marriage between a French and an Indian. Briand reminded Verreau that the government had prohibited such marriages, but he affirmed nevertheless to give his permission to the marriage in question.<sup>731</sup> This marriage was celebrated on 5<sup>th</sup> February at St. Joseph de Beauce. Four years later, in 1777, the ordinances of the Legislative Council in Quebec addressed the issue of relations with the savages. Chapter seven of the ordinance prohibited Whites from entering and living in the villages of the Indians. This was an implicit prohibition of mixed marriages because in practice they could mean cohabitation with Indians in their village. According to the ordinance, Christian missions should be farther removed from European establishments. On 29th September 1800, a Roman Catholic priest in Québec, Jean-Mande Sigogne, acknowledged that the government had prohibited mixed marriages. Such marriages had been tolerated, he held, although he thought that there was little inclination to enter into mixed marriages. Consequently, one would not see many of them in

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<sup>727</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*.

<sup>728</sup> Vachon, *L'enracinement*, p. 49.

<sup>729</sup> James A. Clifton, *The Prairie People* (Lawrence, 1919), p. 134.

<sup>730</sup> John C. Ewers, *Indian Life in the Upper Missouri* (Norman, 1968), pp. 58-59.

<sup>731</sup> Fabrique de Ste. Marie de Bce, livre de comptes I, 3<sup>ème</sup> partie, p. 6. Provost, p. 53.

private or in public.<sup>732</sup> Meanwhile Indians grew increasingly hostile to the idea of being educated in French manners: On 5th July 1806, the Superintendent of the Savages received message from Huron chiefs Bastien Sharennesse and Augustin Jockbouadodon that they no longer wanted to send any Indian children to the Québec seminary to be educated there.<sup>733</sup>

In Beauce, on 15th February 1808, a marriage between an Indian man and a white woman, a very rare case, was recorded. Apparently, the wife followed her husband into his Abénaquis tribe, since she never reappeared in White records.<sup>734</sup> On 21<sup>st</sup> August 1813, Priest Rinfret reported a case of mixed marriage in Sault St. Louis, to which the Indian village chiefs were opposed. The young Indian who wanted to marry was prevented from entering the Church. He decided to pursue his opponents with the help of a lawyer. Priest Rinfret agreed to celebrate the marriage in that case, but was worried whether he would be paid.<sup>735</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> June 1826, Abbey Jean-Baptiste Roupe objected to the marriage of a young Canadian woman and an Iroquois man on the reservation of Lac-des-Deux-Montagnes. Roupe had sought opinion of the Superior in this matter. Roupe listed the reasons for his objection in a letter to the bishop of Québec. He thought that the marriage was a novelty that should not be encouraged since it could serve as bad example. He further claimed that the woman did not speak any Iroquois and the man no French, and the woman did not know anything about savage life. The mixture of Whites and Savages was very harmful for the savages, he thought.<sup>736</sup> Roupe took refuge in formal regulations to back his stance by referring to Chapter seven of the 1777 ordinance, which stated that settlements of Indians and French be kept separate. Roupe rhetorically asked if such a marriage would not suddenly open the way for unrestricted mixture? He held that even the best savages had objected to this marriage. Roupe reiterated the bad character of Whites who entered into such marriages, described the girls as having loose morals; therefore he thought that the savages would be induced to scandal rather than virtue. Yet, Roupe was aware such marriages would increase in the future and that neither he nor other clerics could do much to prevent them. Roupe claimed that this was the fifth such marriage to be refused within 13 years. On 7th June 1838, Marcout wrote to the Bishop of Montreal Trudeau on the relations between Indian village chiefs and missionaries. He considered Indian chiefs at Sault to be unpopular in their own ranks since they were abusing their position. Savage missionaries

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<sup>732</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, “Monsieur Sigogne, Bishop of Quebec, Longueuil 29 September 1800“.

<sup>733</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, 2 no 12a, 5 juillet 1806.

<sup>734</sup> Provost, p. 54.

<sup>735</sup> Archives du Diocèse de St.-Jean-de-Québec, doc. 3A/56, Sault St. Louis, 21 août 1813.

<sup>736</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettre Q, No. 101, Lac des deux Montagnes, 19 juin 1826.

were more difficult to replace than pastors and the chiefs were poor creatures without religion, confessing not more than once a year, if at all, always drunk and enticing the young to drink as well.<sup>737</sup>

From Sault St. Louis, on 21st January 1843, a young man reportedly wanted to marry a Black woman. Marcout was convinced that this was an equivalent to the marriage he had celebrated between a Black man and a White the previous summer. Marcout first made sure that the young man was free, and then found out that he would reach maturity only on 29<sup>th</sup> July, that his parents were dead and that he possessed a small heritage. Marcout wanted to have the Bishop's consent that he would not need to have a tutor named by the Court in order to be able to celebrate the marriage of a minor person. The young man threatened Marcout, that if Marcout did not perform the ceremony as soon as possible, he would take off with his wife. The missionary finally decided to have the man return to his hometown in Terrebonne where his relatives lived and to have a tutor named for him by the Court.<sup>738</sup> On 17<sup>th</sup> November 1844, Marcout mentioned that a savage who had decided to marry a savage woman from his village was continually abusing alcohol. Consequently, the savage was not in the condition to be baptised. The Indian promised that he would stop drinking once he was married. Marcout was not convinced and especially deplored the fact that the Indian had yet to learn to say a prayer.<sup>739</sup> On 21st April 1853, Marcout summarized his many years of experience with mixed marriages in an article published in "*Le Moniteur Canadien*".<sup>740</sup> He stressed that as consistent opponent to marriages between Savages and Whites; he would not change his opinion on mixture. Yet, he saw it as another matter if Canadians from his own parish asked him to perform his duty, in which case he could not refuse. This did not mean, however, that he was competent to decide if marriage also engendered the right to reside in the village. Marcout personally thought that a celebrated marriage did not automatically lead to permission for residence if the couple did not have a residence elsewhere. Marcout insisted that he gave permission to anyone to live among a tribe; rather he had always done everything to encourage the chiefs not to admit any whites among their rank. He again referred to the scandal from 31<sup>st</sup> January and claimed that he had done everything to protect the House of God, and that he had refrained from bringing the culprits before a tribunal. The chiefs had

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<sup>737</sup> Archives du Diocèse de St.-Jean-de-Québec, doc. 3A/193, Sault St. Louis, 7 juin 1838.

<sup>738</sup> Archives du Diocèse de St.-Jean-De-Québec, doc. 3A/255, Sault St. Louis, 21 January 1843.

<sup>739</sup> Archives du Diocèse de St.-Jean-De-Québec, doc. 3A/282, Sault St. Louis, 17 November 1844.

<sup>740</sup> Archives du Diocèse de St.-Jean-de-Québec, doc. 3A/352: *Le Moniteur Canadien*, No. 30, 21 April 1853.

admitted their fault, although it had been the young people of the village who had enticed turmoil because they were jealous of good relations between the chiefs and the missionary.<sup>741</sup>

On 31st January 1853, a mixed marriage in Montréal interrupted the previous “peace and tranquillity”. A 23 year old Canadian<sup>742</sup> man, whose grandmother was a *bois-brûlé*<sup>743</sup> and who was himself described being “black like a Savage”, had been living in the village of Sault St. Marie for eight years. The Indian chiefs had always accepted him as a member of the village and had never thought of chasing him away because of his mixed descent. Lately, however, he had asked Marcourt, who reported the story to the Bishop of Montréal, to be married to a “Sauvagesse”. The priest thought it unwise to prohibit the marriage and to allow it might prevent a grander evil. The Indian chiefs opposed the marriage at Sault, but left it open for the Metis to go and marry elsewhere. Maricourt replied that he would perform the marriage ceremony of the man, like for others, if he were to present himself at the balustrade of the village. The chiefs agreed with this approach, since their main concern was that the marriage not be celebrated in their village church. The priest said that he would give liberty to the marriage candidates to do as they liked outside, but if the young man entered the Church, the priest would prohibit him from touching anything.

The priest told the chiefs that their behaviour was highly unnecessary, since a marriage would not give any rights to the Metis in the village anyway. The chiefs did not concede, Marcourt repeated that he agreed that the chiefs were the masters outside the Church, but he was the master within the Church. The chiefs finally backed down. Following this dispute, the Metis decided to enter the Church while unobserved by the chiefs. Only Marcourt and Father Bernard could see him in the company of another savage. While the fathers were celebrating mass, a group of about 30 savages suddenly entered the Church, searching for the young Metis. Marcourt tried to calm down the atmosphere by introducing himself to the person whom he identified as the ringleader and asked all the Savages to leave if they had not come to pray. The group complied, however a moment later one of the chiefs entered, discovered the Metis, and reiterated that he would not let him marry in the Church. Marcourt had difficulty in keeping the chief away from the Metis who fled to the sacristy where the chief grabbed him and threw him out. In the light of this incidence, Marcout wrote the Bishop that he would have never agreed to this marriage, had he foreseen such turmoil. He would have

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<sup>741</sup> Ibid.

<sup>742</sup> “Canadian” came to be used interchangeably for “Metis”, above all from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

<sup>743</sup> One of the designations being used for Metis because of their dark complexion, referring to burned wood.

sent the Metis away to celebrate the marriage elsewhere. Marcout admitted that initially he had been naïve enough to believe the chiefs' promise. He ended up sending the marriage candidates to Jesuit Father Firmin Vignon in the prairies, together with a letter, in which Marcout asked the latter to celebrate the marriage. Marcout was convinced that Father Vignon had complied, but he did not know the whereabouts of the married couple.

Marcout was so desperate that he asked the Archbishop's opinion on this matter. In any case, Marcout thought that the whole incident should have legal consequences. Above all, those who exposed the Church to profanity should be persecuted at Court. Meanwhile, Marcout eagerly stressed his innocence. He insisted that he had not allowed the savages to enter the Church; rather they had come in on their own initiative. Furthermore, the whole village should be punished since its members had all contributed to the scandal. All of the mass was set upon end by this incidence, such that regular church celebration was no longer possible. Furthermore, since every marriage required a sermon that the chiefs' behaviour had prevented Marcourt from giving, he had to cease working for them. Marcout was of the absolute conviction that if the priest were no longer the master in the church, there would be no need for a village priest. Marcout admitted that the absence of a priest would be a great blow to Catholicism, even if it were only out of vengeance for this whole incident. On 20<sup>th</sup> May 1853, the Archbishop of Québec responded and reported that he had made a copy of this case of marriage between this "young Canadian black like a Savage" and the Indian woman in order to have information ready at hand for the civil authorities if needed. He thought that punishment was indeed necessary, since these village people lacked faith. Furthermore, the Archbishop was convinced that the menaces of the savages were merely thin air and had no further significance.<sup>744</sup> The incident remained significant, however, in respect to illustrating the negative experiences of priests who agreed to celebrate mixed marriages against the wishes of village chiefs.<sup>745</sup>

## **6. Statistics, Numbers and Genetics of Métissage**

Historians of Canadian métissage have largely been content to describe select aspects of métissage such as socio-cultural results of the encounter between Europeans and Indians and their mixture in certain regions and periods. Therefore it is difficult to determine the accurate extent of métissage as an overall Canadian phenomenon. In the sources, we can find only very

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<sup>744</sup> Archives de la Chancellerie de Montréal, 295 099 853-2, Archevêché de Québec, 20 mai 1853.

<sup>745</sup> Archives de la Chancellerie de Montréal, 901° 044 853-1: Marcout, prêtre, Montréal, 31 Janvier 1853.

singular mentions of Metis in the early period of colonial expansion and it seems difficult if not impossible to fully trace the genealogical and geographical origins of Metis individuals. In most accounts, however, métissage in Canada is described as heterosexual encounter between native women of specific tribes and white European men of different nations. With a few exceptional cases, mixing of native men with white women,<sup>746</sup> and of Blacks with Whites or Blacks with Indians is not mentioned in the sources.<sup>747</sup> The reason for this seems to be that the process of colonial expansion has been described as a male white European endeavour. In the colonies, men were initially confronted with a shortage or complete absence of white women and therefore they were urged or preferred to take native female companions and lovers. Only after 1663 did white women appear on the scene on a more extensive scale.

The debates over numbers of mixed marriages and of Metis offspring are controversial and have led to contradictory interpretations: one group of authors, including Denys Delâge, Gilles Havard and Isabelle Perrault hold that métissage was frequent; a second group - a dated tradition in historiography - which includes Benjamin Sulte, Lionel Groulx, Emile Salone and Cyprien Tanguay - has claimed that métissage was a “quantité négligeable” and therefore considered it as not worthy of further discussion. A third group remained neutral and either refrained from mentioning any numbers or statistics by holding that métissage is difficult to quantify, or it gave numbers without setting them into context or evaluating their extent. Such is the preference of Jacques Mathieu, Cornelius Jaenen and Marcel Trudel. That is, authors in the third group agree that the phenomenon of métissage did exist; yet they disagree over its definition, scope and results. Writers such as Lionel Groulx, Benjamin Sulte, Cyprien Tanguay and Emile Salone have addressed the statistical dimension of métissage in their works. Yet, authors who examine this dimension of métissage in Canada often fail to point out that the statistics on mixed marriages and on births of metis children are incomplete, European-biased or, in some cases, copied from the work of previous historians. Those who examine statistics are therefore faced with finding adequate and sufficient source material. Those historians who believe that the colony of New France saw few interracial marriages hold that assimilation into one of the two respective cultural groups was more widespread than mixture itself. Representatives of the first group draw their evidence from incompletely recorded statistics

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<sup>746</sup> Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in Australia and North America, 1870s-1930s* (Melbourne, 2002).

<sup>747</sup> For Indian-Black métissage see Daniel R. Mandell, “Shifting Boundaries of Race and Ethnicity: Indian-Black Intermarriage in Southern New England 1760-1880”, in: *Journal of American History*, vol. 85 (1-2) (September 1998-99), pp. 466-501.



and neglect the practices hidden behind. Authors who make reference to numbers usually rely upon official, mostly church records, and overlook the significant fact that unions between Whites and Indians were either not always sanctioned by the church or that they were not even considered as marriages. Those authors who deny the importance of métissage refer to statistics in order to prove their point, knowing or ignoring the fact that the existing statistics are incomplete. Historians of the old school, such as Lionel Groulx, Emile Salone and Benjamin Sulte, have adopted this approach. Cornelius Jaenen<sup>748</sup>, Jacques Henripin<sup>749</sup> and Kathleen Jameison,<sup>750</sup> in contrast, have favoured the *incorporation thesis*, which argues that intermarriage in Québec led to the inclusion of Metis children into their native mothers' tribes. These authors claim that Metis individuals were completely assimilated.

Paradoxically, the discussions on statistics have rarely mentioned concrete numbers. One exception, for instance, is Benjamin Sulte who holds that métissage was a minor occurrence. He contends that there were 30 mixed marriages among the 16.000 individuals in New France in 1700: „Let us say, by exaggerating the numbers that in 1700 we had thirty marriages of this kind, in the midst of a population of 16.000. This is hardly worth discussion.”<sup>751</sup> Yet, this number only seems to consider the French population. In terms of numbers on the Indian side, recent findings have shown for a number of tribes in 16<sup>th</sup> century Canada that there were approximately 1.000 Inuit, 6.000 Montagnais (Oumanioeks, Naskapis, Papinachois), 5.500 Abenakis (Micmacs, Attikamegues), 15.000 Algonquins and Cree, 5.000 Lous (Mohicans), 30.000 Hurons, 10.000 Neutres, 15.000 Petuns and 15.000 Iroquois.<sup>752</sup> Sulte has utilized the statistics that show a low number of metis individuals in order to claim that children borne of mixed marriages followed their mothers into “the woods”, an expression used to designate the uncivilized lifestyle of Indians: „The children born of these encounters could not be French Canadians; they had to follow their mothers into the woods, since otherwise we would find them among us, given that the registers say everything that has happened with respect to

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<sup>748</sup> “By virtue of the fact that the Metis population was incorporated or assimilated into the various bands and tribes, until the mid-eighteenth century, no estimates or statistics (such as obtainable from parish records and censuses) exist in sufficient quantity for significant periods to guide us.”, Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, 1983, p. 89.

<sup>749</sup> Jacques Henripin, *La Population canadienne au début du XVIIIe siècle: Nuptialité, Fécondité, Mortalité, Infantilité* (Paris, 1954).

<sup>750</sup> „...Les enfants nés de ces mariages ou d’une simple aventure avec une indienne (ce qui était fréquent) étaient généralement absorbés par le groupe de la mère.” in: Kathleen Jameison, *La femme indienne devant la loi une citoyenne mineure* (Ottawa, 1978), p. 15

<sup>751</sup> The French original reads: “Disons en exagérant les chiffres, qu’en l’année 1700 nous avons trente mariages de ce genre, au milieu d’une population de seize mille âmes. Ce n’est pas la peine de discuter.” Sulte, *Canadiens-Français*, p. 362.

<sup>752</sup> Jean-Marc Soye: *Quand l’Amérique s’appelait Nouvelle-France (1608-1760)* (Paris, 1981), p. 49. The author is referring to research findings at the Université de Laval in Quebec.

marriages. They were the sources of Metis, whose descendants today are Savages. Instead of having under this impact taken on Indian blood, we have mixed ours in complete loss.”<sup>753</sup> Sulte neglects the fact that the church did not register all metis births since many such births either did not happen within the confines of a Catholic marriage or because some clerics preferred to ignore such births, even when they were the result of a Catholic union. In some cases, the parents of mixed origin themselves did not look for clerical sanction and opted to register their children with the Catholic Church. Sulte accepts that a new mixed-blood group came into being: he calls them *Metis* or *Bois-Brûlés*. Furthermore, he sees them as originating already by 1675, and posits their principal creation period between 1700 and 1740.<sup>754</sup>

Emile Salone concentrated on the St. Lawrence Valley. He claimed that there were four French-Indian marriages in this region during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>755</sup> Salone further elaborated the clerical argument by holding that the extent of mixed marriages was low because the missionaries were adverse to their celebration. Salone argued that Euro-Indian intermarriage was insignificant in the colony since many missionaries were not in favour of mixed unions. This view generalizes the attitude within a whole group of different agents and neglects the fact that missionaries were not unanimous in their position regarding mixed unions. Salone, thus, turns out to be an advocate of the *incorporation thesis* and assumes: “This does not mean that there were no exceptions to the rule; yet, they had no consequences. The metis children were abandoned to the tribe, lost for the colony.”<sup>756</sup> Salone pointed to the fact that the reality that metis children lived within Indian tribes meant that the Metis could not be considered a factor in building a French colony. Lionel Groulx, in contrast, constructed a “necrophilic” argument<sup>757</sup> in order to support his view on the insignificance of métissage. Groulx believed that all metis individuals, without exception, died at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and, thus, could not have left any traces to the present day, i.e. the 19<sup>th</sup> century in which Groulx was writing *La naissance d’une race*: “There is more to that: these Metis have left no descendants among us, their children were all dead before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>753</sup> The French original reads: “Les enfants issus de ces rencontres ne pouvaient pas être Canadiens-Français; ils ont du suivre leurs mères dans les bois, car autrement nous les retrouverions chez nous, vu que les registres disent tout ce qui s’est passé à l’égard des mariages. Ce furent les sources des Métis, dont les descendants sont aujourd’hui de Sauvages. Au lieu d’avoir sous ce rapport emprunté au sang indigène, nous y avons plutôt mêlé le notre en pure perte.” Sulte, *Canadiens-Français*, p. 362.

<sup>754</sup> Benjamin Sulte, *Les Métis ou Bois-Brûlés*, p. 17.

<sup>755</sup> Salone, *Colonisation*, p. 129.

<sup>756</sup> “Lost for the colony”, meaning: lost for the building up of a French dominated colony. The French original reads: “Cela ne signifie pas qu’il y ait pas eu quelques infractions à la règle, mais elles n’ont pas eu de conséquence. Les enfants métis sont abandonnés à la tribu, perdus pour la colonie.” Salone, *Colonisation*, p. 116.

<sup>757</sup> This is an adequate characterization made by Perrault, *Le métissage*.

This is the final word of incontestable science on this affair of métissage; it revenges us gloriously.<sup>758</sup> Yet, in his book *Histoire du Canada Français* Groulx had held that France had copied what Portugal and Spain had already practiced in their colonies, which were lands with feeble population density, melting pots of human elements still in fusion where “métissage” between Europeans and indigenous peoples were favoured. New France, Groulx holds, employed the same policy: metropolitan and colonial authorities dreamt of an aggregation *en masse* of indigenous races to the “French family”. Still, Groulx contends that France cultivated the illusion of an easy and quick adaptation of the indigenous population to the European civilization.<sup>759</sup>

In terms of the scope of métissage, the German-Jewish anthropologist Franz Boas claimed: „A certain amount of intermingling between White and Indian took place, but in the United States and Canada this has never occurred to such a degree that it became an important social phenomenon.”<sup>760</sup> Yet, in 1879, Harvard estimated that there were 40.000 mixed-bloods in America, of which 22.000 were in the United States and 18.000 in Canada.<sup>761</sup> Cyprien Tanguay was, among those historians who thought that métissage was a rare phenomenon, and believed that 94 mixed marriages occurred in Canada in the period of two centuries.<sup>762</sup> In 1886, he set out to trace the genealogy of the White population.<sup>763</sup> He stated for each year, the number of arrivals in and departures from the colony, the number of marriages, births and deaths, the number of *hivernants* in Quebec and on Huron territory, and the total number of inhabitants in Quebec, citing the Quebec registers, the figures mentioned by Champlain, the missionaries Sagard and Leclercq, and the Jesuit Relations.<sup>764</sup> For 1608, he states that there were 31 arrivals (among which three prisoners were sent back to France), three departures, no marriages, no births, but three deaths, 25 *hivernants* in Quebec and none among the Huron, and a total population number in Quebec of 31.<sup>765</sup> The first marriage between a French man and a French woman - Guillaume Couillard and Guillemette Hébert - is mentioned in 1621, according to the Quebec registers for that year. From 1608 to 1640, Tanguay counted 26

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<sup>758</sup> The French original reads: “Il y a plus: ces métis n’ont laissé parmi nous aucune descendance, leurs enfants étants tous morts avant la fin du dix-huitième siècle. Voilà sur cette affaire de métissage le dernier mot de la science irrécusable; il nous venge glorieusement.” Groulx, *La naissance*, p. 26.

<sup>759</sup> Lionel Groulx, *Histoire du Canada Français*, Montréal 1950, p. 95.

<sup>760</sup> Franz Boas; “Race and Progress”, in: *Science* 74, no. 1905 (1931), p. 1.

<sup>761</sup> Harvard, Smithsonian Institute 1879, cited on an Indian genealogical website.

<sup>762</sup> Groulx, *La naissance*, p. 26.

<sup>763</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*.

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid*., p. 3.

marriages, and from 1608 to 1660 a total of 334 marriages, probably all non-mixed, since he does not mention Indian spouses.<sup>766</sup> For the year 1647, he mentions a young Huronne called Barbe, who had studied at the Ursulines for four years, and who was demanded in marriage by a twenty-year-old Frenchman called Jean Mignot de Chastillon. To demonstrate his determination to marry her, Chastillon offered to give 300 livres, of which 100 were to be for the benefit of the Indian girl, in the event that he should not keep to his marriage promise. The girl was not interested and preferred to follow her parents' wishes to take an Indian man as husband. Chastillon eventually married Louise Cloutier, the widow of an interpreter at Trois-Rivières, in 1648.<sup>767</sup> Naomi Griffiths mentioned two Acadian women who married into French communities. She, however, overlooked the most famous case of French-Indian intermarriage in that region: Baron Bernard Anselme de Saint-Castin, who had travelled to Acadia with the Carignan-Salières regiment in 1665, and married an Abenaki woman there called Marie-Mathilde Madokawando. With her he had one son: the metis, Bernard-Anselme, who later became a well-known *coureur de bois*.<sup>768</sup>

Some historians have remained neutral on the issue of the extent of métissage. They did, however, come up with numerical estimates, but avoided to make any value judgments. The mere mention of low numbers can be taken as an implicit position in disfavour of the prevalence of métissage. Among such writers, Marcel Trudel quoted official records on the extent of mixed marriages around 1663, i.e. the year in which New France officially became a royal colony. According to these records, four metis families resided in the colony of New France, along with a single metis woman who had nine children. Although Trudel recognized that métissage did occur in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, he contended that it fell into disfavour thereafter since public opinion considered the offspring of mixed marriages to be of bad quality.<sup>769</sup> In *Dictionnaire des Esclaves et de leurs propriétaires au Canada Français*<sup>770</sup>, Trudel was more generous in his estimates. Out of a total of 4.092 slaves listed for the period 1632 to 1763, he identified 255 illegitimate Métis children born to Indian slaves, 167 of which were recorded in Detroit and 31 in Michilimackinac. Trudel believes that the highest number of such children

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<sup>766</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>767</sup> Tanguay, *A Travers*, p. 29.

<sup>768</sup> See Robert Le Blant, *Une Figure légendaire de l'histoire acadienne - Le Baron de St-Castin* (Paris, 1934); and Dickason, *A look at*, p. 25.

<sup>769</sup> Marcel Trudel, *Initiation à la Nouvelle-France* (Montréal, 1968), p. 147.

<sup>770</sup> Marcel Trudel, *Dictionnaire des Esclaves et de leurs propriétaires au Canada Français* (Montréal, 1990); idem.: *Esclavage au Canada français* (Québec, 1960), pp. 257-261.

was found not where there was the biggest concentration of domestic slaves, i.e. in Montréal and Québec, but rather at interior military posts.<sup>771</sup>

Jacques Mathieu claims that before 1700, “one of every two adults made a trip to Indian country in the region of the Great Lakes. This could have had determining effects on the meeting of cultures.”<sup>772</sup> Mathieu merely points to the “potentiality” of métissage. With this neutral position the author refrains from positioning himself in one of the two ideological camps in favour or disfavour of métissage. As far as the “civilizing mission” of state and church is concerned, however, Mathieu concludes in a more outspoken, yet negative manner: “The enterprise of evangelisation and civilization has never resulted in intense métissage or in assimilation.”<sup>773</sup> If neither métissage nor assimilation happened to any considerable degree, one might conclude that both French and Indian cultures remained almost pure. What is meant, however, by “determining effects on the meeting of cultures”? Determining in the way that cultures remained separate, or determining in the way that they mixed? In any case, the author contends that the church’s endeavours in this respect were less effective than the state’s, i.e. conversion was less prevalent than language instruction, settlement and mixed marriages. Cornelius Jaenen mentioned seven mixed marriages in the parish registers for the period 1642 to 1715. For the seigneurie of Boucherville, Jaenen found evidence for the celebration of three mixed marriages between 1703 and 1710.<sup>774</sup> These numbers say little about the importance of métissage if the author does not place them in context by relating them to the population size at the time or to the total number of marriages. Thus, Jaenen’s figures further prove the incompleteness of the statistics and the official records regarding métissage.

Representatives of the school that believes in a high frequency of métissage usually refer to the low number of French women in the colony or the uncontrolled habits and free-spirited lifestyle of French voyageurs. These circumstances serve as indicators of the necessity and ease of métissage: while the lack of French women resulted in the search for native women, “uncontrolled”, i.e. sexually free, habits led to natural mixture. For instance, Alfred Bailey

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<sup>771</sup> Ibid.

<sup>772</sup> The French original reads: “Avant 1700, un homme adulte sur deux a fait un voyage au pays des Amérindiens de la région des Grands Lacs. Cela a pu avoir des effets déterminants sur la rencontre des cultures. “ Jacques Mathieu, *La Nouvelle-France. Les Français en Amérique du Nord XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Laval, 1991), p. 85.

<sup>773</sup> The French original reads: “Jamais l’entreprise d’évangélisation et de civilisation n’aboutit à un métissage intense ou à une assimilation. “ Mathieu, *Les Français*, p. 106.

<sup>774</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 89; Armand Martineau, *La Seigneurie de Boucherville du temps de Pierre Boucher (1672-1717)*, unpublished manuscript, p. 247 as cited in Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 90.

contended that, for the period 1607 to 1675, “there were few Acadian families with no Indian blood in their veins”.<sup>775</sup> Historians Lachance and Savoie proposed estimates for the whole of the colony of New France. With reference to parish registers, these authors claim that there were 180 mixed marriages in New France during the period from 1644 to 1760, Acadia and Louisiana excluded. According to these estimates, 54 such marriages occurred in the Saint-Lawrence Valley, 52 in the Pays d’en Haut, 24 of which took place before 1715, 21 in the “Domaine du Roi” and 44 in unknown places. With these numbers the authors have tried to correct the traditionally low estimates of Quebecois historians as to the extent of métissage.<sup>776</sup> Gilles Havard has objected to the numbers given for the Pays d’en Haut, stating that they do not match the existing realities and practices of the region, whereas the numbers for the Saint-Lawrence Valley were more realistic.<sup>777</sup> Havard argues that in the Saint Lawrence Valley, the ratio of men and women was less conducive to the celebration of mixed marriages and that matrimonial strategies differed from those of the regions further west.<sup>778</sup> In conclusion, historians who argue in favour of the prevalence of métissage remain in a minority position.

Some scholars have tried to gain further insight into statistical dimensions of métissage by looking at the numbers of French immigrants who came to make a living in the colony. The views of historians on the actual numbers are widely controversial. Charbonneau et al. have shown that at British take-over of New France in 1763, of the 25,000 initial emigrants from France, no more than 8500 colonists, which included only 1600 women, settled permanently in Canada and had progeny.<sup>779</sup> The low ratio of women to men has been taken as an indication for the “necessity” or “inevitability” of métissage. Frenchmen were described as being in need of Indian women as partners and intermediaries in an alien and often-dangerous environment. Mario Boleda has differentiated this view by contrasting *founding immigration*, which refers to those who formed the basis of what was to become the Canadian population, and *observed immigration*, which refers to the totality of immigrants. Boleda came up with new estimates that differ from those of previous historians. Those had considered the founding population of

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<sup>775</sup> Alfred Goldsworthy Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures 1504-1700* (Toronto, 1937/1969), p. 112.

<sup>776</sup> Lachance/Savoie, p. 190-191. For details see *Programme de Recherche de Démographie Historique* (PRDH) à l’Université du Québec à Montréal and Havard, *Empire*, p. 627; and Isabelle Perrault, “L’historiographie de la dissolution”, in: *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec*, vol. 10, no 4 (1981), p. 273-275.

<sup>777</sup> See the geographical contexts of these expressions in the following chapters.

<sup>778</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 627. See also Dickason, *From one nation*, p. 27 and Jan Grabowski, *Common Ground*, pp. 286-288.

<sup>779</sup> Marc de Braekeleer, “Homogénéité génétique des Canadiens français du Québec: mythe ou réalité? “, in: *Cahiers québécois de démographie*, vol. 19, no 1 (printemps 1990), p. 29. Also see Hubert Charbonneau/J. Legare, “La population au Canada aux recensements de 1666 et 1667”, in: *Population* 6 (1967), pp. 1031-1054.

Quebec and estimated 10.000 as the number of immigrants for the period 1608 to 1760.<sup>780</sup> Boleda, however, showed that for this period total quantum of immigration was at least 30.000 Frenchmen. He pointed out the difference in numbers between those immigrants who stayed in the colony to build up the future population of Quebec and those who emigrated from France to Canada for various reasons, among whom considerable numbers returned to France.<sup>781</sup> For the process of métissage, both founding immigration and observed immigration played an important part since all those who came to the new continent have to be considered as potential “métisseurs”, and, in rarer cases, “métisseuses”.<sup>782</sup>

At the beginning of the 1980s, two scholars - Ohayon and Cambon-Thompsen - tried to break new ground in the field of metis history by introducing genetic techniques to analyse the extent of métissage in Quebec. The scholars examined the distribution of polymorphism of several serum markers in populations of Quebec and diverse regions in France in order to determine the genetic distances, and for that matter resemblance, between the populations of these regions. In each of the 15 French regions under analysis a number of nuclear families were examined,<sup>783</sup> next to 90 families in Quebec from the regions of Saint-Hyacinthe and Monterege (the chosen families). The variables that the scholars have identified in order to chose their experimentees were as follows: the chosen families were not related at least to the second degree, had a negative medical history in terms of heredity and had lived in the region for longer than two or three generations. The results of the study show that there exists a genetic resemblance between the French regions of Poitou, la Catalogne, les Cevennes and Auvergne and the chosen Canadian regions of Monterege and Saint-Hyacinthe. The French provinces of Bourgogne and Normandie showed lesser genetic resemblance with Quebecois regions under scrutiny. Scholars found astonishing that, although the province of Bretagne was the fifth most likely source of French emigrants to New France, the analysis of genetic distances has shown that the French-Canadian population of Quebec was very different from that of Bretagne. Furthermore, the frequency of *Gc variants* observed in Quebec (1,6%) was clearly higher than the frequencies found in different French regions (0,5%). Certain of these variants, however, do appear within Indian populations.<sup>784</sup> De Braekeleer concluded that

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<sup>780</sup> Mario Boleda, “Les migrations au Canada sous le régime français, 1608-1760“, in: *Cahiers québécois de démographie*, 13, no 1 (avril 1984), pp. 23-39.

<sup>781</sup> See the thesis on Acadian refugees by Jean-François Mouhot (EUI).

<sup>782</sup> This word is my own choice

<sup>783</sup> The authors do not specify this number.

<sup>784</sup> Francine Decary et al., “Québec“, in: *Journal de génétique humaine*, vol. 34, no. 2 (1986), pp. 128-129.

genetic origins of the French-Canadian population are not solely restricted to the western provinces of France, but are to be found in other regions - presumably those with Indian populations - as well. The author drew the obvious conclusion that the origins of French-Canadians in Quebec have been heterogeneous rather than homogenous.<sup>785</sup> De Braekeleer thereby referred to the influence of Indian blood that scholars believe to have identified among *Gc variants*.

## 7. Conclusion

While métissage initially was most extensive in Acadia, this was also the region that saw the first disappearance of tribes. Métissage, by its nature, seemed to signal the extinction of Indian tribes since amalgamation of two groups into one meant that a new entity was created at the cost of one of the origin groups. That this was to cause the fading of Indian tribes rather than White groups was predetermined by the fact that the contact situation meant military and technological superiority to the Europeans, thus stunting the growth of the Indian population. While the debates over numbers are by nature controversial, it is certain that Indian populations diminished after European contact. One very rough estimate holds that in 1500 the earth's population was at about 400 million, 80 million of which lived in the Americas. In the middle of the sixteenth century, there were only ten million left on this continent.<sup>786</sup> Yet, Robert Berkhofer has drawn attention to the diversity of Indian cultures: "The first residents of the Americas were by modern estimates divided into at least two thousand cultures and more societies, practiced a multiplicity of customs and lifestyles, held an enormous variety of values and beliefs, spoke numerous languages mutually unintelligible to the many speakers, and did not conceive of themselves as a single people..."<sup>787</sup> Through contact with Whites Indians went through considerable transformation. Some Iroquois, who had been taken prisoners by the Whites, on their return to a Christian reserve exclaimed: "Though knowest well that we now proceed in a different fashion than we formerly did. We have overturned all our old customs. That is why we receive you quietly, without harming the prisoners, without striking or injuring them in any way."<sup>788</sup> It appears that Indians of the Iroquois tribe were either intimidated by the Whites or that they saw that peaceful agreement

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<sup>785</sup> De Braekeleer, *Homogénéité*, p. 43.

<sup>786</sup> Tzevan Todorov, *Die Eroberung Amerikas. Das Problem des Anderen* (Frankfurt, <sup>2</sup>1988), p. 161.

<sup>787</sup> Berkhofer, *White Man*, p. 3 and p. 28f.

<sup>788</sup> Jesuit Relations, XXVII, 235. Cited in Cornelius Jaenen: "Amerindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century", in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. LV, no 3 (September 1974), p. 289.



and understanding would be a better way of interacting with incoming enemies. On the other hand, it was the Whites who were accused of wanting to wage war. Iroquois chief Crowfoot held that “we do not wish for war. We have nothing to gain, but we know that people make money by war with Indians, and these people want war. If these peoples want to incite war, or to steal the right of warring men - that is to fight without the consent or knowledge of the Government - do not let them, and when they find out that there is no profit in it, they will stop.”<sup>789</sup>

The notorious libertinage of Louisiana meant that it was the region to receive the greatest number of *filles du roi*. The complaints of authorities were noted, and metropolitan authorities reacted quickly to remedy the anarchic situation. That is, métissage there probably occurred more as a consequence of libertine relationships than within the institution of mixed marriages. In contrast, for the region of the Upper Country, Gilles Havard emphasized the strategic importance of mixed marriages as a means of colonial politics throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Havard believes that the civil authorities in this region saw in mixed marriages a colonisation tool of cultural, demographic and diplomatic importance, and therefore in general encouraged such unions.<sup>790</sup> The documents, however, show that, regardless of official positions, French traders started to adapt to the customs of the country on their own. Many French traders and soldiers simply seemed to take advantage of native custom, which allowed them to engage in sexual relations without the social pressure of marriage. Pressure for marriage often originated within Indian tribes who were hoping for trading advantages, while the French preferred to opt for concubinage. In the Lower Country, frequency of métissage in the Saint Laurence Valley was low in comparison to other Canadian regions. This may be linked to the fact that many tribes of the region had been killed and that trading posts, where most Frenchmen lived, were rather in the interior of the country. However, the total number of mixed marriages is difficult to quantify, since estimates differ due to the fact that historians have looked at different regions and time periods, and have not always used the same sources. To colonial official Edme Rameau it was clear that métissage was the result of necessity and “natural interest of man abandoned to himself (...) separated from sane and saintly traditions”. Rameau was certain, “this decline of civilized life towards savage life, resulted only in the disorder of morals” and that “the dissolute vices were

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<sup>789</sup> John MacLean, *Canadian savage folk: the native tribes of Canada* (Toronto, 1896), p. 380f.

<sup>790</sup> Havard, *Empire*, p. 203.

exceptional cases”.<sup>791</sup> The identification of métissage with moral decline and degeneration, most prominent during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was a powerful image of Whites contaminated with the customs of Indians. The poor regard for métissage in the French metropolis and among a French public may be accounted for by cultural and racial prejudice concerning the living conditions in New France. Such accounts were mostly filled with stereotypical descriptions of Indian and Metis.

As to genetic studies on métissage, they provide an additional perspective by going beyond statistics. Their scientific validity, however, is questionable for various reasons. First, the study mentioned does not clarify whether the sample is representative, since authors do not mention the total population numbers of the chosen regions. Secondly, the study does not give details on the Indian populations in which the authors claim to have found so-called *Gc variants*. Thirdly, the results are not surprising since in any genetic analysis of the populace racial heterogeneity is more likely to occur than homogeneity, especially in those groups with a history of emigration. In such groups endogamous patterns seem unlikely since they reduce chances of survival in foreign territories. That is, in cases where the new territory radically differs from the home environment there seems to be - almost for biological-evolutionary reasons - a necessity for immigrant groups to cross with other races. In fact, in the case of Canada contemporary discourse stressed the regional “wilderness”, the challenges of survival and the need to find native partners.

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<sup>791</sup> Edme Rameau de Saint-Père *Remarks about the registers from Belle-Isle-en-Mer* (written in the 1800s).

## E. From the Process of Métissage to Mixed-blood Individuals and Groups: The Emergence of the Metis

### 1. The Concept of “Metis”

„Written with a small ‘m’, metis is a racial term for anyone of mixed Indian and European ancestry. Written with a capital ‘M’, Metis is a socio-cultural or political term for those originally of mixed ancestry who evolved into a distinct indigenous people during a certain historical period in a certain region in Canada.“

**Metis National Council**<sup>792</sup>

The above definition was ascribed by a metis nationalist organization in Canada in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>793</sup> The vague formulations of “a certain historical period” and “a certain region in Canada” refer to the Red River in Western Canada in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, Metis groups already existed earlier in the areas of Acadia and the Great Lakes region before they migrated westwards.<sup>794</sup> The process of métissage and of Metis development began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with first intercultural encounters of Europeans and Indians close to Indian villages, primarily in Acadia, La Hève and Isle de Royale. These encounters led to métisation in subsequent centuries at French trading and military posts in the Great Lakes region, particularly the posts of Saulte Ste. Marie, Green Bay, Michilimackinac, Detroit und Chicago, and they finally resulted in Metis communities at the Red River and the North West Territories.<sup>795</sup> These Metis individuals were of French, British and other European origins. How was it that Metis communities formed in some regions, however, despite the initial tendency to either merge metis individuals into Indian tribes or, less so, into White society? Was this the case because French authorities had not sufficiently supervised Indians and the behaviour of Frenchmen towards them, leading to a development that resulted not only in uncontrolled métissage but also led to increased métisation? Why did Metis decide not to become White or to go with the Indian tribe to assume completely Indian manners and way of life? Why did Metis increasingly marry within their own group rather than marry out? Was it because other groups

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<sup>792</sup> *The Metis Nation*, Ottawa: Metis National Council, Fall 1984, p. 6. I am using “metis“ with minor “m“ whenever I want to designate the adjective “mixed“ and “Metis“ with major “M“ whenever I want to point at mixed-blood persons or individuals, regardless of geographic origin.

<sup>793</sup> Parts of this chapter are published in *Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien* 2007, Jahrgang 28, Nr. 2, Bd. 50 under the title “Metis als Vielheiten: die Ethnogenese kanadischer Mischlinge in Diskursen des 17. bis 20. Jahrhunderts”.

<sup>794</sup> See Brown/Peterson, *The New Peoples* and Dickason, *From One Nation*.

<sup>795</sup> See Delâge, *L’Influence*; Dunn, *Metis* and Havard, *Empire*.

rejected them as marriage partners or was it because Metis preferred endogamous unions in order to preserve their own culture? How, as a result of this, did the category of “Metis” come into being and how was it defined in different contexts?

Parallel to the intricate issue of how métissage and métisation resulted in the formation of Metis communities and the creation of the concept “Metis”, the question of defining Metis has led to ample debate in the disciplines of anthropology, political science, ethnology and history.<sup>796</sup> A precise definition of “Metis” in Canada - in view of diverse contexts, in which agricultural, nomadic, Catholic, syncretistic, French- and English-speaking Metis/Halfbreeds and mixed-bloods of several other origins were involved - remains to be formulated. Similarly, the process of métissage by nature of the widespread occurrence of encounters had no single origin; like the formation of Metis identity itself, which was formed synchronically at several places in Canada in different periods and in diverse forms. It comes as no surprise therefore that debates over the formulation of this identity continue to the present day.<sup>797</sup> In any case, male Metis appeared more often in the records than their female counterparts. This sort of preservation in official records made metis identity apparent through the male lense. In light of unexpected results of assimilation endeavours undertaken by state and church authorities, newly emerging metis individuals were, however, difficult to grasp.<sup>798</sup> Rather than taking up a European way of life, Metis had partly engaged in Indian culture or taken up syncretistic religious and cultural customs and given birth to Metis individuals of origins that were diverse and difficult to determine. Yet, most authors writing on the subject take it as given that Metis today form a separate ethnic or aboriginal group in Canada. Catherine Lynn Richardson, for instance, has recently stressed the important role of cultural stories in the construction of a Metis self and identity.<sup>799</sup> Other authors have seen the category of “Metis” as the “geometric place” at which repartition of segregations, the “optical foyer” of censures and prohibitions takes place.<sup>800</sup> Permanent value judgements are made and “Metis” remain a constant object of

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<sup>796</sup> With thanks to Kerstin Martens, Julie Ringelheim, Clara Palmiste, Renate Huber and Ursula Lehmkuhl for their comments and inspiration on parts of this chapter.

<sup>797</sup> See attempts made by Martin Dunn for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

<sup>798</sup> See Th. Bouysse-Cassagne: “Incertitudes identitaires métisses: l’ éloge de la bâtardise”, in: Caravelle, no. 62, (1994), pp. 113-134

<sup>799</sup> Catherine Lynn Richardson, *Becoming Metis: The Relationship between the Sense of Metis Self and Cultural Stories* (Victoria, 2005).

<sup>800</sup> Jean-Luc Bonniol, *Paradoxes du métissage* (Paris, 2001), p. 13.

discourse. In the words of Jean-Luc Bonniol: in a colonial universe, where prejudices are the vectors of fatality, the Metis is judged as dangerous to the existing order.<sup>801</sup>

## 2. The Variance of the Term “Metis” and Equivalent Terms

The variety of terms to designate mixed bloods calls for an analysis of their specific usage in different contexts in order to accentuate the multiplicity of meanings. While a look toward the variety of terminology may not yield the desired results, a systematic history of concepts can produce a more meaningful analysis. By combining the dimensions of *synchronicity* and *diachronicity*, the diversity of métissage processes can be highlighted. Furthermore, through the stress on change and prevalence of concepts throughout epochs, further social historical insights can be gained. By a diachronic focus the prevalence and the validity of a concept can be brought into perspective. It is precisely through an analysis of socio-political contexts that the *variance*, *change* and *success* of concepts can be highlighted: frequency of usage, varying meanings in changing political climates and the number of speakers can be taken as indicators for the success or respective lack of success of a concept. A look beyond the intricacies of the term “Metis” to specific studies on mixed-blood experience illustrates that the process of mixture had a tormented history.<sup>802</sup> At times one finds the acknowledgment that race mixture was merely a cultural assimilation process to which Indians were historically opposed, yet politically and culturally used for their aims of survival and integration.<sup>803</sup> However, the result of a new ethnic group of “Metis” was neither intended nor particularly welcomed by colonial authorities. The fact that mixed-bloods were labelled with new designations different from those for Indians and Whites in Canada shows that this was an identity to be reckoned that contemporaries had to explain, categorize and handle. Yet, the meaning and evaluation of the term “Metis” has varied according to the specific period, geographical areas and speakers in question. In Greek mythology, Metis was the first lover of the God Zeus. She had successfully resisted his advances by transforming herself into different guises. Yet, Zeus made her

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<sup>801</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>802</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*.

<sup>803</sup> See Isabelle Perrault, *Le métissage*. In her perspective, métissage figures as a social process in which White and Indian societies come into contact. Métissage is understood as a concrete, significant, structured and dynamic entity. Perrault proposes two perspectives of analysis: One in which métissage is seen as an integrative concept, i.e. the process that led to the integration of both European and Indian ways into the life of the colony. The second possible perspective would see métissage as the result of “diffuse influences” and “material imprints” which altered the mentalities of those who became sedentary in the colony. In other words, it is about the way in which métissage led to increased sedentarization. Perrault herself adopts a wholly new perspective: she sees métissage as the result of a power constellation in which the socio-political relationship of Indians and colonial authorities and settlers is at the centre of analysis.

pregnant with their daughter Athena and subsequently devoured Metis because he feared to lose his power. He had received the message that a newborn daughter with her would aspire to have equal status with him and that a newborn son would even overthrow him. Finally, it was Zeus himself who gave birth to Athena (since he had devoured the pregnant Metis). The son that he had with his wife Hera became the obstetrician to Athena's birth: he bet Zeus on his head with an axe and thus Athena jumped out in full armature. Her mother Metis is described in Greek mythology as the woman with the most knowledge and the "doer of all just things". By giving salt water in order to provoke vomiting she had helped Zeus to free his sisters and brothers that Titan Kronos had eaten. By devouring Metis and thus effacing female practical power, Zeus himself turned into the "God of wise advice". This legend depicts Metis as symbolizing wisdom and cunningness. Not only did she help the mightiest Greek God to seize parts of his kin; she even became his lover and the mother of his daughter, almost as a reward for her good deeds. Metis' parents, too, had been positive figures for earthly development: her father Okeanos was one of the oldest Sea Gods giving life to all other creatures and was married to Tethys who in turn was the creator of the principal rivers.

While, in general, the term "Metis" today points at individuals who are the offspring of several forms of race mixture, changing usages of the term "Metis" seem to reflect fluctuating conceptions on individuals and societies which prevailed in various places and periods. Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink has proposed a present-day definition of Metis that could apply to all contexts: "someone who derives from the crossing of races, of different varieties of the same type."<sup>804</sup>. The same type refers to human beings, its variants being different races. Yet, the word does not only imply racial differences, but hierarchical understandings as well that are ambivalent. Thus, the word turns into a concept. Hierarchical understandings are fostered and place every human being in a specific position from which one can deduce an understanding of worth, rights and privileges. Historically changing characteristics that are ascribed to mixed bloods can be deduced from etymological analyses of terminology, which refer to occupational and cultural backgrounds of individuals, their anthropological nature and *mentality* or their geographical locations. It turns out that there existed a wide variety of terms to denote human mixture and the processes that led to it; and that meanings and evaluations of these terms have varied diachronically according to speakers, places, periods and contexts in question. A look at the word "métiser", borrowed from the biological sciences, may give us insights on the predicament of "métissage": métiser denotes the process of crossing plants and

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<sup>804</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 104.

animals in order to generate new species and to experiment their variability. In fact, in 1878 French physiologist Claude Bernard held, “one can also try to arrive at creating new species through métissage, take up our old ideas on the possibility of fecunding artificially animals of different species.”<sup>805</sup> Reference to animals was widespread when it came to explain métissage still seen as unusual in the human realm in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Through a lexicographic analysis of dictionary articles in diachronic perspective the usage of “Metis” can be traced. The word originated in 1180 with its variant “mestiz” used by Girart de Roussillon to designate someone of mixed blood who was bad and vile.<sup>806</sup> *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* holds that the spelling was “mestis” in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and then changed into “mestif” in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, before it became “metis” in 1669.<sup>807</sup> Lüsebrink has drawn attention to the fact that the reason that the Portuguese designation “mestiço” preceded the French word “métis” can be attributed to overseas expansion of the Spanish and Portuguese empires which led to first mixed-blood communities in the New World, i.e. especially in the Caribbean, in Brazil and in Central America, before equivalent communities sprang up in French North America. While “Metis” initially designated a “low extraction” (1288),<sup>808</sup> it was first used to name mixed-race animals (1338)<sup>809</sup> before it came to be used for humans (1559) by Amyot in his “Vie des hommes illustres grecs et romains” where he called a mestif among Greeks someone “whose mother is of a different people than the father”.<sup>810</sup> Initially, the meaning of the word referred to offspring of an Indian woman and a white man in Brazil where mestizaje was widespread practice during the colonial period.<sup>811</sup> In 1688, Governor Denonville in New France rather referred to Indians than to Metis and contended that the word “barbaris” meant any savage against whom the French kings were waging war, and that the same word in English was “barbarous wild indian”.<sup>812</sup> In *Furetière*, in 1690 the word “Metis” designated the mixture of Spaniards and Indians and in 1704 in *Trévoux*, in the same way. It gradually came to denote the general mixture between Europeans and Indians. In

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<sup>805</sup> *Trésor de la Langue Française*, p. 743.

<sup>806</sup> M. Pfister, *Lexikalische Untersuchungen zu Girart de Roussillon*, p. 568. See also Bernard/Gruzinski, *Les métissages*, p. 8.

<sup>807</sup> See also Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 94.

<sup>808</sup> This is held also in Tobler-Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, Band 5, hg. Erhard Lommatzsch (Wiesbaden 1963), pp. 1703-1705.

<sup>809</sup> See also F. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle* (Paris, 1880-1901).

<sup>810</sup> *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, sous la direction de Alain Rey (Paris, 1992), p. 1236.

<sup>811</sup> *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, p. 1236.

<sup>812</sup> Archives Nationales, C11A, vol. 10, f. 32f.

1709 *Richelet*, in 1718 *l'Académie*, in 1755 *Prévost* and in 1768 *Feraud* all designated “metis” as being the latter process.<sup>813</sup> *Feraud* specified in 1787 that metis referred solely to individuals in the geographical area of the West Indies.<sup>814</sup>

A more general word for mixed-bloods was the term “sang-mêlé”.<sup>815</sup> Its usage was geographically limited, as was mulâtre: one rarely finds “sang-mêlé” in historic sources on métissage in Canada. One example, however, refers to Louisiana sources dating from the 1730s,<sup>816</sup> which mention, “sang mêlé de métis”, “métis bâtards” and “métis légitimes”. Jacqueline Peterson has not considered these sources,<sup>817</sup> when she affirms that the beginnings of using “métis” lie in the year 1750 when Father Vivier noted, “the inhabitants [of the Pays des Illinois] are of three kinds: French, Blacks and Savages, without speaking of the Metis who are born of both the former for ordinary, against the law of God [i.e. illegitimately].”<sup>818</sup> We find another mention of mixed bloods in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1749, an officer speaks of “sang mêlé” with reference to individuals in Michilimackinac.<sup>819</sup> In 1751, Bossu encountered a “sauvage métis”, which he called “mi-sauvage”, at the borders of the Mississippi river.<sup>820</sup> However, Jennifer Brown claims that the term “metis” first appeared in economic contexts and that servants of the North West Company in Montreal were the first whites to apply the term “metis” and “halfbreed” to mixed-blood populations.<sup>821</sup>

Furetière mentioned usage of “metis” to denote either the offspring of Spaniards and Indians or mixed race dogs called “lévrier”, “levron” and “épargneule”.<sup>822</sup> *Richelet* followed on this track and stated that “metis” was a mixed race dog such as “mâtin” or “levrete”.<sup>823</sup> At the same time, the term “metis” had further variants that ranged from “mestif” or “mestive” in 1702, 1708, 1727 and 1732 in *Furetière*, and in 1704, 1721, 1732, 1740, 1743, 1752 and 1771

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<sup>813</sup> Sylviane Albertan-Coppola: “La notion de Métissage à travers les dictionnaires du XVIII<sup>ème</sup> siècle”, in: Marimoutou/Raccault (éds.), *Métissages* (La Réunion, 1992), p. 35-50, 47.

<sup>814</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>815</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 94.

<sup>816</sup> Archives Nationales, F3, vol. 24, f. 236. “Mémoire concernant les Illinois 1732”.

<sup>817</sup> Peterson, *Ethnogenesis*, p. 57.

<sup>818</sup> The French original reads: “Les habitants sont de trois espèces: des Francois, des Nègres et des Sauvages, sans parler des Métis, qui naissent des uns et des autres pour l’ordinaire, contre la loi de Dieu. “ Cited in: Jesuit Relations 69, p. 144.

<sup>819</sup> Michel Chartier de Lotbinière cited in Jacqueline Peterson: “Many Roads to Red River”, in: Brown/Peterson, *The New Peoples*, p. 47.

<sup>820</sup> Bossu cited in Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 108.

<sup>821</sup> Brown, *Linguistic Solitudes*, pp. 147-159.

<sup>822</sup> Béatrice Didier: “Le Métissage de l’Encyclopédie à la Révolution: de l’anthropologie à la politique”, in: Marimoutou/Raccault (éds.): *Métissages*. Tome I: Littérature et Histoire (La Réunion, 1992), 11-24, p. 11.

<sup>823</sup> Albertan-Coppola, *La notion*, p. 49.



in *Trévoux*, to “mestice” or “metice” in 1743 and 1752 in the same dictionary.<sup>824</sup> Another variant was “mulâtre”, a term which was also used in these dictionaries to denote changing understandings. While in 1690 and 1704, “mûlatre” (while having a more denigrating bent than “métis”)<sup>825</sup> designated in Furetière and in *Trévoux* the mixture of Negro and Indian, it turned into White-Negro in 1759 in *Richelet’s* “Grand Dictionnaire” and remained Negro-Indian in 1761 in *Richelet’s* “Portatif”. *Trévoux* in 1743 and 1752 mentioned that “mulâtre” was a synonym of “métis”, but avoided further reference to races by stating that this referred to a child born of a father and a mother of “different nations” (rather than races). In 1762, the dictionary of the “Académie” took up the meaning of Negro-White, as did *Prévost* in 1750, and as *Corneille* had done in 1694. *Feraud* dictionary agreed in 1787 and took up the meaning of Negro-White. However, in 1765, the meaning of “mulâtre” slipped back to Negro-Indian in *Encyclopédie*.<sup>826</sup> This dictionary literature testifies that words to denote race mixture found recognition and had a particular status. The fact that contemporaries not only coined such words, but that these entered into prestigious dictionaries shows that race terminology became prevalent among the literate public. The theologian and encyclopaedist Denis Diderot saw this democratisation as conducive to the well being of the nation. He saw the state of the language and the progress of the nation as being linked: “The language of a people provides its vocabulary, and the vocabulary is a fairly faithful measure of the totality of the knowledge of this people: from the comparison of vocabulary of a nation in different terms, one can grasp an idea of its progress.”<sup>827</sup> Yet, one might question if the use of race terminology was indeed illustrative of progress of the nation, or if it merely indicated a linguistic differentiation process in which such terminology came to be diffused among the literate strata of society.

In 1770, the Dutch philosopher Cornelius de Pauw used the word *metis* in his “Recherches Philosophiques” in which he held that in the Americas mixed-bloods were generally superior to the native inhabitants because of the partly white blood in their veins. According to this understanding possessing one drop of white blood meant higher status. At the same time, de Pauw as a *conditional mixophile* propagated conduciveness of mixture, but restricted this positive effect to the mixture with European blood: “The Métis, inferior to the Créoles, nevertheless surpass by far the natural peoples of America whose blood has not been mixed

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<sup>824</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>825</sup> See Béatrice Didier, *L’Encyclopédie*, p. 13.

<sup>826</sup> Albertan-Coppola, *La notion*, p. 49.

<sup>827</sup> Diderot in: *l’Encyclopédie* (1751-1772), p. 637. Cited in Albertan-Coppola, *La Notion*, p. 46. Shortly before his death, Diderot joined in Abbé Raynal’s project of writing “L’histoire des deux Indes” and became a staunch critic of European colonialism.

with that of Europeans; from which it may be inferred that the latter barely merit the title of reasonable men.”<sup>828</sup> In 1783, Abbé Guillaume-Thomas Raynal used the term “Metis” in his “Histoire des deux Indes” in order to designate offspring of Indians and Europeans in South America and the Spanish Antilles.<sup>829</sup> Raynal referred to “Metis” negatively and placed them in a hierarchy of races between the *chapeçons* (European Spaniards) and *créoles* (American born Spaniards), and the *nègres* and *indiens*.<sup>830</sup> In present-day usage, the term “créole” rather refers to the French than the Spanish-American context as a designation for descendants of mixed-blood offspring in the Caribbean and in the Antilles. With reference to Negroes in the West Indies, Julien Raymond used the term “Metis” in 1791 to designate the offspring of a fourth degree of intermarriage, i.e. between a tierçon - the child of a white person and a quarteron (child of a mulatto) - and a European.<sup>831</sup> In French dictionaries of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, negative understandings of “metis” prevailed, such as the definition of *metif* or *mestif* as a variant of “metis” referring to the mixing of dog races. It appears that most French authors refer to metis individuals in their Spanish and Caribbean context rather than as part of French cultural life, as if to deny that racial mixture had a place in French reality. This seems to be linked to the denegation and unfavourable image of métissage in the epoch of colonial expansion.<sup>832</sup>

In modern German discourses, the concept *Mischling* appeared as a designation for mixed blood individuals with mostly negative connotations. *Brockhaus* defined it as someone who is genetically mixed and named within this remit Mulattoes, Eurasian or Half-Breeds (of Whites and Indians from India), Mestizos (in Central America), Zambo (of Blacks and Indians), Liplap (of Whites and Malaysians in Indonesia), Pernanakan (of Whites and Chinese in Indonesia) and Bastaards (of Bures and Hottentots in South Africa).<sup>833</sup> In 1843, American physician and surgeon Josiah Nott, being an *absolute mixophobic*, took up racist discourse in America on the intermarriage of Whites and Blacks and Blacks and Indians. In his tractate

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<sup>828</sup> The French original reads: “The Métis, inferior to the Créoles, nevertheless surpass by far the natural peoples of America whose blood has not been mixed with that of Europeans; from which it may be inferred that the latter barely merit the title of reasonable men. “ Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains; ou Mémoires intéressants pour servir à l’Histoire de l’espèce humaine*, 2 vols. (Londres, 1770), ii, p. 168. See also in: Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 88.

<sup>829</sup> The French clergy put this book on the index immediately after its publication.

<sup>830</sup> Guillaume Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique des deux Indes*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1770), viii, chap. 21, p. 155-156.

<sup>831</sup> Julien Raymond, *Observations sur l’origine et le progrès du préjugé des colons blancs* (Paris, 1791), pp. 5-7, p. 9, p. 16.

<sup>832</sup> With thanks to Tamar Herzog for this observation.

<sup>833</sup> *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, vol. 7 (Wiesbaden, 1979), p. 594f.

“The Mulatto a Hybrid - probable extermination if the two races of the Whites and Blacks are allowed to intermarry”<sup>834</sup> the author, after an excursus on mortality and death rates among blacks and mulattos, wrote of the offspring of Blacks and Whites. He claimed that, “mulattos are intermediate in intelligence between the whites and blacks” and that “the two sexes when they intermarry are less prolific, than when crossed on one of the parent stocks”.<sup>835</sup> Nott held that, “the intellectual and moral character of the Europeans is deteriorated by the mixture of black and red blood; while on the other hand an infusion of white blood tends in an equal degree to improve and ennoble the qualities of the dark varieties.”<sup>836</sup> Again, European and White blood was valued higher than its black or red variants. Furthermore, we find different classifications of mixed-bloods in Anglo-American contexts.

The offspring of the mixture of Blacks and Whites as *mulatto* was the equivalent of the French *mulâtre*. Related terms referring to mixed-blood individuals are *half-breed*, a term originating in the Carolinas and coming into use in Canada only in the early 1800s,<sup>837</sup> *half-caste* deriving from English colonial rule in India and used in Canada to denote mixed bloods of English fathers, and *Zambo* for the intermixture of an Indian with a Black.<sup>838</sup> Spanish colonialism in Mexico brought about a system of classification as to the degree of mixing. In the first degree the descendant of a Spanish-Indian couple were *mestizo*. Mestizo and Spanish produced *castizo* children. Spanish-African offspring were called *mulatto* - just as in the case of mixing of Black and White - further distinguished as *Morisco* for offspring of Spanish and mulattoes and *chino* or *albino* for the descendant of a morisco/Spanish couple.<sup>839</sup> Similarly, racist discourses prevailed in Quebec, where in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century mixed-bloods were distinguished as *allophones* and *amérindiens* as opposed to the rest of the so-called pure population. Furthermore, pure blood was ascribed to the population in the area of the Saguenay, referred to as *Saguenayens*, as opposed to the inferiorly placed mixed bloods, the *Métis*.<sup>840</sup> In 1877, Jean Holmes described the mixture of European races with Africans and

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<sup>834</sup> Josiah C. Nott, “The mulatto a hybrid: probable extermination of the two races if the Whites and Blacks are allowed to intermarry”, in: *The American Journal of the medical sciences*, no. 6 (1843), pp. 252-256.

<sup>835</sup> Nott, *The mulatto*, p. 253. At the face at such harsh judgments, André Gide has claimed: “Le nègre est jugé d’autant plus sévèrement que le Blanc est bête.” Cited in Jean Malaurie: “De la conquête du territoire à celle des âmes”, in: *Destins Croisés. Cinq siècles de rencontres avec les Amérindiens* (Albin Michel, Unesco 1992), p. 370.

<sup>836</sup> Nott, *The mulatto*, p. 256.

<sup>837</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 81.

<sup>838</sup> De Quatrefages de Bréau, *Formation*, p. 23.

<sup>839</sup> Garry B. Nash, “The Hidden History of Mestizo America”, in: Nash, Garry B.: *Forbidden Love: The Secret History of Mixed-Race America* (New York, 1998), p. 18.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid.*

Indians as producing sub-races or varied *races métisses*. *Métis* deriving from Spaniards and Portuguese were called *mestizos*, *cholos* and *mamelukos*. *Mulâtres* were born of parents of whom one was white and the other Negro. *Métis* deriving from Negroes and Indians were called *Zambas*, *Lovos*, or *Aribocos*.<sup>841</sup> Yet, scholars are debating whether these categories only designated ideal types or whether they were ever implemented in a social context.<sup>842</sup>

### 3. Variants Used for “Metis” in Discourses on New France and Canada

Initial attempts in the human sciences to address the issue of mixed-blood identity in Canada have resulted in the assumption that “Metis” exclusively designated those individuals who derived from mixture of Indian tribes with Europeans at Red River as a consequence of colonial expansion.<sup>843</sup> However, because of their multiple origins in different geographical areas, mixed bloods had a variety of names, before they finally came to be called “Metis”. Many terms were employed which not only reflected social status or the cultural and racial origins of mixed-blood people, but also alluded to professional occupation or economic function in the fur trade. Often observers of Metis simply described them, as they perceived them, by the colour of their skin, their habits and character traits. Some terms for Metis individuals originated within Indian tribes, which were in contact with them or raised them among their own ranks. Indian tribes - although initially embracing mixed-bloods as their own kin<sup>844</sup> - started to distinguish themselves from the Metis because they increasingly perceived them as different and became concerned with the issue of Indian purity.

Initially, Indian terms considered outer appearance or character as relevant: *bois-brûlé*, for instance, meaning burned wood, referred to the darker skin complexion of mixed-bloods in contrast to Whites; the Ojibwa translation of this term is *wisahkotewan niniwak* meaning *men partly burned*; the English version of the same term is *burnt (or scorched) wood people*.<sup>845</sup> The Cree Indians called mixed-bloods *ooptip ayim sowak* - the people who own themselves, accenting their free-spirited and independent character as documented in many travellers’ accounts.<sup>846</sup> This term probably pointed to the fact that in the Cree Indians’ experience Metis

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<sup>841</sup> Jean Holmes, *Nouvel abrégé de géographie moderne à l’usage de la jeunesse* (Montréal, 1877), p. 5.

<sup>842</sup> With thanks to Tamar Herzog for this remark. Yet, sources suggest that speakers did indeed use some of these terms.

<sup>843</sup> Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, 1983.

<sup>844</sup> See the analyses of Dickason and Peterson.

<sup>845</sup> See Lussier/Sealey: *The Metis. Canada’s Forgotten People* (Winnipeg, 1981).

<sup>846</sup> Julia Harrison, *Metis: People Between Two Worlds* (Vancouver, 1985), p. 12.

did not want to be incorporated into Cree tribes. Furthermore, terms for mixed-bloods have, in different variants such as “half-breed”, “half-caste”, “sang-mêlé”, “mulâtre” and “bastard”, been employed in various colonial contexts and geographical confines. Further etiquettes were „chicot“, „country-born“, „mixed blood“, „coureurs de bois“ and „pork eaters“. <sup>847</sup> Metis historian Martin Dunn has proposed listing the terms that have, at various times and places throughout Canada, been used to designate mixed-bloods: “Canayen, Freeman/Gens libres” - similar to the Cree designation *ootip ayim sowak* -, “Home Guard Cree” and “Home Indian” - both referring to Metis occupation in the fur trade -, ”non-status Indian” - referring to legal status -, “Rupertslander” - as a geographical location, meaning the area around the Red River, and many other terms. <sup>848</sup> These terms, however, have not been applied on a large scale, but only occasionally by several writers such as travellers or company servants. Therefore, they were not commonly and widely used. In fact, today in Canada most of these terms are no longer employed.

Dictionary literature in Canada referred to the Metis in stereotypical manner. In *Lexique de la langue algonquine* in 1886, for instance, Algonquin usage of the term “metis” referred to the fighting spirit of mixed bloods through the phrase *Aiabitawisidjik wi mikakik*, translated as “les Métis veulent se battre”. <sup>849</sup> Being good fighters and warriors was a characteristic ascribed to Metis in many contemporary descriptions. The same dictionary defined “*Metis, o*” as Algonquin for “brûler en passant” or “être en Purgatoire”. <sup>850</sup> “Nekawe metizodjik” meant the souls of hell. <sup>851</sup> The same dictionary pointed at some zoological particularities: while the Saulteaux tribe named a certain Wolfe, “sans poiles”, of a rare species “*packwatac*”, the Metis invented their own expression and called him “loup des prairies”. <sup>852</sup> This entry indicates that Canadian Metis were developing a vocabulary of their own, which was not necessarily a mixture of Cree and French - as is often held <sup>853</sup> - but could also be a French expression unknown in France or among French settlers in Canada. Furthermore, *Dictionnaire canadien-français* states that ”capitaine de sauvages” designated in the early times of colonisation ”un seigneur ou concessionnaire de fief, dont les financiers ordinaires se recrutaient pour la

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<sup>847</sup> Dunn, *Metis*.

<sup>848</sup> Martin Dunn, “The Definition of Metis: A Double-edged Blade” [www.Cyberus.ca/~mfdunn/metis/Papers/CircleSum.html](http://www.Cyberus.ca/~mfdunn/metis/Papers/CircleSum.html) 1994.

<sup>849</sup> André Cuoq (ed.), *Lexique de la langue algonquine* (Montréal, 1886), p. 8.

<sup>850</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214, p. 251.

<sup>851</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>852</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>853</sup> Bakker, *A Language of Our Own*.

plupart parmi les métis et les Indiens”.<sup>854</sup> These *capitaines des sauvages* usually served French governors and colonial officials as interpreters, intermediaries or distributors of the annual presents made to Indians - prominent roles ascribed to the Metis. However, not all those called “Metis” were, in fact, mixed bloods. Although Metis usually worked as “coureurs de bois” or “voyageurs” in the service of fur trading companies, many among the employed “pure” Europeans, too, came to be designated as “Metis”. Observers automatically assumed that all employed traders were mixed blood due to their professional tradition. This is an inadequate generalization, as many traders in the beginnings of the colony of New France were either of French or of another European nationality. Leading present day French dictionaries explain the term “Metis” without naming any ethnic components or professional characteristics: in 1990 it was defined in *Le Robert* bluntly as “qui est moitié d’une chose, moitié d’une autre”, while *Larousse* in 1972 referred to the notion of race: “qui est issu de croisement de sujets de races différentes, qui résulte d’un mélange”.<sup>855</sup> The simple fact of mixture was all that was to be observed when it came to “Metis”.

However, designations for Metis indicated the various forms of mixture as an ethnic, legal, political or professional category. These were intended to label mixed-race individuals or individuals of mixed culture, depending on whether one favours the concept of race or that of culture. In scholarly debate we find, on the one hand, the view that the children of Indian-European marriages in the Canadian fur trade at an early stage differed in both their self-understanding and their appearance from neighbouring Indian and European communities. On the other hand, doubts have been raised as to the assumption that neighbouring Europeans perceived these mixed race individuals and settlements as different from Indian ones.<sup>856</sup> The literature favours descriptions of Metis, in which they are pictured as trappers, fur traders, interpreters, cultural brokers or exotic outcasts.<sup>857</sup> Yet, it is difficult to determine in how far external views and the self-perceptions of Metis themselves really differed from one another. Single sources convey the impression that the Metis were identified by outside observers with only one side of their ancestry, thus seeing them as either „Native“, „French“, „English“ or

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<sup>854</sup> The French original reads: “un seigneur ou concessionnaire de fief, dont les financiers ordinaires se recrutèrent pour la plupart parmi les métis et les Indiens. “ *Dictionnaire canadien-français ou Lexique - Glossaire des mots, expressions et locutions se trouvant pas dans les dictionnaires courants et dont l’usage appartient surtout aux Canadiens-français* (Montréal, 1894), p. 67.

<sup>855</sup> *Le Petit Robert*, 1990, p. 1192. *Larousse*, 1972, p. 574.

<sup>856</sup> Liliane Krosenbrink-Gelissen: “The Metis National Council“, in: *Native American Studies*, vol. 3, no 1 (1989), p. 33.

<sup>857</sup> Peterson/Brown (eds.), *The New Peoples*. See also the usage in diverse Canadian dictionaries.

„Scots“.<sup>858</sup> The sheer overabundance of names for mixed bloods in Canada, that preceded the present day nomination of “Metis”, indicates that mixed bloods were distinguished in various ways from their White and Indian neighbours. The use of “Metis” in particular is repeatedly found in the sources and in the literature on colonial history.<sup>859</sup> The question of when the usage of terms referring to mixed-bloods began is subject to debate, especially at the face of the synchronic occurrence of terms for mixed-bloods among several observers in different places.

Often “savage” was equated with “metis”. This is not surprising since colonists; settlers, historians and travellers in North America often failed to differentiate between Indians and Metis whom they both saw as savage. The word “native” is seldom found in sources relating to early New France. It denotes a similar understanding, in a more differentiated way: “native” is a person which is native to “native soil”, an indigenous person who belongs to the natural environment in which he or she grew up - some French dictionaries, such as Cassell, for instance therefore propose the French word “naturel” as a translation for “native”. However, the same word “natif/native” does exist in the French language as well, precisely to denote a native, to say that someone was born on his native soil. “Savage”, on the other hand, was used in narratives and sources to contrast those people from so-called civilized Europeans and incoming settlers who were supposed to spread European manners. Metis nationalists hold that the term „Canadien“ or “Canadian”<sup>860</sup> is a general term for Metis.<sup>861</sup> They proffer proof for this by pointing to its usage as a name for mixed bloods in sources at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the US-Canadian frontier. Indeed, it is found at the beginning and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century writings,<sup>862</sup> in which the Metis were increasingly called *Canadians*.<sup>863</sup> On 25<sup>th</sup> January 1812, officer Jean-Baptiste Philippe-Charles D’Estimauville told his superior general

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<sup>858</sup> Foster, *The People and the term*, p. 83f.

<sup>859</sup> The term „Metis“ and its variants have also been used in Senegal, Togo and Brazil (partly in modified form, such as „mestico“), and in further countries and colonies, in which mixture with colonists or immigrants and indigenous peoples occurred.

<sup>860</sup> See also the usage by the French officer d’Aleyrac and the historian Alexander Ross. A variant of this term was “Canayen”. Dunn, *Metis*.

<sup>861</sup> Daniels, *We are the Metis*, p. 5.

<sup>862</sup> ‘Metis Nationalism is Canadian Nationalism’ is one of the slogans of this argument. Daniels, *We are the Metis*, p. 52. The Metis historian Olive Dickason has tried to show that the designation „Canadiens“ has also been used to generally describe Indians. She refers to a letter by missionary Joseph Jouvency, who never personally came to Canada, however. Dickason (1993), p. 12, p. 300. For Emile Petitot “Canadiens“ are solely the Metis of Irish descents. See Emile Petitot, *Autour du Grand Lac des Esclaves* (Paris, 1891), p. 91.

<sup>863</sup> André Renaud has analysed the meaning of “Canadians“ of Indian descent in: “Les Canadiens de descendance indienne“, in: *Revue de l’Université d’Ottawa* (1957), XXVII (4), 405-426. See also Gervais Carpin, *Canadien. L’Histoire d’un mot* (Silléry, 1992).

of the military character of Canadians, meaning the Metis. “The character of the Canadian is warlike, proud and susceptible. The history of their ancestors entices them to behave with courage. Yet, one has to know how to take them. The unfortunate ignorance, which prevails in our countryside, has led, together with mercantile speculation, to a love for gain pushed to the extreme which has completely undone almost every other sentiment.”<sup>864</sup> The designations „Canadien“ or “Canadian” have been used in a more differentiated manner and did not only refer to Metis. Long before the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it indicated, on the one hand, Indian women, and on the other hand, mixed bloods raised by their mother's tribe near the fur trading tradition of the St. Lawrence.<sup>865</sup> The terms “native”, “indigenous” and “savage”, “metis” and “Canadian” derive from usage by colonists, settlers and historians encountering or writing on American Indians and mixed-bloods. The variety of terms referring to mixed-bloods in the past has today resulted in the single designation “Metis”.

#### **4. Beginnings and Diversity of Metis Identity in Canada**

While the Metis acquired ethnic status and were being increasingly perceived by outside observers, the question of Metis identity remained controversial. In 1985, two Canadian academics, Boisvert and Turnbull, pointed to a simple sounding, yet complicated question: “Who are the Metis?” The authors tried to differentiate several meanings of terms to designate mixed-blood individuals. This provoked further questions which are closely interrelated: who has been considered historically by whom as Metis in Canada, and who has considered himself as such; when and how did people first start speaking about Metis and Metis communities? One of the principal questions in this debate is who can be called “Metis”, i.e. of which ethnic components does the category consist? The state of the research on mixed bloods and race mixture in Canada, in fact, shows a considerable degree of inconsistency that seems to stem from contradicting definitions and terms. Among scholars in Canada, initial attempts in the human sciences to address the issue of mixed-blood identity have resulted in the assumption that “Metis” exclusively referred to those individuals who were born as a result of the mixture of Indian tribes with Europeans at the Red River during the period of colonial expansion.<sup>866</sup> However, identification of metis individuals poses certain problems. While it is certain that all those persons who are not identified as White or Indian, fall into the

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<sup>864</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Documents Faribault no 207, Québec 25 janvier 1812, signé D'Estimauville.

<sup>865</sup> Foster, *The People and the Term*.

<sup>866</sup> Peterson/Brown (eds.), *The New Peoples*.



category of “Metis”; it is not at all clear who can be positively identified as Metis: any mixed-blood, i.e. offspring of White-Indian mixture? Yet, it remains an intricate issue if the designation “mixed-blood” solely entails mixture between different races, or if it also refers to mixture between Indian tribes? Consequently, offspring of an Algonquian and Iroquois union or of a Micmac and Malecite union would have to be considered as “Metis”. An extension of the term “Metis” would encompass all those individuals who were the product of Euro-Indian mixture, in some cases Indian-Indian, Euro-Inuit and Inuit-Indian mixture and all those who deliberately want to self-identify as mixed-bloods.

Historian John Foster believes that during the first years of the nineteenth century, people of mixed descent in Canada began to be distinguished terminologically from Whites and Indians. Foster claims that before then, people of mixed descent were usually identified with only one side of their ancestry and were called *Native*, when referring to the mother’s line, or *French*, *English* or *Scots* when reference was made to the father’s origin.<sup>867</sup> Furthermore, mixed-bloods in Canada were distinguished as “métis” and “halfbreeds”. Differences in the usage of the terms “métis” and “half-breed” in Canada, and, in fact, elsewhere, are often said to represent specific attitudes towards mixed-bloods: whereas *Métis* seems to refer to the simple fact of mixture, *half-breed* designates the offspring of a morganatic marriage, i.e. the product of an unsanctioned union usually celebrated without consent of a priest. In the latter case, speakers stigmatised mixed individuals as being lawless. Different terms can also refer to various cultural origins. In Canada, the term “Metis” originally referred only to persons of French and Indian ancestry, as opposed to those with English or Scottish ancestry who were rather called *country-born*, *half-caste*, originating from English colonial rule in India and referring to class or status, or *half-breed*, originating in the Thirteen Colonies, spreading to Canada in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and referring to racial origins.

These distinctions alluded to a dichotomy between farmers and buffalo hunters: English half-breeds were often farmers, whereas French métis were hunters.<sup>868</sup> A comparative look at different cultural and periodical contexts shows that the usage of the words *hybrid* and *half-breed* in the English language are filled with a derogatory meaning. In contrast, some authors claim that the words *metis* and *métissage* have positive connotations.<sup>869</sup> In terms of the etymological origins of these words, there is some truth in these assumptions. Metis refers to

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<sup>867</sup> Foster, *The People and the Term*.

<sup>868</sup> See above all in Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien*, and also in writings by Alexander Ross, George Stanley and William Morton.

<sup>869</sup> See for example Foster, *The People and the Term*.

*mixture*, deriving from the Latin word *mixtus* or *mixticius*. *Half-breed* refers to the offspring of a morganatic, i.e. lawless marriage, and is therefore filled with a stigmatising effect with respect to legal and marital status. In conclusion, the negative connotations of terms relating to race mixture seem to derive from images of cultural and racial purity or, for that matter, of the purity of blood. With reference to “différente qualité” one can also claim that these understandings of purity were extended to imply social status, class or worth of individuals. Negative connotations seem to suggest a need for protection of society’s traditional hierarchy in order to guarantee an assumed purity. At the same time, such discourses led to the elaboration of racial classifications, pointing at the subordinate position of colonial offspring, which are identified as the “impure” element.

There is controversy regarding the precise point in time to which the beginnings of Metis identity can be traced. Scholars debate the question of when the term first appeared in the sources. Several authors hold that the first use of “metis” in Canada appeared at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>870</sup> Gilles Havard is among those who subscribe to the view that the term “métis” was already in use in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Canada, although he holds that metis communities were not yet perceived as being distinct from White or Indian ones. He brings proof for this with reference to Gédéon de Catalogne who described an individual called Dubeau as being “mitif, fils d’un françois et d’une huronne”.<sup>871</sup> Bacqueville de La Potherie identified the same individual as being called “Dabeau”<sup>872</sup>. A Jesuit referred to a certain Laurent Duboc who had married the Huron Marie Felix Arontio in 1662. Apparently, the above-mentioned Dubeau was a son of this union.<sup>873</sup> Those authors who did speak of Metis in the early period - either from a subjective or observer’s point of view - have rarely defined the term, such as, for instance, in the utterance “mitif, fils d’un françois et d’une huronne”.<sup>874</sup> In most cases, the degree or components of the mixture were not mentioned. It is only from the 1750s onwards that documents became more explicit on the question of definition: distinctions were made more frequently between the several Indian tribes involved in the mixing, European fathers were more often identified, and Metis individuals and communities were differentiated from Indians and Whites.<sup>875</sup> Yet, not all encounters between these two groups have been fully

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<sup>870</sup> Havard, *Empire*.

<sup>871</sup> Cited in Havard, *Empire*, p. 625. See also Catalogne, *Recueil*, p. 250.

<sup>872</sup> La Potherie, t. 2, p. 296.

<sup>873</sup> Dickason, in: Brown/Peterson, *The New Peoples*, p. 27.

<sup>874</sup> Cited in Havard, *Empire*, p. 625; Catalogne, *Recueil*, p. 250.

<sup>875</sup> See Peterson and Foster.

documented. This was the case not the least because many of the first incidences of métissage happened in the context of rape and kidnapping. Even when there was consent among the partners of such unions, civil and clerical authorities usually labelled these unions as “illicit sexual relations”.<sup>876</sup> Illicit sexual relations were seldom registered in official records, but were frequently reported among French military personnel such as officers and soldiers, or among fur traders, voyageurs and coureurs de bois. Observers noted that these men met Indian women of nearby villages without necessarily making marriage offers to them. Whenever the expression “illicit sexual relations” occurred in the sources, it stemmed from church and state officials who were referring to the illegality and unsanctioned nature of such encounters. In the eyes of protagonists, there was nothing criminal or “illicit” about such unions. For them, they fulfilled sexual desires or served as useful partnerships in Canada’s wilderness. Those women, in turn, who married French officers often retained European surnames in order to be well respected and sometimes even to hide their Indian origins.

Furthermore, the children born of such unions were not registered under the term “Metis” and often their Indian mother was not mentioned in the records. In parish registers, baptism and other documents on early New France “Metis” as a distinct term did not appear.<sup>877</sup> On the one hand, in such sources, Metis individuals were mentioned with a complete French or English name, i.e. as Christians and without reference to an Indian past. On the other hand, there are authors who adhere to the *incorporation thesis* which holds that most early Metis were absorbed by Indian tribes since it were their mothers who took care of them and found the egalitarian environment of tribes appealing. Kathleen Jameison, for instance, among such authors, has held that “the children born of these marriages or from a simple adventure were generally absorbed by the group of the mother.”<sup>878</sup> Cornelius Jaenen claims that up to 1760, all mixed-bloods were considered to be part of Indian nations, pointing at the fact that French authorities did not make any distinction between Indians and Métis - just as the Indians themselves who accepted metis children, as in fact many Whites, as members of their tribe without distinction of skin colour or the origin of fathers.<sup>879</sup> Furthermore, there were cases of adoption where French families took Indian or metis children and raised them as their own so that they were no longer identifiable as Metis.<sup>880</sup> Some historians identify the beginning of

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<sup>876</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 82.

<sup>877</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>878</sup> Kathleen Jameison, *La femme indienne devant la loi: une citoyenne française* (Ottawa, 1978), p. 15.

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>880</sup> Dickason, *A look at*, p. 23.

Metis identity in Canada with the moment when the first white man set foot in North America.<sup>881</sup> Others claim that the existence of metis individuals preceded the creation of a metis identity - and therefore category. A third group identifies the creation of metis identity with the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when first nationalistic rebellions for metis rights occurred.<sup>882</sup> Another group of historians denies that the Metis have a distinct identity at all. They simply view them as an intermediate stage in the transition from a primitive to a civilized way of life in North America. According to this view, once the so-called civilized state is achieved, the Metis lose their separate identity and are assimilated into the majority culture.<sup>883</sup> In the 1980s, this school of historiography provoked a reaction by young historians and ethnologists, who stressed the cultural diversity of a metis identity and refuted the concept of “civilization” altogether because it carries considerable colonial bias.<sup>884</sup> These historians and ethnologists proposed to study métissage from the point of its diversity: they draw upon approaches from the disciplines of history, ethnology and anthropology in order to show how complex Metis identity is.<sup>885</sup>

Self-professing Metis have made attempts to define the precise time of their origin. Duke Redbird, for instance states that the beginning of metis identity was “nine months from the time the first white man set foot in North America”<sup>886</sup>, i.e. the period after conception, and being restricted to mixture with Whites. According to the official historiography „the first white man“ - in prominent terms - would be Christopher Columbus, who, next to Italian and French explorers such as Giovanni Caboto, Giovanni de Verrazzano, Amerigo Vespucci and Jacques Cartier, is considered one of the first European explorers to come to North America. Whether Columbus or his colonial counterparts had metis offspring is unknown, but could be just as probable as the assumption that the majority of male immigrants to Canada had, at one time or another, contact with Indian women. Before these prominent European explorers

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<sup>881</sup> Ibid.

<sup>882</sup> Alvin Kienetz, “Metis ‘Nationalism’ and the Concept of a Metis Land Base in Canada’s Prairie Provinces”, in: *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 15, no ½ (1988), pp. 11-18.

<sup>883</sup> See such writers as Stanley, Giraud and Morton.

<sup>884</sup> See above all Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*.

<sup>885</sup> Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*; Jacqueline Peterson, “Many Roads to Red River: Metis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region 1680-1815”, in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, pp. 37-71; *ibid.*: “Ethnogenesis: Settlement and Growth of a ‘New People’ in the Great Lakes Region 1702-1815”, in: *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 6, no. 2 (1982), pp. 23-64; *ibid.*: “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Metis”, in: *Ethnohistory*, 25, no. 1 (1978), pp. 41-67; Jennifer Brown, “Women as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis communities”, in: *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 3, no.1 (1983), p. 39-46; *ibid.*: “Linguistic Solitudes and Changing Social Categories”, in: Judd/Ray (eds.), *Old Trails*, pp. 147-159.

<sup>886</sup> Redbird, *Metis*, p. 1.

came to the North American continent, however, there were already Vikings in the North who could also be considered as the first Canadian “métisseurs”. Redbird’s biological definition, thus, avoids pinpointing a concrete historical moment for the beginning of métissage as well as the ethnic groups and tribes that were involved. At the same time, his definition creates the image of a magical moment,<sup>887</sup> which seems to monopolize the emergence of a White-Indian metis identity. The hint at a so-called open beginning of métissage distracts from the fact that separate group formation of mixed blood offspring from the beginning of Euro-Indian encounter was rather improbable. The biological impossibility that mixed race offspring could have generated families from the first generation of Metis, does not contradict the understanding of the first white métisseur,<sup>888</sup> who stepped on North American soil, but makes it rather unlikely that shortly after European immigration to the continent metis communities were formed. Mixed bloods in Canada had various origins. If we restrict the perspective to Whites and Indians, we see not only offspring of French fur traders and Cree women - as stressed in early Metis narratives - <sup>889</sup>, but also of English and Scottish traders with Ojibwa and Chipewya women. An additional perspective is the Inuit-Metis mixture in Labrador.<sup>890</sup> Mixture of Whites with Blacks and Blacks with Indians has not been sufficiently researched for the Canadian context; considered to be a marginal phenomenon.<sup>891</sup>

A group formation of Metis as the crossing of Europeans, mainly French, English and Scottish, and Indians, mainly Ojibwa, Chippewa and Cree, at Red River in the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be traced as such: The migration of Great Lakes Metis in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century led to the concentration of Red River Metis in the Northwest of the country. There were two main groups, the French-speaking Métis derived from French fathers and the English-speaking half-breeds derived from English and Scottish fathers. In Canadian historiography up to the present day, these are named as the classical representatives of mixed-race and mixed-cultural communities in Canada, above all in Metis nationalist literature.<sup>892</sup> With a view to a mixture of Indian tribes west of the Red River region, there were also Cree and Iroquois communities. Furthermore, north of the Red River, diverse mixed populations of Saulteaux and Iroquois

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<sup>887</sup> Michel Foucault, *Von der Subversion des Wissens* (Frankfurt a. Main, 1996), p. 70.

<sup>888</sup> “Métisseur“ understood as an individual, who is mainly participating in the process of métissage, i.e. the mixture of the races, through active sexual behaviour.

<sup>889</sup> Lussier/Sealey, *The Metis*.

<sup>890</sup> Dunn, *Definition*.

<sup>891</sup> Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 82 with reference to a report by Laterrière in 1766. Dunn, *Definition*, and Dunn, *Metis*, who argues for an extension of the term „Metis“.

<sup>892</sup> This is reflected in the fact that the majority of works on Canadian Metis refers to the region at the Red River.

were living, equally deriving from marriages in the fur trade.<sup>893</sup> Scholars have labelled these groups as „Northern Metis“ in contrast to the Red River and the Great Lakes Metis<sup>894</sup>, and have distinguished these Metis from Europeans and Indians mainly through the criteria of mixed language<sup>895</sup>, a folklore of their own and specific economic function. Additionally, a distinction was made between nomadic buffalo hunters and semi-nomadic peasants; French-speaking Metis were usually ascribed to the first group and English-speaking to the second.<sup>896</sup> These attempts at differentiation illustrate how divided the notion of “Metis” and, at the same time, how multifaceted it is. The several metis groups reflect a diversity of metis experiences, and show that Metis developed, in fact, a proper identity that differed from both Europeans and Indians, while at the same time showing characteristics that could be just as typical of Europeans (settlement and agriculture) as of Indians (nomadism and chase).

An answer to the identity question of Canadian Metis in legal terms is complicated by the fact that to present those individuals are excluded from the 19<sup>th</sup> century Indian Acts. Yet, the ethnic identity of so-called *non-status Indians* shows no connection to Metis culture or lifestyle as understood by Metis nationalists or self-professing Metis. *Non-status Indians* are usually individuals who do not reside on reservations or are culturally not clearly identifiable as Indians. These are Metis who referred to one side of their ancestry. This confusion in identifying Metis, in legal as well as cultural terms, has led to continued controversy over Metis identity up to the 21st century. At the same time, such discussions support the theory that Metis are not easily defined. The transition from métissage to Metis in Canada, i.e. from the process to the product was not as smooth as it often appears in discourses on New France. Legal procedures and concepts were introduced. Such legal measures were essential since the existence of this new ethnic group gave rise to questions of inheritance, birthrights, language policies and property rights.

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<sup>893</sup> Sawchuk, *Reformulation*, p. 7.

<sup>894</sup> Ibid.

<sup>895</sup> Bakker, *Language*.

<sup>896</sup> Ibid.

The diverse nature of mixed-bloods in Canada is apparent from their ethno-genesis, as identifiable in mostly nineteenth century discourses of historians and travellers. These discourses, however, reflected a European-centred view based on a tradition of racist thinking and therefore these discourses initially lacked capacity for differentiation. At the same time, this European view allowed the group-formation of metis individuals to be traced and later led to politically correct approaches on a concept of a Metis-nation. As a result, it turns out that there is neither a clear definition of “Metis” nor a linear development of “métisation” in Canada. Rather, both processes of definition and evolution are subject to a multitude of, above all, ethnic components and diverse regions. The reports of travellers and historians illuminate to some extent the nature of Metis. Such European views on Metis and their Indian counterparts were dominated by a dichotomy made between “civilization” and “savagery”. Historians of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century have taken up this dichotomist perspective, and for the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have led towards a paradigmatic shift to a position, which considers the cultural diversity of mixed bloods as well as their specific economic function. From these developments one can trace the construction of an ethno-genesis, according to which Metis in Canada evolved from an anthropologically defined *category* to the formation of self-consciousness as an *ethnic group*<sup>897</sup> to finally form a *nation*, which is not yet politically sovereign.<sup>898</sup>

There is considerable colonial bias in descriptions of the Metis since the settlers, travellers and traders reporting their observations made them for the most part with a sense of superiority towards natives. These discourses are at the same time imbued with admiration derived from a romantic Indian image. The discourses are dominated by remarks on the biological and anatomical characteristics of Metis and their specific abilities and appearance. Parallel to this romantic image, the perception of the happy, but naturally defective Indian and Metis is prevalent, which portrays them as lacking character and the capacity for civilization. We can discern a romanticized Metis image - in the tradition of the happy, but socially defective primitive -, extended by a civilizationist critique on the deficiency of character of Metis. Historian Alexander Ross gave the following description: „A Canadian<sup>899</sup> or half-breed [...] is never at home, but driving and carioling in all places, at every opportunity; [...] The neighbourhood of the church on Sundays and holy days has all the appearance of a fair; and

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<sup>897</sup> Abner Cohen sees the ethnic category as a preliminary stage of an ethnic group. Cohen, *Ethnicity*, p. 4.

<sup>898</sup> Argyle, *Size and Scale*, pp. 31-53.

<sup>899</sup> Here „Canadian“ is used with reference to „Metis“.

whether arriving or returning, the congregation is deafened by the clamour, and shocked by the varieties of these braggarts.”<sup>900</sup> In Ross’ observation, the diversity of Metis becomes apparent solely from the authors’ use of two designations for mixed bloods: „Canadian“ and „half-breed“. Ross’ critique of the lifestyle of Metis, refers to a coherent group, which - because of its bond to nature - lacks the capacity to live in a civilised society. This perspective reflects easiness, joy for life and diversity that seems incompatible with a Protestant-style European purism, which stresses control of physical urges and Puritan work ethic.<sup>901</sup> From this critique many travellers have deduced, with reference to the nomadic lifestyle of many Metis, that there were no agricultural peasants among them. Therefore, they were presumably excluded from a higher form of existence. The incompleteness of this perspective becomes apparent when one considers that, in numerous sources, we find reference to agricultural Metis, next to nomadic and buffalo-hunting people.

The Earl of Southesk tried to undo the prejudices on Metis that prevailed in the European metropolises by claiming that “too many at home have formed a false idea of the half-breeds, imaging them to be a race little removed from barbarians in habits and appearance (...) I doubt if a half-breed, dressed and educated like an Englishman, would seem at all remarkable in London society. They build and farm like other people, they go to church and to courts of law, they recognize no chiefs (except for their great hunting expeditions), and in all respects they are like civilized men, not more uneducated, immoral or disorderly, than many communities in the Old World.”<sup>902</sup> Remarkable in Southesk’s discourse is the mention that mixed-bloods form a distinct race. He praises the anatomical advantages of mixed-bloods as such: “Physically they are a fine race, tall, straight, and well proportioned, lightly formed, but strong, and extremely active and enduring. Their chests, shoulders, and waists are of that symmetrical shape so seldom found among the broad-waisted, short-necked English or the flat-chested, long-necked Scotch.”<sup>903</sup> Whenever the Metis are viewed as a group, their anatomical characteristics of outer appearance and talents prevail. From these early writings we can discern an admiration for Metis’ adaptability to savage circumstances. At the same time, however, Metis were made scapegoats. For instance, one observer noted “when

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<sup>900</sup> Ross, *Settlement*, p. 196.

<sup>901</sup> See the writings of the Scottish cultural anthropologist William Robertson in 1779.

<sup>902</sup> Cited in Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 7.

<sup>903</sup> *Ibid.*



accidents occasionally occur, (...) it is often the case that it is not the Savages that are guilty, but their brothers, the Métis, who have badly advised them.”<sup>904</sup>

## 6. Application of Race Theories to the Metis

19th century Canadian debates on métissage were dominated by racial considerations, as illustrated in works by Benjamin Sulte and Lionel Groulx.<sup>905</sup> These authors discussed how “savage” Franco-Canadians became through contact with Indian tribes. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, historians such as George Stanley and Marcel Giraud utilized the dichotomy of “civilized” versus “uncivilized” peoples to account for the emergence of métissage.<sup>906</sup> They concentrated on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Red River area where the birth of the Metis “nation” was identified. Race theorists have tried to describe the Metis nation as being inferior to the French, who were described as “biologically homogenous”.<sup>907</sup> The idea of the purity of blood as a characteristic of a higher existence, in social as well as in race hierarchical perspective, has been applied to the Metis as the form of mixed existence par excellence. We find descriptions of Metis, in which they are described as being absorbed between the “purity” of English and French identity.

The nationalistic Anglo-Canadian *Canada First*-movement<sup>908</sup> described the Metis within the Anglo-French conflict over the colonial division of the territory and the spheres of influence. In a description in 1875 by Charles Mairs, which was published in the newspaper *Toronto Globe*, this is expressed as such: “... the instinct of the English-speaking native, led him [the Metis] to the farm, the instinct of the French-speaking native, urged him to the chase. [...] In general the Frenchman married the Indian and sank to the level of her tastes and inclinations. In general the Englishman married the Indian and raised her to the level of his own...”<sup>909</sup> In fact, contemporary writings stress that the French could not accomplish their colonial goal of Indian assimilation to Frenchness through the means of mixed marriages, since Indian lifestyle was more appealing to the French. In light of this failure, Mair uses the comparison between English and French race mixture for propagating the idea that the British

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<sup>904</sup> Marc Sauvalle, *Louisiane, Mexique, Canada* (Montréal, 1891), p. 276.

<sup>905</sup> Lionel Groulx, *La naissance and Sulte, Canadiens-Français* (Montréal, 1919).

<sup>906</sup> Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien* (Paris, 1945), and George W. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada. History of the Riel Rebellions* (Toronto, 1936).

<sup>907</sup> Sulte, *Canadiens-Français*.

<sup>908</sup> Owrarn, *Canadian*. See also Denison and Mair, in Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 54.

<sup>909</sup> Cited in: Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 54.

were destined to pursue an imperial colonial policy, while the French are meant to be thrown back to the European continent.<sup>910</sup> Such racially motivated explanations were nourished by the conflict over the concept of “civilisation”. Behind this concept, authors have tried to detect a White-European image of a teleological progress of humanity. Humanity, it was held, developed from a wild, barbaric state towards the salvation of civilisation, i.e. European way of life.<sup>911</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, for instance, has tried to explain this conviction of European superiority through the fact that Europeans thought that they held a, if not *the* religious truth in their hands and minds. The written record of the Bible<sup>912</sup>, according to Greenblatt, led to Europeans becoming the victim of narcissistic feelings, as was manifest in their own speech, and, in addition, in the possession of a technology to preserve and multiply this speech.<sup>913</sup> Writing constitutes not only a means of conserving knowledge and stories, but also a means to memorialise sources, on which the recording of history in the Western tradition is based. Since indigenous peoples did not use such possibilities, because of the lack of written records and the orientation to an oral tradition, their history remained invisible and shadowy in the perception of Westerners accustomed to reading and writing rather than telling history.

George Stanley, one of the representatives of 20th century historiography stressing the dichotomy of primitivism and civilisation, tried to explain the end of the old order and the breakthrough of the new order. It threatened to destroy both Indians and Metis, once more with the superiority myth of Europeans: “...the European, conscious of his material superiority is only too contemptuous of the savage, intolerant of his mental processes and impatient at his slow assimilation of civilization. The savage, centuries behind in mental and economic development, cannot readily adopt himself to meet the new conditions.”<sup>914</sup> Yet, it remains unclear if Stanley here justifies European mentality towards Indians and Metis, or if he simply tries to recount what Europeans were, in fact, thinking on their encounters with Natives. Since this line of discourse is pursued through his whole account on Metis history, it seems appropriate to assume that Stanley understands the lifestyle of Metis, like French ethnologist and historian Marcel Giraud ten years later, as an outdated and inferior form of existence,

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<sup>910</sup> Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 54.

<sup>911</sup> LaRoque, *Literature*, p. 86. LaRoque herself uses the German word “Weltanschauung” in this context.

<sup>912</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions. The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago, 1992). Yet, it is to be asked why this feeling of superiority should be restricted to Europeans. Muslims, too, have a written holy book from which they derive their belief in a higher destiny. Greenblatt is right, however, to stress that the possession of technology is the vital point in spreading this superiority.

<sup>913</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>914</sup> Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 194.

which was necessarily bound to fall victim to European civilisation and progress.<sup>915</sup> Stanley constructs the downfall of the nationalist movement of the Metis in teleological manner, a downfall, which appears in this view as the natural consequence of an imperial policy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, aimed at expanding in North America through European settlement in the West.

In contrast, we find views, which see mixture as a natural development and as cultural gain. The Scottish archaeologist Daniel Wilson, for instance, tried to undo racist prejudices of Europeans. In the Metis of the Canadian West, Wilson saw living proof of the fertility of racial mixture.<sup>916</sup> A further exception from stereotypical thinking and ethnocentric perceptions are the reports by Earl of Southesk in 1859 and 1860, in which he contradicts the prejudices on the European continent towards the Metis in North America: “Too many at home have formed a false idea of the half-breeds, imagining them to be a race little removed from barbarians in habits and appearance...I doubt if a half-breed, dressed and educated like an Englishman, would seem at all remarkable in London society. They build and farm like other people, they go to church and to courts of law, they recognize no chiefs (except when they elect a leader for their great hunting expeditions), and in all respects they are like civilized men.”<sup>917</sup> Here we find a comparison to “civilised” patterns of behaviour, as prevalent among Englishmen. Southesk used these descriptions to stress that mixed bloods, too, could lead a civilised way of life, which went beyond mere functioning in the present. At the same time, we find the acknowledgement that Metis formed communities of their own, which differed from European ones by their annual buffalo hunting activities at the Red River. The image of the hunt as a characteristic of Metis has been repeatedly stressed in numerous writings of historians.<sup>918</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

It was partly through race terminology that Metis were recognized and established as a distinct identity. However, ethnically there were a variety of Metis experiences in New France and Canada. Attempts have been made to define Metis not only according to ethnic and racial components, but also through membership to different fur trading traditions in different geographic areas. Peterson/Brown hold that by the 1970s the meaning of the term “*Métis*“ had

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<sup>915</sup> Ibid., xxv-xxvii.

<sup>916</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>917</sup> Southesk, reprint 1969, p. 360-1, cited in Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 7.

<sup>918</sup> Sprenger, *Buffalo Hunting*.

burst its linguistic and geographical confines. It came to signify “any person of mixed Indian-white ancestry who identified himself and was identified by others as neither Indian nor White.”<sup>919</sup> Today, the term “Metis” in Canada generally encompasses offspring of European fur traders and indigenous women who formed their own communities in the Great Lakes, in Canada’s Northwest and at the US-Canadian border regions. The “beauty” of the Metis was due to his cardinal function in between two societies. At the same time, there was stigma attached that was difficult to undo, deriving from illegitimate and mixed birth. The equivalent of “bastard” circulated in the minds of colonial opponents of race mixture. Rather than accepting the cultural richness and freedom of the Metis, the burden of two cultures was stressed, which conveyed the image of the mixed-blood as being caught in between. However, from the perspective of the Metis himself, this was an erroneous image: the Metis had the freedom of choice, to tap into either identity - to speak in Jennifer Brown’s words. Yet, he often refrained from doing so, either because he did not know of his dual ancestry or because he preferred - due to social stigma - not to out himself as being of dual nature. The category of “Metis” remains an ambivalent one: if it is a matter of choice, it is not as distinctive as national categories such as German, French or English. Still, these latter identities can be made a choice, too, by assigning citizenship to those who are said to “deserve” it. By birth and cultural origin a Metis has always the option of choice: he or she can opt to belong to one of his origin cultures, or he or she can opt to be a Metis. This is the attractiveness of being “Metis”, while at the same time being controversial in perception.

Presumably, mixed-bloods did not necessarily view themselves as being different from pureblooded individuals. Yet, mixed-bloods sometimes used their own labels to express either a submissive, proud, rebellious or a distinctive view of themselves. Outside descriptions usually referred to bodily and mental characteristics and referred either to appearance, status, occupation, place of birth or the nationality of their European fathers. In most cases, the results of *métissage* were seen as threatening as becomes obvious in unfavourable descriptions of mixed-bloods. This becomes also evident in the very practice of placing mixed-bloods in intermediate positions between the parent races, by naming them “*métis*”, “mulatto”, “mestizo”, “half-breed”, “hybrid” or “bastard”. As far as the evaluation of “*métissage*” is concerned, there exists a tendency among authors to differentiate positive and negative outcomes of the process. In its negative effects, *métissage* was described as having engendered feelings of threat towards the majority culture. A look at discourses of

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<sup>919</sup> Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, p. 5.

contemporary intellectuals unravels a usage of the term, which presents race mixture as leading to human degeneracy with respect to society in the colonies. In fact, Chateaubriand was convinced that “biological métissage creates vicious, ambiguous, depraved individuals”. He had observed during his voyages to America “finally, a sort of metif people was formed, born of colonists and Indian women”.<sup>920</sup> Guiliano Gliozzi has drawn attention to denigrating implications of métissage as viewed by intellectuals. He has stressed that, in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, human races were seen as the result of a primitive métissage, which corrupted the white man by mixing his blood with those of animals. The coloured man is viewed as degenerate, and métissage, in consequence, is viewed as an instrument of contamination.<sup>921</sup>

The mixed-blood was seen as someone who “ranks below the dominant group but above the unmixed indigenous, slave or ex-slave populations”.<sup>922</sup> From this there seems no escape other than social stigma or affiliation to one group through further marriage into the dominant group. This negative view on mixed-bloods was in some ways the logical consequence of fears of degeneration and decline through contact with foreign races. At the same time, the ambivalent desire to want to mix with them, to assimilate them to one’s own image and customs and to undo therefore native identity was an expression of colonial domination that aimed at supremacy over new territories in the hands of native groups. The global prospect of human history as decline through race mixture, if the superior race, the Aryans, cannot win the battle of the races, was an image created in the minds of mostly 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century European intellectuals who were concerned with ideological superiority over other races, the providence of humanity and an ultimate aim in history, such as represented in Hegel’s “Weltgeist”. If this was to be personified by “race”, then the Weltgeist was indeed haunting every corner of the world where races were meeting.

The widespread acceptance and success of the cultural myth<sup>923</sup> of European superiority has led to a hierarchisation of Metis in relation to Indians according to agriculture and nomadism. Since Metis were partly agriculturalists, they were placed higher in this hierarchy than purely nomadic Indians, but lower than Europeans who were considered as being

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<sup>920</sup> The French original reads: “Le métissage biologique crée des individus vicieux, ambigus, dépravés.” Chateaubriand, *Mémoire*, tome 1 (Paris, 1848), p. 313.

<sup>921</sup> Guiliano Gliozzi: “Le métissage et l’histoire de l’espèce humaine”, in: Marimoutou/Raccault (éds.); *Métissages. Tome I: Littérature et Histoire* (La Réunion, 1992), 51-58, p. 51. This view, however, only makes sense if one accepts to give “blood” a prominent role and to see it either as “pure” or “impure” as is prevalent in religious traditions.

<sup>922</sup> Fredrickson, *Mulattoes*, p. 104.

<sup>923</sup> Jennings, *Invasion of America*.

completely agricultural. This “intermediate” position of Metis was used to describe them as a vanishing category, lost between two forms of existence, the “primitive Indians” and the “progressive Europeans”. Metis were seen as a group, which had not succeeded in making the complete transition towards the progressive culture, since they had kept to some of their indigenous traditions.<sup>924</sup> On the other hand, some authors see Metis culture as a static intermediate stage rather than the symbol of a progressive transition from primitivism to modernity in Canada.<sup>925</sup> These authors refer to the extinction of a purely nomadic form of existence through agrarian and semi-nomadic elements, in the wake of which Metis initially showed great flexibility by adapting to new living conditions.<sup>926</sup>

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<sup>924</sup> LaRoque, *Literature*, p. 87.

<sup>925</sup> See for this perspective above all Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien*.

<sup>926</sup> Ibid. and Joseph Howard, *Strange Empire: Louis Riel and the Metis People* (Toronto, 1974).

## F. The Community Formation of the Metis

### 1. Metis as Distinct Communities

“The living arrangements, material culture and occupations of Métis set them apart from their Indian kin and neighbours and from European society to the East. The establishment of permanent villages and towns, geographically separate and visually distinct from adjacent band villages, was a critical hallmark of Métis development.”

Jacqueline Peterson<sup>927</sup>

One of the visible results of mixed marriages was increased métisation. In 1757, a commandant at a military post in the Upper Country complained on the low numbers of French habitants in the area. At that period, the population in Detroit was at two hundred people. By that time, first metis communities had already emerged. In Michilimackinac, the military man Louis-Antoine de Bougainville noted the presence of a Metis community.<sup>928</sup> The Upper Great Lakes region during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, in fact, showed a “sizeable Metis population” with growing towns and villages in which mixed-bloods were seen as “economic middlemen, intercultural brokers and interpreters linking tribal peoples and Anglo-American patrons interested in the fur trade.”<sup>929</sup> Thus, Great Lakes Métis started to form their own distinct identity. Territoriality played a vital role in forming Metis identity.<sup>930</sup> The attachment to indigenous soil was one of the characteristics of Metis community formation. Furthermore, it was the “preserved memory of their different ancestries”, in which métissage scholar Jean-Luc Bonniol sees the specificity of metis communities in general.<sup>931</sup> Bonniol further holds that this memory was registered in the genealogical trajectory, of which the individuals were the culmination point. It was reflected in their physical aspects, which tended to structure them along the criterion of origin.<sup>932</sup> According to Francis Affergan the phenotypic marker is at the centre of two simultaneous strategies, on the one hand resulting from an ontological and

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<sup>927</sup> Jacqueline Peterson, “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis“, in: *Ethnohistory* 25, no. 1 (Winter 1978), p. 51.

<sup>928</sup> Jaenen, *Colonisation*, p. 19.

<sup>929</sup> Peterson, *Prelude*, p. 41.

<sup>930</sup> For the case of the Prairies and Quebec, see Étienne Rivard, *Prairie and Quebec Metis Territoriality: Interstices territorial and the Cartography of in-between Identity*, PhD (Vancouver, 2005).

<sup>931</sup> Jean-Loup Amselle: *Paradoxes du métissage*. (Paris, 2001), p. 12.

<sup>932</sup> *Ibid.*

essentialist vision of colours, and on the other hand, from an overture on two possible games of interpretation, varying in function of different isotopies.<sup>933</sup>

Brenda Manuelito argues that as early as by 1690 colonial officials started to recognize Metis in Canada as a distinct community.<sup>934</sup> Descriptions of the buffalo hunt practice in the prairies have often been used to identify Metis communities. These hunts happened annually and in groups, and they were seen as one of the characteristics of Metis existence. Yet, the buffalo hunt was not the only Metis tradition. Many authors have also tried to ascribe Metis difference in typical dress, such as the multicoloured Metis slash, in language, such as Michif spoken in Montana, Dakota and some Canadian regions,<sup>935</sup> and in diet, such as pemmican eaten as a staple mostly at the Red River region.<sup>936</sup> In fact, Jennifer Brown has held that on Canada's Atlantic Seaboard not only metis individuals, but also families and communities were identifiable by the 1600s, "although not classified according to race".<sup>937</sup> According to Jennifer Brown, second generation Metis began to establish families of their own from 1809 onwards. The number of Metis householders therefore rose to between a minimum of 40, or 42 percent, and a maximum of 60, or 63 percent. In 1816, 87 percent of the 84 households in Michilimackinac were Metis.<sup>938</sup> Brown holds that in the region of the West "Metis life was characterized by matriorganization. Daughters were more likely than sons to remain in the West, marrying there and contributing to the rapid population growth of the Metis."<sup>939</sup> Brown contends, "by early nineteenth century, biracial families in the fur trade context of northern North America numbered in the thousand. Their progeny were moving in varied cultural and ethnic directions - Indian, White, Metis."<sup>940</sup>

Authors who refer to a distinct Metis identity claim that Metis differed from Whites and Indians, while at the same time retaining some of the typical characteristics of either. Emile Petitot described Metis at the Slaves Lake and Mackenzie as such: "The French has

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<sup>933</sup> Ibid.

<sup>934</sup> Brenda K. Manuelito, "Intermarriage with Non-Indians", in: *Encyclopaedia of North American Indians. Native American History, Culture and Life from Paleo-Indians to the Present*, ed. Frederick E. Hoxie (New York, 1996).

<sup>935</sup> Pieter Jan Bakker, "A Language of Our Own" – *The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Metis* (Amsterdam, 1992).

<sup>936</sup> See Peterson/Brown; Dickason, Giraud and Dunn.

<sup>937</sup> Jennifer Brown, "Linguistic Solitudes and Changing Social Categories", in: Judd/Ray (eds.), *Old Trails and New Directions* (Toronto, 1980), pp. 147-159.

<sup>938</sup> Elisabeth Taft Harlan/Elisabeth Case (eds.), *1830 Federal Census - Territory of Michigan, Detroit* (Michigan, 1961).

<sup>939</sup> Brown, *Women*, p. 39

<sup>940</sup> Ibid., p. 40.



assimilated to himself the redskin element by engaging in veritable marriages with Danite girls and by procreating a metis family (...) of French esprit and customs. (...) The metis families in the Northwest are therefore French or at least Catholic. The Metis who have remained isolated in the woods, close to their Indian mothers, are almost entirely rejected by the British or at least the protestant bourgeoisie.”<sup>941</sup> Author Faribault-Beauregard described Michilimackinac at the end of the French period in the middle of the 18th century as hosting “twelve to fifteen French families of which some are of mixed blood established at this post.” Comte de Chateaubriand held that encounter between Whites and Indians produced offspring called *Bois-Brulé*. He believed that mixed blood offspring inherited the characteristics of their parents, and acknowledged that they established their own group. He described this group as follows: “Finally, a sort of metis people born of white colonists and Indians was formed. These men called *Bois-Brûlés*, because of the colour or their skin, are the brokers of change among the authors of their double origin. Speaking the language of their fathers and their mothers, they have the vices and the virtues of their races.”<sup>942</sup> Metis historian Duke Redbird made an attempt at outlining the process of Metis group formation: he traced the development of their ethnic awareness as initially emerging in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. He took as his parameters the lack of awareness as to the specific experience of being “metis”, leading to a clearer awareness of this at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and to nationalistic mobilisation at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>943</sup>

In Canada, further remarks on the group formation of Metis mainly stem from fur trading company clerks who were in close contact with Metis working in the fur trade. One such example are the observations of John Mac Lean, a company servant of the Hudson’s Bay Company, who described English Metis as a distinct group: “The English half-breeds, as the mixed progeny of the British are designated, possess many of the characteristics of their fathers; they generally prefer the more certain pursuit of husbandry to the chase, and follow close on the heels of the Scotch in the path of industry and moral rectitude.”<sup>944</sup> In the writings of the North West Company clerk Colin Robertsons we find the following observation on the Metis in 1812: “They think themselves the happiest people in existence, and I believe they are

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<sup>941</sup> Emile Petitot, *Autour du Grand Lac des Esclaves* (Paris, 1891), p. 92.

<sup>942</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 94. The French original reads: “douze à quinze familles françaises dont quelques uns de sang mêlé établies à ce poste (Michilimackinc).” Marthe Faribault-Beauregard, *La population des forts français* (Paris, 1982), t. 1, p. 118.

<sup>943</sup> Duke Redbird, *We are Metis* (Toronto, 1980).

<sup>944</sup> John Mac Lean, *Notes of a Twenty-five Years’ Service in the Hudson’s Bay Territory*. Cited in Stanley, p. 9.

not far mistaken.”<sup>945</sup> The description of a “happy people” is also to be found in observations by Alexander Ross: „They are great in adventuring, but small in performing; exceedingly plausible in their dealings. Still, they are oftener more useful to themselves than to others, and get through the world the best way they can, without much forethought or reflection. Taking them all in all, they are a happy people.”<sup>946</sup> In the same year D’Estimauville noted: “This weak and credulous people governs by that spur that blinds it, lets itself be conducted by the impulsions of this little number of speculators who only think of themselves in order to lead them into error.”<sup>947</sup>

At Red River, a mission was founded in 1818 in order to convert the local Metis people. This points at the fact that the presence of Metis was acknowledged to a degree that the setting up of a mission became vital in order to survey and protect them. The mission comprised the territory between the rivers leading into James Bay and Hudson’s Bay. The aim was to convert “a multitude of barbarians of diverse nations, the instruction of the Metis or Bois-Brûlés to Catholic religion, for the most part yet being infidel, the return of a certain number of bad Christians to piety and good manners”. In short, Red River was according to official discourse meant to become “a civilised colony”. The Red River missionary Sévère Joseph-Nicolas Dumoulin wrote to the Bishop of Quebec referring to Bishop Laval who had sent Father Claude Allouez to preach the gospel to the Ottawa in 1663. In terms of the quality of its field to be converted, Dumoulin compared Red River to these early endeavours by Allouez and thought that there was nothing wrong with keeping up traditions that had been respected in the past, such as Bishop of Quebec Hubert becoming Grand Vicar in 1778 to convert the Illinois. Dumoulin took pains to justify missionary activity in the area to convince superiors of the necessity of supporting their work. The role of the Grand Vicar as head of the Red River mission was vital, he thought, otherwise there would have been no one to instruct him in 1820 to proceed to Hudson’s Bay. A “single converted soul” would be enough to arouse the admiration of good Christians, considering that this soul had been gained “at the price of the blood of a God”.<sup>948</sup>

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<sup>945</sup> Cited in Howard, *Strange Empire*, p. 40f.

<sup>946</sup> Ross, *Settlement*, p. 193.

<sup>947</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Documents Faribault no 207, Québec 25 janvier 1812, signé D’Estimauville. By “speculators” he is making allusion to white settlers trying to get hold of Metis lands.

<sup>948</sup> Archives du Séminaire de Québec, 17 no 4, Notice sur les Missions de la Rivière Rouge et du Sault Ste. Marie, Québec 10 mars 1824, signé Dumoulin, ancien missionnaire de la Rivière Rouge.

The success of missions was further underlined by the fact that five years later there were already 800 converted souls, including children as well as adults, 120 marriages had been performed or rehabilitated, and 150 persons had been admitted to first communion. Furthermore, the local school showed great success and the pupils were well advanced in the humanities. Dumoulin listed these points to contradict the view that the mission needed no bishop, and cited the case of Boston, which did have a bishop despite the fact that in 1810 it had a substantially smaller Catholic population. Red River needed a bishop; too, it was held, to give orders to the pupils, to preside over their education and to survey the workers at the mission. Dumoulin stressed that one should not regard the formation of clerics in the country as chimerical, considering Metis children who proved to be far superior in intelligence to other children, and who had “tender piety” and “innocence of manners”. Dumoulin was not surprised that, especially among Protestants, there was an atmosphere of jealousy towards the missions; especially since Anglican missionaries had little success either with whites or “savages”. Dumoulin agreed with the success of the Jesuit missionaries giving them presents in order to win over the Indians. Yet, he was conscious of the fact that missionaries no longer had the same resources as the early Jesuits who belonged to powerful confraternities and had had just as powerful institutions to back them. Dumoulin closed his letter by listing the names of 18 missionaries that he asked to employ, one for each mission in the region.<sup>949</sup>

Jean Holmes described the North West Territories as the region between the Glacial Ocean and the Atlantic, Canada, the United States, the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. The Hudson’s Bay Company for a sum of 300.000 Louis or 1.500.00 pound sterling ceded this region to Canada in 1869.<sup>950</sup> According to Holmes, its population was at 56.000 individuals of whom 4.000 were foreigners from Europe and the other parts of America. Furthermore, the region counted 12.000 to 15.000 Metis: “This population, so weak in relation to the extent of the country, offers a unique rapprochement of diverse races, the elements that it is composed of belonging to fourteen civilised nations and twenty-two savage tribes. The majority of the French Métis or Canadiens, and a large part of the indigenous savages are Catholics.”<sup>951</sup> Holmes made an attempt to define the components of Metis identity and counted the nations and tribes that were involved in métissage. However, he did not specify which nations and tribes these were in particular, pointing at the fact that mixture was so widespread that it was

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<sup>949</sup> Ibid.

<sup>950</sup> Jean Holmes, *Nouvel abrégé de géographie moderne à l’usage de la jeunesse* (Montréal, 1877), p. 54.

<sup>951</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

difficult to distinguish apart its components. As to the “fourteen civilised nations” and the “twenty-two savage tribes”, he probably counted all European “civilised nations” coming to Canada and the principal Indian tribes of the region. Gerbié described the process in the region as such: “A short time after the arrival of Frenchmen on the borders of the Saint-Laurence, some among them ascended the river up to its extremity at the Great Lakes, disappeared in the depth of the forests, reached the valley of the Red River and dispersed in the vast region of the North-West. The ones came back in the province of Québec to make part of the discoveries of their compatriots, while others continued to run the woods, living in the mode of the Indians of the products of chase and fishing. They were called “coureurs de bois”, or “bois-brûlés”. Having not taken their wives with them, they married Indian women. From there derives the name of Métis given to their descendants.”<sup>952</sup> At the Red River, the centre of activities was Fort Garry at Winnipeg, under the command of the Hudson’s Bay Company, this was a point at which Indians and Metis exchanged their furs for provisions.<sup>953</sup> According to Benoist, up until 1870 the only Whites in the region were of Scottish or Irish descent and many of them entered into legitimate unions with Indian women to form the “Metis race”.<sup>954</sup>

## 2. The Specific Experience of Being Metis in Canada

It was above all John Foster who has pointed at the difference between Metis who belonged to the St. Laurence fur trade and those who belonged to the Hudson’s Bay tradition.<sup>955</sup> Jennifer Brown, too, has pointed at the working conditions in the fur trade in explaining the specific experience of the Metis. She has termed the Metis’ experience during the fur trade of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as opposed to that of the Europeans, “linguistic solitudes”.<sup>956</sup> This formulation seems to point at the members of a community, who, through social changes to their lifestyle, the intrusion by colonists or immigrants and the geographical scattering of their ancestors, were faced with stereotyping and categorizing. In Brown’s argument, Metis experienced loneliness, which did not necessarily reflect their own self-perception. According

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<sup>952</sup> Frédéric Gerbié, *Le Canada et l’immigration française* (Québec, 1884), p. 297. The reductive view of Metis community formation deriving from the shortage of White women is a common theme. Yet, it neglects the fact that White men chose Indian women not only when there were no White women available. In many cases, they felt attraction, love or desire towards Indian women, who were not merely seen as substitutes for white women.

<sup>953</sup> Ibid.

<sup>954</sup> Charles Benoist, *Les Français et le Nord-Ouest canadien* (Bar-le-duc, 1895), p. 100.

<sup>955</sup> Foster, *The People and the term*.

<sup>956</sup> Brown, *Women*, p. 147f.

to Brown, Metis loneliness can be explained as follows: from the pressure to adapt to transformation of Canadian society in the wake of the fur trade, the Metis were confronted with rapid change in living and working conditions dating from the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>957</sup> As a consequence, Metis were faced with a multitude of designations, which reflected their numerous functions in the fur trade, as they had developed during the transition to industrialization. Brown's argument neglects the fact, however, that the first variants designating mixed-bloods stem from a period before the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. with the first appearances of mixed blood individuals, and also occurred outside the context of the fur trade. Therefore, it seems more appropriate to assume that mixed bloods, from the very beginning of their existence, were confronted with a multitude of designations, that stemmed not only from transition processes during the fur trade, but also referred to physical traits or mental characteristics or. As a consequence, references to mixed bloods in Canada were not the result of denominations based on their functions in the fur trade, but the result of the perception of elite settlers prior to the 19th century, who saw such children as a threat to their established economic, cultural and political status.

As much as it is true to see "Metis" as the result of colonial expansion towards the West and as being composed of different ethnic groups, it would be short-sighted to view Metis solely through the lens of conflicts engendered by the dichotomy of European-ness and indigeneity in North America. Traditionally, 19<sup>th</sup> century historiography, as represented by the writings of authors such as Marcel Giraud, George Francis Stanley, William Morton and Alexander Ross has favoured such a dichotomist perspective. According to these writers, the competition between European civilization and indigenous savagery was fundamental in explaining the emergence of the Metis people. In this view, Metis were seen as the product of the conflict between two lifestyles, the one dominant (European), the other vanishing (Indian). Today, most Metis scholars prefer to dissect the notion of "metis" into its several ethnic and regional components in order to show how diverse and colourful it is, rather than stress its emergence through European expansion in North America. Although the latter approach may have an air of oppressing colonialism to it, from which most scholars prefer to distance themselves, it is impossible to have one without the other, i.e. Metis in Canada are just as much a multifaceted ethnic category different from Whites and Indians as they are the product of North American colonial expansion and the conflicts that it entailed and engendered among those groups.<sup>958</sup>

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<sup>957</sup> Brown, *Women*, p. 157.

<sup>958</sup> As representative of the first group see Foster and Dunn, for the second group Stanley and Giraud.

Jennifer Brown and Jacqueline Peterson have described Metis negatively as people who were identified neither as Indians nor as Whites.<sup>959</sup> In terms of landholdings, the authors have claimed that the Metis were collectively characterized by “an almost universal landlessness” and “an oppressive poverty”. Precisely for lack of landholdings and of legal recognition prior to and up to the 1980s one metis group identified itself as North America’s “non-people”.<sup>960</sup> There is no doubt, however, that preceding centuries had seen Metis self-assertion. While some Metis had opted to remain with their Indian neighbours and, thus “went with the tribe”, others formed their own groups, developed new ways of life, dresses and language and constituted new communities. Hence, certain areas remained completely White or Indian, while others became predominantly Metis. Such was the case in the Great Lakes and at the Red River in Western Canada where a whole range of Metis communities settled.

Nationalist constructions by Metis scholars<sup>961</sup> such as Lussier/Sealey were used in the 1970s to explain the emergence of a new cultural group distinct from Indians and Whites.<sup>962</sup> Both the “nationalist” and the “civilizationist”, i.e. frontier, historiography, have remained at the simplistic level of dichotomising Europeans and Indians rather than accepting the ambivalent nature of both groups’ relations. Ethnologists and economic historians have tried to extend the perspective on Metis. In the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Metis were mostly described as a derivative of the Anglo-French conflict: that is either as offspring of European fathers, the product of Anglo-French colonial antagonism or as victims in the quest for the Canadian West by Europeans from the East Coast. The hint at the indigenous heritage of Metis has been used to back the negative identification of their deficiencies, the proof of uncivilised forms of living or for romanticizing their character traits. In these images of Metis as a group, the former were constructed mainly by distinguishing them from European conceptions of societal formation. The idea of a Metis nation as derived from group formation processes shows considerable weaknesses. While ethnologists have stressed the identification of cultural traits of mixed bloods,<sup>963</sup> further models have drawn attention to political self-assertion with a view to asserting economic interests. Cultural models have remained at the perspective of a static ethnic “category”, which seems to privilege European travellers’

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<sup>959</sup> Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, p. 4.

<sup>960</sup> Ibid.

<sup>961</sup> Whenever I use the expression “Metis scholar” or “Metis historian” I am referring to scholars who self-identify ethnically as Metis.

<sup>962</sup> Antoine Lussier/D. Bruce Sealey (eds.), *The Other Natives: The Metis*, 3 vols. (Winnipeg, 1979); Ibid., *The Metis. Canada’s Forgotten People* (Winnipeg, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. 1981).

<sup>963</sup> Sawchuk, 1978 and Peterson/Brown, 1985.

perception of Metis as a primitive, inflexible group. In contrast, the criteria of political self-assertion have been stressed, in order to show the flexibility and adaptability of an ethnic group to a certain societal climate.<sup>964</sup> This view is found in economic studies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>965</sup> These studies tried to explain the emergence of the Metis from the perspective of wide reaching economic transformations in Canada. In this perspective, the transition from a mercantile-agrarian to an industrial society has been stressed.<sup>966</sup> By recognizing the socio-economic and political changes of the epoch, Metis identity developed that encompassed them as a group.<sup>967</sup> The central role of the economic function of this group in the fur trade has been repeatedly stressed. Thus, their identity was limited to membership to one of the two fur trading traditions. At the same time, studies attempted to explain the Metis' formative background. John Foster has drawn attention to the fact that Metis among the indigenous peoples of Canada were unique because their existence did not precede the emergence of the fur trade.<sup>968</sup> Jacqueline Peterson has extended this argument to imply that, through the loss of their function in the fur trade and the buffalo hunt, Metis lost their identity.<sup>969</sup>

In economic studies of the Metis, there is a shift from describing them as members of a certain fur trading tradition to more wide-reaching concepts and explanations for Metis as a flexible ethnic group. At the forefront is the adaptability of the Metis to changing living and working conditions. Through the introduction of the concept of "proto-industrialization" the Metis have been described as independent of a traditional civilisation historiography. With the socio-economic niche that Red River Metis conquered for themselves through this sort of homework, they succeeded in the 1840s in making the transition from a pre-capitalist subsistence economy to a capitalist market economy and the embedding into the system of world trade.<sup>970</sup> Today, ongoing debate over criteria for definition has resulted in new legislation and attempts to re-define the hunting rights of Metis. This is an expression of an age-old conflict, since Metis have always been described as skilful hunters, threatening the

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<sup>964</sup> See the flexibility perspective see Cohen; for the static perspective see Barth. Also Sawchuk, *Reformulation*, pp. 8-11.

<sup>965</sup> Peterson/Brown (eds.), *The New Peoples*.

<sup>966</sup> Eccles, *Frontier*, p. 443.

<sup>967</sup> Sawchuk, *Reformulation*, p. 10, pp. 39-41, p. 44.

<sup>968</sup> Foster, *The People and the term*, p. 73.

<sup>969</sup> Peterson, *Ethnogenesis*.

<sup>970</sup> Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland. The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto, 1996), p. 5.

White-European sedentarized lifestyle.<sup>971</sup> Through this new discussion over hunting rights of Metis in Canada, old patterns of identity construction are renewed.<sup>972</sup>

As to the subjective perspective of Metis themselves, there initially was a lack of self-authored evidence. This can partly be explained by assuming that the genre of writing on oneself was not popular among the Metis. Autobiography as a genre of Metis self-expression became widespread only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the wake of Indian autobiography.<sup>973</sup> As a consequence, the first period of métissage, i.e. the time from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, has been represented in mostly European sources such as travel accounts, reports by missionaries and colonial officials, historiography, birth and marriage registers. For the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards there are political pamphlets, letters, diaries, oral accounts, autobiographies and the cultural artefacts of individuals who have either considered themselves as Metis or have been identified as such by historians and ethnologists. Such distortions might prevent a proper evaluation of the subjective perspective. However, the lack of historical evidence in the early period of metis history seems to indicate a specific development of self-awareness to which ethnic groups, especially indigenous ones, are subject.

### 3. The Concept of a Metis Nation

While nations are imagined communities, nationalism is a political movement to entice followers to uphold and fight for the legitimacy of the idea of the uniqueness and value of this imagined community, the nation, as a distinct political, legal and social community, delimited by other neighbouring communities accepted in turn as sovereign themselves. In this bent, I adhere to Benedict Anderson's assumption that nationalisms and nation-ness are cultural artefacts belonging to the realms of "kinship" and "religion", yet with profound emotional

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<sup>971</sup> "The R. v. Powley decision was the first Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) judgment to address the question of whether Metis have Aboriginal rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The unanimous decision, which was handed down on September 19, 2003, recognized that the Powleys, as Metis, had a constitutionally protected Metis Aboriginal right to hunt for food. Minister Irwin Colter put the matter into perspective at the Aboriginal Peoples Summit on April 19, 2004 in Ottawa. He said the Powley decision not only provides a legal framework for recognizing Metis rights under section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, it changes our [federal government's] whole frame of reference with respect to Metis peoples in Canada. In response, Canada allocated \$20.5 million to conduct its own research and policy analysis, and to also enhance the capacity of Metis organizations to better understand the Supreme Court's decision." See in the Internet: "Powley Fund Funding Request for 2004/05, MSGC Work Plan to Promote Community Understanding & Application of R v. Powley", [http://www.msgc.ca/media/powley\\_proposal\\_2003.pdf](http://www.msgc.ca/media/powley_proposal_2003.pdf).

<sup>972</sup> Christian Andersen, *Courting Colonialism? The Juridical Construction and Political Aftermath of Metis Rights in R. v. Powley*, PhD (Edmonton, 2005).

<sup>973</sup> See the biographies of Maria Campbell and Lee Maracle.



legitimacy for most of its members who are ready to sacrifice their lives for them, and see them as territorial entities existing in the minds of adherents as an imagined political community inherently limited and sovereign.<sup>974</sup> Mixed-blood individuals claimed to be part of this world's nationalist theatre in which they wanted to hold a rightful place because of the lack of recognition within traditional society. As despaired as this claim of the Metis may appear, it seemed to have some justification deriving from a dual discrimination on both sides of their origin cultures. While Metis were perceived as a people by outside observers, some Metis started to go beyond a distinct ethnic status to demand national status. In the modern period, this process began with uncertainties over the fate of the Metis, which led to many clashes with authorities and to rebellious upheavals. On the one hand, metis individuals themselves took issues into their own hands and tried to find political solutions in rebellions in Western Canada: in Seven Oaks/Manitoba in 1816, at the Red River in 1869/70 and in Saskatchewan in 1885. On the other hand, state authorities interfered, in order to push through the state's interests and those of White settlers. Metis were dispossessed of lands that they had considered their native soil. Métissage had come at the cost of discord between Whites and Indians. Metis individuals were confronted with hostilities from state authorities as well as from neighbouring groups and settlers, while church authorities such as missionaries acted as protectors of the Metis, especially those at the Red River.<sup>975</sup>

The definition of Canadian Metis nationalism poses certain problems. It depends on the proper definition of "nation". According to a most basic understanding of nationalism a nation first presupposes a linguistic-cultural identity of a group of individuals, secondly a decision-making process and institutions and thirdly a politically motivated acquisition of territory in the face of the resistance of a state authority or other settlers.<sup>976</sup> Viewed in this light, the concept of "new nation" - as the Red River Metis called themselves at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - appears as the result of a preceding nationalist genesis. This concept of a Metis nation is, thus, based less on ethnic criteria than on a historic-territorial tradition. An ethnic concept of nation would have presupposed homogeneity of the Metis, which did not exist,

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<sup>974</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London/New York, 1983), p. 4-6. Imagined means that "most of the nation's members will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." p. 6 While communities (in villages, towns, quarters) do really exist, nations are invented. To me, one of Anderson's key sentences is: "It is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny". It shows the accidentalness of its existence. In a similar bent, Ernest Gellner has held that "nationalism is not the awaking of the nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist." Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London, 1964), p. 169.

<sup>975</sup> See the example of Provencher.

<sup>976</sup> See John Breuilly, "Introduction", in: *ibid.*, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester, <sup>2</sup>1993), p. 6.

since there were at least two language groups, the French-speaking as well as the English-speaking Metis.<sup>977</sup> There is a time gap of 160 years between the official recognition of Metis as indigenous people of Canada on the side of the Canadian government in 1982 and the proclamation of a “new nation” at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the side of the Metis at the Red River. The temporal difference between colonial perception and indigenous self-perception seems to hint at the fact that state agents were more powerful vis-à-vis the oppressed ethnic group in defining their status. It also shows that there are different premises on both sides of what constitutes a “nation” or a “people”. The struggle for recognition is of importance to Metis individuals due to rights and privileges to derive there from towards Canadian governments. Such rights include territorial claims and the universal acceptance as one of the founding nations of Canada.<sup>978</sup> The concept of “new nation” appears in this context as a political instrument and a means of self-assertion against a powerful state. At the same time, it serves as a historical reference point for derivative nationalist claims.

### **3.1. First Battle for Territory: “The Battle of Seven Oaks” 1816**

One of the preconditions for the formation of political nationalism is assumed to be a contested territory.<sup>979</sup> The beginning of Metis nationalism can according to this assumption be dated at the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At this point Metis defended their territory at Seven Oaks under the leadership of Cuthbert Grant, “Captain General of all Half-breeds in the Country”, against the attempt of Scottish settlers to set up an agricultural colony with the help of the Hudson’s Bay Company and Lord Selkirk. At the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816 one Metis and 21 Scottish settlers died. This episode in the history of the Metis shows typical nationalistic mythology and symbolism. These are the military title of the leader Cuthbert Grant and the flag with a horizontal eight as a symbol for indigenous infinity.<sup>980</sup> The cooperation of English and French Metis at the Red River points to a common background of experience, which united them in their political actions. The mobilised Metis saw Cuthbert Grant as the personification of Metis nationalism at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Metis nationalists argue that the Metis reaction to an outside threat meant an organised, systematic and effective defence, but also a mobilisation of the Metis around the concept of a

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<sup>977</sup> Ibid.

<sup>978</sup> Daniels, *We are the Metis*, pp. 3-13.

<sup>979</sup> Kienetz, *Nationalism*, p. 12.

<sup>980</sup> Redbird, *Metis*, p. 13.

“new nation”.<sup>981</sup> Metis activists extended the concept of a Metis nation to a period, which lies two hundred years before the event of 1816. They therefore tried to tie on conceptions of other indigenous peoples such as the Iroquois, Choctaw and Sioux.<sup>982</sup> The criteria for national formation, however, were only matched at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the formation of a distinct cultural-political identity in conjunction with the defence of an ancestral territory against outside enemies and the formation of political institutions and decision-making structures. Therefore, the basis for the formation of a nation was only present upon the event of 1816 at Seven Oaks. This first manifestation of Metis nationalism has been interpreted by Frontier historians such as George Stanley, Arthur Morton and Marcel Giraud as the consequence of the agitation through the North West Company (NWC). According to these authors, the NWC thought that the settlement movement by its rivals, the Hudson’s Bay Company clerks, was an attempt to interfere with the trading basis of the NWC by settling on NWC’s trade route. Metis nationalism was therefore seen as an artificial product of the NWC, which instrumentalized the Metis for its own interests.<sup>983</sup> According to this logic, the Metis would have had to disintegrate after the fusion of both fur-trading companies in 1821 and the end of the competition between them. In reality, however, the Metis at the Red River continued to press for recognition and developed their own language and social structures.<sup>984</sup> The significant events in the history of the Metis, through which they matured into a self-conscious ethnic group and nation, lie in the following period of the middle and late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.2. Free Trade and Victory against the Sioux: the Sayer Trial in 1849 and the Battle of Grand Coteau in 1851**

Between 1821 and the first Riel Rebellion of 1869/70 there were two events which seemed to decisively promote Metis nationalism. These events were the Sayer process of 1849, which brought the trade monopoly of the Hudson’s Bay Company to an end, and thus opened up the way for Metis free trade. The HBC had decreed that furs, which had been hunted on its territory, could only be sold to them. In order to enforce this regulation the HBC needed Metis co-operation. The Metis refused, since the HBC increasingly acted in a dictatorial manner

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<sup>981</sup> Redbird, *Metis*, p.12.

<sup>982</sup> Ibid.

<sup>983</sup> Giraud, *Metis Canadien*, p. 588, p. 617. The idea that Metis consciousness developed out of the conflict between HBC and NWC has been held by Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 11f, and Lussier/Sealey, *The Metis*, p. 38f.

<sup>984</sup> Bakker, *Language*. Michif originated as a mixed form of Cree and French of Cree verbs and French nouns with diverse other influences.

towards them. The Metis openly demonstrated against HBC regulations when two Metis were accused of unlawfully smuggling furs out of HBC territory. During the trial, many Metis demonstrated in favour of the insurgents and demanded their release. The judge's decision to free the two Metis marked the end of the monopolistic position of the HBC.<sup>985</sup> This success was mainly due to the French-speaking Red River Metis, since the English-speaking Metis had refused to co-operate. This refusal was caused by the propaganda of Anglican clergymen who claimed that French-speaking Metis were the personification of the "papal Antichrist". This ethnic division meant a weakening of the Metis movement, but it did, nevertheless, assert itself against HBC authority. In 1851, the Battle of Grand Coteau led to a Metis victory over the Sioux in the Prairies. The nationalist historiography of the Metis holds that the Metis had a decisive victory against the Sioux in this battle, which allowed them to become the "masters of the plains". Since then, the Metis argue that they had made a decisive contribution to the security of the prairie region and that they had asserted themselves in the history of the Canadian West as "warden of the plains".<sup>986</sup> Furthermore, this period coincides with the demographic peak of the Metis in Red River. According to Metis statistics, in 1857 six of seven of the 7.000 inhabitants of the Red and the Assiniboine River Region were of mixed Indian-European ancestry.<sup>987</sup>

### **3.3. Rebellions as Climax: the Manitoba Insurrection of 1869/70**

The more decisive events in the history of the Metis, through which they are described as maturing into a self-conscious ethnic group and nation, lie in the period of the middle and late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rebellions of 1869/70 and 1885 marked the climax of Metis nationalism. In oral tradition, such as in the *Falcon song*, these significant events in the history of the Metis were stylised into a heroic tale of an oppressed minority rebelling against a powerful central government. Therefore, these events fulfil the criteria of a nationalist movement, which exists in definition and relation to a powerful enemy, such as the state, and a deriving lack of rights. Central personalities of the struggle for recognition such as the military leader Gabriel Dumont and the political leader Louis Riel were fashioned into mythical heroes who subordinated their person behind the concept and aims of a Metis nation. The struggle against

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<sup>985</sup> Redbird, *Metis*, p. 13f.

<sup>986</sup> Daniels, *We are the Metis*, p. 13.

<sup>987</sup> The first federal census of 1871 showed that for the newly created province of Manitoba of 12.000 inhabitants, 5.720 were French Metis, 4.080 English Halfbreeds, 1.600 Whites and about 600 Indians. Therefore at the point of its foundation, Manitoba was a province that was primarily populated by Metis. Stanley, *The Birth*, p. 75 and Redbird, *Metis*, p. 15.

the central government, which was ignorant toward Metis claims and rights, was seen as more than a mere pressing for cultural recognition and acceptance. This struggle did not only mean defence of a territory, but also the formation of provisional governments which claimed to represent the whole Red River region and therefore the territory of the later province of Manitoba. The attribute “national” was used for numerous organs of these provisional governments such as National Committee, Metis National Council and the newspaper *New Nation*.<sup>988</sup> Yet, the process of nation building was subject to historical discontinuities, to territorial repression and to migrations, and, as a consequence, to the dissolution of communities.<sup>989</sup> Therefore, the concept of a scattered national genesis appears rather as the product of mythical exaggeration on the side of historical protagonists and later observers.<sup>990</sup> The concept of “new nation” was territorially defined and it was the Red River region that was ascribed the central role therein.

The political dimension of the rebellions becomes apparent through the formation of provisional governments. In Red River, this was preceded by the creation of the Metis National Council (MNC), which saw itself as the representation of the English and French Metis in the region, in order to formulate their own interests against the central government in Ottawa. The latter had sent authorities in 1869 to Red River, in order to execute the envisaged transfer of the region after the Hudson’s Bay Company had sold it to the Canadian state in 1868. The Metis saw therein a threat to their ancestral territory and demanded, under the leadership of Louis Riel, that all settlers of the Red River region (including the Whites) that the French and English languages should have equal status, that the Metis be represented in the federal parliament and that a democratic government be elected for the region. On 25<sup>th</sup> January 1870, a provisional government was set up and was named “National Council of the Red River Metis” representing English- and French-speaking mixed-bloods. Under Riel’s leadership, the province of Manitoba came into being after negotiations with the Canadian government. Metis nationalists have henceforth used the province’s existence to claim that it was largely a Metis creation. With the Manitoba Act of 1870, the region at the Red River acquired its provincial status and the offspring of Metis living in that region gained 1.400.000 acres of land to be distributed among them. Later on, the Canadian government denied the Metis population this land and instead introduced a scrip system by which Metis could sell

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<sup>988</sup> Kienetz, *Nationalism*, p. 10.

<sup>989</sup> Kienetz, *Nationalism*, p. 11.

<sup>990</sup> Foucault, *Subversion*, p. 81.

their parcels of lands to White speculators who then sold the land to white settlers from Ontario.<sup>991</sup> Many Metis preferred to move towards Saskatchewan.<sup>992</sup> While the recognition of Manitoba as a province and its subsequent entry into the Canadian confederation can be taken as recognition of the Metis, following the acquisition of provincial status, the Metis saw integration into Canadian society as counterproductive. They were further dispersed rather than being concentrated in a specific homeland. While the Metis population of Manitoba was 82% in 1870, it fell to 7.3% in 1885.<sup>993</sup> At the same time, the reduction of the buffalo population in the prairies further undermined the means of living of the Metis. The reduction of buffalos, however, was due to American rather than Canadian policy. United States authorities burned large parts of the prairies in order to gain new settlement lands and to fight the Sioux tribe of the region.<sup>994</sup> As a result, Metis populations declined or, alternatively, Metis assimilated into White-European communities.

### 3.4. Louis Riel - Mythical Figure of Political Metis Nationalism

In 1879, Louis Riel had tried to convince Iroquois chief Crowfoot to join in a revolt against the government together with the Sioux, the Cree and the half-breeds, i.e. the English-speaking Metis. Crowfoot reported: “The idea was to have a general uprising and capture the North-West, and hold it for the Indian race and the Metis. We were to meet at Tiger Hills, in Montana; we were to have a government of our own. I refused, but the others were willing; and then they reported that already some of the English forts had been captured.”<sup>995</sup> After the second Metis uprising of 1885, again led by Louis Riel and resumed with his execution, Metis moved towards Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.<sup>996</sup> Observers noted: “One

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<sup>991</sup> Thomas Flanagan, *Metis Lands*; Ibid.: “Metis Aboriginal Rights: Some Historical and Contemporary Problems”, in: Menno Boldt/Anthony J. Long (eds.): *The Quest for Justice: Aboriginal Peoples and Aboriginal Rights*. Toronto 1985, pp. 230-245. D.N. Sprague, “The Manitoba Land Question 1870-1882”, in: Bumsted (ed.), *Interpreting Canada’s Past, Vol. II: After Confederation* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 2-16; Clem Chartier, “Aboriginal Rights and Land Issues: The Metis Perspective”, in: Boldt/Long, pp. 54-61.

<sup>992</sup> On Saskatchewan Metis see Brenda Macdougall, *Socio-cultural Development and Identity Formation of Metis Communities in Northwestern Saskatchewan 1776-1907*, PhD (Saskatoon, 2005).

<sup>993</sup> These numbers are given according to the Manitoba Metis Rights Assembly. Cited in Krosenbrink-Gelissen, *National Council*, p. 39. Yet, Metis organizations claim that there are over 100.000 individuals who identify today as Metis in the framework of diverse Metis organisations. Numerically, this points at the fact that there are at present more self-confessing Metis than ever before. This may have to do with the fact that there are certain financial privileges to be derived from this identity as reparation to previous experiences of expulsion and denial.

<sup>994</sup> J. R. Miller, “The Northwest Rebellion of 1885”, in: Ibid., 1992, 243-258, p. 244.

<sup>995</sup> John MacLean: *Canadian savage folk: the native tribes of Canada* (Toronto, 1896), p. 380.

<sup>996</sup> With the loss of the Red River region as a Metis homeland and the death of Louis Riel in 1885 Metis nationalism seemed to have lost its two most important reference points. However, historical discontinuities did not jeopardize further Metis nationalist formulations. Rather Metis went on to claim nationalist demands. Metis associations saw the light of day, such as the Union National Métisse in Manitoba in 1909 and metis publications

travels here towards an establishment of mixed-bloods, of Métis, as they are called here, (...) where the two big twins, the Saskatchewan [river] of the North and the one of the South meet. (...) there were many of these establishments of this kind.”<sup>997</sup> Riel described Metis experience in the following words: “It is true that our savage origin is humble, but it is right that we honour our mothers just as much as our fathers. Why should we be concerned to which degree of mixture we possess European blood and Indian blood? For the little that we have of one or the other, the recognition and the filial love, do they not make it imperative to say: We are Metis.”<sup>998</sup> In this way, Louis Riel explained the ambivalent, yet loyal nature of his people out of the respect for both origin cultures of Indians and Europeans. Mothers and fathers are equally considered as being the source of Metis identity. At the same time, Riel stressed that the proportions of mixture did not play any vital role in defining Metis. In the formulation of political Metis nationalism Louis Riel holds a central place, not the least because the first published mention of the word “Metis” in Canada stemmed from him. Riel used it in an article published in the Canadian newspaper “Globe and Mail” shortly before his death in 1885.

Through Riel’s attempts to establish Metis self-government through two rebellions and to negotiate a homeland for the Metis, he became the leading figure in the Metis movement. His intention was to create a form of Metis self-government within the confines of the Canadian Confederation.<sup>999</sup> Even if this did not become reality, his political ideas still remained the reference point for later Metis nationalist reformulations in form of Metis federal and national organizations, which continued to see in him the representative of the Metis struggle for recognition as a separate group.<sup>1000</sup> Today, many Metis identify with the figure of Riel to

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were distributed with titles such as “History of the Métis Nation in Western Canada” and “Metis of the Mackenzie District”. In fact, the metis phenomenon sprang over the border to spread on US territory. Since 1965 metis federations were founded in several US states such as Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana and Washington. In Canada, in 1971 the Native Council of Canada started to give a voice to metis individuals, and in 1983 the Metis Native Council introduced the concept of metis nationhood. Resurgence of metis nationalism prevailed in Lewistown, Montana where Metis gathered in September 1979 in order to celebrate the centennial the town’s founding by metis settlers in 1879.

<sup>997</sup> Marc Sauvalle, *Louisiane, Mexique, Canada* (Montréal, 1891), p. 255.

<sup>998</sup> The translation is my own. The French original reads: “C’est vrai que notre origine sauvage est humble, mais il est juste que nous honorions nos mères aussi bien que nos pères. Pourquoi nous occuperions-nous à quel degré de mélange nous possédons le sang européen et le sang indien? Pour peu que nous ayons de l’un ou de l’autre, la reconnaissance et l’amour filiale, ne nous font-ils pas une loi de dire: Nous sommes Métis.” Cited in Lussier/Sealey, *The Metis*.

<sup>999</sup> Flanagan, *Metis Aboriginal Rights*, p. 221.

<sup>1000</sup> Douglas Owrain, “The Myth of Louis Riel”, in: *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 63, no 3 (1982), pp. 315-336; Donald Swainson, “Rielana and the Structure of Canadian History”, in: *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. XIV, no 2 (Fall 1980), pp. 286-297.

build a connection to their Metis heritage.<sup>1001</sup> The significance of Louis Riel for the identification of Metis as a nation from outside perception is further illustrated in an exclamation of Canadian Prime Minister John A. Macdonald after Riel's execution in 1885: "If they [the Metis] are Indians they go with the tribe; if they are half-breeds they are whites."<sup>1002</sup> This categorization aims at the dissolution of the Metis by either ascribing them to the Indians or to the Whites, rather than to the death of their proclaimed leader. Yet, this was a short-sighted hope, since after Louis Riel's death many Metis preferred to self-identify as mixed bloods, they went on to organize themselves and to protest against the disregard of their rights by Canadian governments. Riel had provided an example, and new Metis organization and mobilisation on this model occurred.<sup>1003</sup> It stood in a tradition of Metis resistance as represented by Riel who had the main driving force in establishing modern political Metis nationalism.

In the period between the two principal Metis rebellions of 1869/70 and 1885 there was a certain inconsistency and shift in the ideas and aims of Riel. Initially, he had concentrated on the French-speaking Metis, himself being of half-French origin, and incorporated them in a vision of a French-Catholic nation. At this point, Riel was at pains to delimit a specific Metis group from other mixed-bloods. Later on, Riel started to stress the indigenous, i.e. Indian heritage of the Metis.<sup>1004</sup> Furthermore, after 1869 and before the second uprising in 1885 during his exile in the United States between 1878 and 1884 he propagated the necessity of Roman-Catholic immigration to Canada's Northwest in order to "metisize" all its indigenous peoples.<sup>1005</sup> He had the vision of a pan-Catholic movement of all Catholic peoples, in which Italians, Irish, Bavarians and Poles should be involved.<sup>1006</sup> This artificial métisation to be effected via the instrument of the Catholic faith aimed to expand the Metis nation through the

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<sup>1001</sup> See the autobiographies of Howard Adams, Maria Campbell and Anne Anderson.

<sup>1002</sup> Canadian Encyclopaedia (1985), p. 1126.

<sup>1003</sup> In 1909, the Union Nationale Métisse St. Joseph de Manitoba was formed which was largely devoted to recording the history of the Red River Metis. In the 1920s, Manitoba Metis pressed court cases against the Canadian government because of corruption in the scrip procedures introduced in Manitoba. In 1932, the Alberta Metis Association and in 1938, the Saskatchewan Metis Society were formed, followed by other organizations on a federal and national level. See Krosenbrink-Gelissen, *National Council*, p. 36f.

<sup>1004</sup> Flanagan, *Riel*, p. 117, p. 119, and pp. 121-125.

<sup>1005</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118, p. 120 and p. 122.

<sup>1006</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120. See also Riel's prayer cited in Flanagan, *Riel*, p. 52: "Sacred Heart of Jesus! Obtain for us grace to attract the good men to ourselves. Inspire us, so that the religious Irish, the pious Bavarians, the faithful Poles, the wise Italians, the sincere Belgians, the intelligent Canadiens, the intrepid and good French and the hardworking and docile Scandinavians be the only ones whose enthusiasm for my plans leads them to leave the United States and come join us in Manitoba and in the enormous expanse of the North-West."



influence of other European peoples and to make it stronger. At the same time it appeared as a means of a missionizing the remaining indigenous peoples.

This vision bespeaks Riel's belief in the superiority of the Metis to Indians, because of the Metis' half-European heritage. On the other hand, Riel pursued the idea of a reserve for Metis in Montana and pressed claims in this respect towards the American president Grover Cleveland.<sup>1007</sup> Finally, Riel tried to persuade the Fenians in New York and the Western Plains Indians to invade Canada.<sup>1008</sup> Riel formulated similarly inconsistent ideas after his return from American exile in 1884, when he tried to unite white settlers in their claims for territory with the English-speaking Metis of Prince Albert in a Western protest movement.<sup>1009</sup> Together with the leader of the white settlers, Riel threatened to realise secession from Canada if land claims were not fulfilled by the central government. During his trial in 1886, Riel expressed the following words on 1<sup>st</sup> August, after having been convicted guilty of criminal acts during the rebellion: "The court has finished its work on me, and although at first sight, this result seems to be to my disadvantage, I have such confidence in the ideas that I had the honour to express yesterday, that I believe that it will turn to my advantage and not to my defeat. Until now, I have been regarded by some as an alienated, by others as a criminal, and by still others as a man with whom one should avoid to have any contact."<sup>1010</sup>

#### **4. Modern Treaty Arrangements with Mixed-Bloods**

That the Metis cause was difficult to defend became apparent in subsequent years. In terms of making treaties, Metis of certain regions made different experiences, such as the Metis in Montana and North Dakota,<sup>1011</sup> Alberta,<sup>1012</sup> North-eastern Ontario<sup>1013</sup> and Rupert's Land.<sup>1014</sup> In North Dakota, the US government called a Chippewa group the "Pembina Band" and signed a treaty with them in 1863, giving them an annuity of \$20.000 per annum for twenty

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<sup>1007</sup> Flanagan, *Riel*, p. 113 and p. 123.

<sup>1008</sup> Ibid. p. 113, p. 122.

<sup>1009</sup> Flanagan, *Metis Aboriginal Rights*, pp. 86-97.

<sup>1010</sup> Documents de la Session, vol. 19, no 12, A (Ottawa, 1886), p. 216. Numerized from a microfilm belonging to Library and Archives Canada, CIHM no: 9\_04051\_19\_12.

<sup>1011</sup> Verne Dusenberry, "Waiting for the day that never comes: The dispossessed Métis of Montana", in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, pp. 119-136.

<sup>1012</sup> Trudy Nicks/Kenneth Morgan, "Grande Cache: The historic development of an indigenous Alberta métis population", in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, pp. 163-181.

<sup>1013</sup> John S. Long, "Treaty No. 9 and fur trade company families: Northeastern Ontario's halfbreeds, Indians, petitioners and métis", in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, pp. 137-162.

<sup>1014</sup> Irene M. Spry, "The métis and mixed-bloods of Rupert's Land before 1870", in: Peterson/Brown, *The New Peoples*, pp. 95-118.

years, with one-fourth of it to be applied to agricultural purposes.<sup>1015</sup> Alexander Ramsay who negotiated the treaty for the government, wrote: "...the Pembina Band, who subsist by buffalo hunting, also retain for themselves a tract of land claimed by them, embracing some of the favourite pastures of that animal north and northwest of Devil's Lake."<sup>1016</sup> The Pembina Band was not further surveyed and decided to move further towards Montana in order to follow the buffalo in order to guarantee their means of subsistence. Their subsistence was jeopardized by the disappearance of the buffalo in the 1880s, and, thus, the Pembina Metis pressed stronger claims on Washington.

The Indian Agent Price was instrumental in a double strategy of the US government. On the one hand, Price agreed that the Pembina Band had title to their land; on the other hand, he supported the government on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1882 in officially opening nine million acres of land to white settlement. Two Métis townships in the Southeastern part of Turtle Mountain were turned into reservations. In 1884, the new Indian Agent at Devil's Lake Agency, John Cramsie, wrote that thirty-one Chippewa and twelve hundred mixed bloods were living there. Cramsie added: "...if poverty and ignorance in abject form is to be found in this world, I know no better place to seek it than among the half breeds of the Turtle Mountains. With but few exceptions, the half breeds have lived on the buffalo all their lives, and now that their means of subsistence have all disappeared, I cannot tell how they are to make a living without assistance." Fifty thousand dollars worth of stock and farming implements would hardly supply their wants, and without it they will starve or be compelled to steal. Unless generous aid and instruction are furnished these people, the near future will see our jails and penitentiaries filled to overflowing with their prolific rising generation."<sup>1017</sup>

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the category of "Metis" was, in fact, increasingly being tied to land issues in Canada. The Canadian "Act concerning the Savages" of 1886 differentiated Metis and Indians, both subsumed under the term "Savages", however. There were all sorts of expressions for Indians with different status listed, and one for mixed bloods, which solely referred to the Metis in Manitoba. Article 13 declared that any Métis that participated in the land distribution programme for Métis would no longer be called a "savage". Furthermore, no

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<sup>1015</sup> Dusenberry, *Waiting*, p. 127.

<sup>1016</sup> Senate Documents 154, 55<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, p. 11. Cited in Dusenberry, *Waiting*, p. 126.

<sup>1017</sup> Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1884, p. 34-35. Cited in Dusenberry, *Waiting*, p. 128. After long negotiations and changing agreements Francis Leupp, commissioner of Indian affairs, could state in his report of 1906 that a total of 549 members of the Turtle Mountain Band had files on public land. However, there remained 1.370 Métis for whom no provisions were made. It was agreed that they should receive further public lands in Montana and North Dakota. *Ibid.*, p. 133f.

metis head of family would be called a “savage” or have the right to enter into a treaty with “savages”. Article 11 declared that women who decided to marry a non-Indian would lose their band membership and would cease to be a “savage”. Finally, Article 9 mentioned the treatment of illegitimate children: “The general superintendent can at all times refuse to recognize any illegitimate child as member of the band, unless he has the consent of the band of which his father and mother are a member, that he made part during a period of more than two years, to the last distributions of this band.”<sup>1018</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

As to the emergence of Metis groups, one can observe that their development ranged from an anthropological category, to ethnic self-consciousness to the formation and self-declaration as a nation.<sup>1019</sup> This development indicates some typical signs of nation building.<sup>1020</sup> Yet, the ethnic concept of *Metis* rather shows characteristics of a community of interests with politico-economic aims. Discontinuities, territorial repelling and subsequent dispersal of communities marked this development.<sup>1021</sup> Thus, one cannot identify linear or teleological development of Metis nationalism. Rather single historical events, diverse geographical areas and different political constellations characterized it. Metis communities had come into being because White men had married or had sexual contacts with Indian women, partly due to the fact that there was a shortage of White women in the colony, but also because Indian women were preferred for their beauty and exoticism or for pragmatic reasons. This aroused feelings of fascination and curiosity in the male mind. Furthermore, men also fell in love with Indian women and therefore did not attach any importance to social stigma, prevalent in the colony, of marrying out. There was at the same time the acceptance that marrying Indian women was a helpful adaptation strategy to living conditions in the colony: Indian women were seen as useful helpers and union with them was considered a “good match”, which facilitated access to Indian society.

Some authors believe that Metis community formation started by the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, others at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, again others by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>1018</sup> Acte des Sauvages, chapitre 43, article 9, A.D. 1886.

<sup>1019</sup> Abner A. Cohen, “Introduction“, in: *ibid.* (ed.), *Urban Ethnicity* (London, 1974), p. 4.

<sup>1020</sup> W.J. Argyle, “Size and Scale as Factors in the Development of Nationalist Movements”, in: Anthony D. Smith (ed.), *Nationalist Movements* (London, 1976), pp. 31-53.

<sup>1021</sup> Alvin Kienetz, “Metis” Nationalism and the Concept of a Metis Land Base in Canada’s Prairie Provinces”, in: *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, vol. 15, no 1-2 (1988), 11-18, p. 11.

For Acadia, there is no doubt that community formation started earlier than in the interior of the country since it was here that first intense contacts between Indians and Whites occurred. Towards the modern period, Metis and Indian communities came to be increasingly policed and categorized in the same manner. The division of the native population into Indians and Metis created a divergence in interests, which in turn prevented a political homogeneity of native groups vis-à-vis the Canadian state and its authorities.<sup>1022</sup> On the one hand, Metis had pressed for recognition as a distinct group, yet, on the other, they considered themselves as being aboriginal, like their Indian counterparts did. Paradoxically, in obtaining a distinct status, Metis were increasingly being dispossessed of rights. Laplante/Perrault have called this “technocratic genocide”, which aimed at eliminating autochthonous subjects legally without explicitly exterminating them.<sup>1023</sup> Colonial authorities acted in ways that promised and enhanced the hope for assimilation and citizenship, on the one hand, while envisaging and taking into account the disappearance of Indian tribes and Metis communities, on the other.

As to the figure of Louis Riel, his inconsistency shows the impasse to which the Metis leader manoeuvred himself at the face of a powerful state government, which tried to exclude Metis from the project of the Canadian Confederation. His religious and spiritual prayers at times convey the image of a mentally confused man who took refuge in prayers to God in order to find solutions. This is supported by his imagination of being a prophet and a saviour of the Metis in a mission to bring them to their rightful place in Canada. Riel’s ongoing faith in his beliefs did not cease until his final hour, up until which point he continued to lead the Metis cause. To Laplante/Perrault the Riel affair is not merely a singular event in Canadian history, but the convergence and structuration point of a whole series of mediations of ethnic relations at the heart of the Confederation. Metis repression functions simultaneously to instigate the question of status, power and legitimacy of Amerindians, of French Canadians and of immigrant minorities in their respective relations: “It is in the denouement of the Metis crises that is given to apprehend a number of the most important principles of structuration of this political entity [the Confederation] which is aptly described with the metaphor of “mosaic”.”<sup>1024</sup>

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<sup>1022</sup> Ibid., p. 38f.

<sup>1023</sup> Robert Laplante/Isabelle Perrault: “Les oubliés de l’histoire”, in: *Possibles*, vol. 1, issue 3-4 (1977), pp. 35-56.

<sup>1024</sup> Robert Laplante/Isabelle Perrault, “Les oubliés de l’histoire“, in: *Possibles*, vol. 1, issue 3-4 (1977), 35-56, p. 36.

Yet, the question is justified if the birth and multiplication of Metis individuals does not necessarily appear to be linked to the development of mixed ways of life derived from multiple sources. In this bent, Jean-Luc Bonniol questions the term “cultural métissage”, and asks if cultures can indeed be mixed, pointing at the “écart différentiel” between cultures as expressed by ethnologists such as Kroeber and Lévi-Strauss. Aimé Césaire stressed that it is because a culture is not a simple juxtaposition of cultural traits that there may not be a métis culture. He points at the fact that it is characteristic of cultures to have a style, a distinctive imprint of a people at one epoch that one finds in all domains where the activity of this people manifests itself.<sup>1025</sup> In fact, Metis in Canada did have such a distinctive style in dress, folklore, custom, diet and language. Negative evaluations on the nature of Metis were meant to stress their disloyal character. They also expressed the observed unease with which mixed-bloods decided to form their own identity rather than merging into either Indian or White society. Historian George Fredrickson is convinced that a métis group developed “that might have been absorbed into the European population had not the French surrendered Canada to the British who imposed a narrower conception of what it meant to be white or European (...).”<sup>1026</sup>

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<sup>1025</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>1026</sup> Fredrickson, *Mulattoes*, p. 105. However, this question would require a separate study of what miscegenation meant under British rule in Canada after 1763.

# Conclusion: Canadian Métissage and its Failures

## 1. The Failures of Métissage

“Bien crains-je que nous aurons bien fort hasté sa déclinaison et sa ruïne [de ce monde enfant des Indiens] par notre contagion (...) Au rebours, nous nous sommes servis de leur ignorance et inexpérience à les plier plus facilement vers la trahison, luxure, avarice et vers toute sorte d’inhumanité.(...) Tant de villes rasées, tant de nations exterminées, tant de millions de peuples passez au fil de l’espèce, et la plus riche et belle partie du monde bouleversée pour la negotiation des perles et du poivre!”

Michel de Montaigne<sup>1027</sup>

It was 16<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher Michel de Montaigne who, in an admittedly polemical manner, best described how initial French visions of métissage led to devastating results as far as humanistic ideals of human coexistence were concerned. Montaigne built up a dichotomy between the Ancients and the Moderns and held that had the Greeks and Romans discovered the Americas, they would have ideally mixed their virtues with the inhabitants of the New World, while the intruding French had, in his view, mostly destroyed, plundered and exterminated for the sake of gaining “pearls and pepper”.<sup>1028</sup> This rather flattering opinion on the Ancients in striking contrast to the modern French distorts the fact that in historical reality métissage inevitably occurs at the cost of social disharmonies, power struggles and economic exploitation. While Montaigne’s dictum is written proof of nostalgia towards antiquity in order to build a positive counter-image to the cruelties of the early modern age and of modernity, it says nothing of the ways in which these cruelties were ideologically backed and

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<sup>1027</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, Tome II, Livre III, “Des coches”, p. 6, p. 137. Paris 1962.

<sup>1028</sup> Ibid. Montaigne started from the assumption that every nation had an inclination to declare the others as “barbarous”. Yet, it was not only the utterance “barbarous” that one would find with reference to other nations and tribes, but also the term “primitive” as opposed to “civilized”. Claude Lévi-Strauss, however, has tried to show that it is not specific human groups that are primitive, but a certain psychic stratum, which was to be found in all human races. Claude-Lévi-Strauss: “Rasse und Geschichte”, in: *Der Blick aus der Ferne*, München 1985, p. 38. See also in Werner Kraus: *Zur Anthropologie des 18. Jahrhunderts. Die Frühgeschichte der Menschheit im Blickpunkt der Aufklärung*, hrsg. von Hans Kortum und Christa Gohrlich, Frankfurt a. Main 1987, p. 16 and p. 86. On primitivism see also Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and Theodor Wilhelm Danzel who held that primitive peoples were characterized by the use of magic rather than logic. See Montaigne quoted in Nelly Schmidt, *Histoire du métissage* (Paris, 2003), p. 52. Montaigne, *Essais*, livre III, chapitre VI.

As far as the attitude of Romans and Greeks to racial and social mixture is concerned, it was - from what we know of - no less intolerant. For the Roman case see Judith Evans-Grubbs: “Marriage more shameful than adultery: Slave-Mistress relationships, “Mixed Marriages”, and Late Roman Law”, in: *Phoenix* XLVII, Vol. 2 (Summer 1993), 125-154. Benjamin Isaac has recently shown that racism already existed in classical antiquity among Greeks and Romans rather than being an issue that only came up with modernity. See Benjamin Isaac, *The invention of racism in classical antiquity* (New Jersey, 2004).

organised. Furthermore, it insinuates that French métissage in Canada was a failure, without outlining, however, the reasons for this failure. 20<sup>th</sup> century historian George Francis Stanley made an attempt at explaining the failure of métissage politics as envisaged by France: “Neither King, minister nor intendant seem to have devoted serious study to the problem of racial contact; not, at least, in a way which revealed to them difficulties, complexities and delays necessarily attending any schemes of amalgamating the red and white peoples in Canada. They were impatient of results and therefore prone to lay the blame not upon the problem, but upon those who had not yet solved it.”<sup>1029</sup> This referred to the missionaries that French authorities identified as the scapegoats for the failure of the French evangelisation and civilizing mission. “Red” and “white” peoples, as Stanley called Indians and Europeans, could not be “amalgamated” due to the fact that the principal agents on the clerical side did not seriously try to understand what the problem of racial contact consisted in.<sup>1030</sup>

While George Francis Stanley was more concerned with the results of race mixture as such, Léopold de Saussure rather looked at the outcome of assimilation. He claimed in his works on colonial history that the French colonizing mission had failed and he saw the reasons rather in the relationship between the colonizing power and the Natives. He was convinced that it was wrong to believe that one could bind native peoples through education or assimilation to one’s own civilisation. According to Saussure it was necessary to ensure that natives’ resistance (R) was won over by moral (m) and material (M) power. It was the equation  $R = M + m$ , which held that if moral conquest (m) did not succeed; proportionately high resources of material power (M) were required. As noteworthy as the failure of a French programme of race mixture and assimilation is, the natural occurrence of a new ethnic group of mixed bloods that refused to either merge with Indians or Whites, too, is important to analyse. A study on Canadian métissage must therefore show how encounter and mixture occurred in unexpected ways, why French assimilation failed, how Metis came into existence and how they were received.

In order to properly evaluate if Montaigne’s, Stanley’s and de Saussure’s views are justified, an analysis of the actual policies and the involvement of agents is required. This has

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<sup>1029</sup> Stanley, *Francisation*, p. 341.

<sup>1030</sup> In fact, Jennifer Spear, too, has rightly held that “the struggle over métissage illuminates conflicts between secular and religious authorities and between colonial and metropolitan interests as each sought to shape the colony’s development.” See Jennifer Spear, *Colonial Intimacies*. Her argument is that métissage served to build the colonial state rather than being an expression of the natural, i.e. sexual urges of European men. I would argue that métissage was about both these processes: the colonial state was inherently based on the sexual urges of European men.

been the aim of the present study. The study has examined métissage - i.e. the process and the policies of cultural, social and political encounter, mixed unions and offspring of Whites and Indians. The argument was that métissage was subject to metropolitan objectives of colonial expansion and to the changing moral climate and demographic composition in the colony of New France. Secondly, the study tried to show that discourse and actual practice were closely linked. The practice was volatile and inconsistent and therefore led to failure in attaining the intended aim of frenchification as expressed in official discourse. Changing policies had to do with personal stances of social and political agents in state and church institutions. This work has revealed how these changed according to convictions and attitudes of participating agents. Thirdly, métissage was a racial and often a racist concept that did not occur in France as a term before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its product - the Metis - not before the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Canada. It was racist in that it stressed races as a category to classify, describe and treat humans. The process of métissage itself, however, set in motion in 1508 when the first Indians were taken to France to show them French manners in a French environment in order to facilitate assimilation. The study has tried to show that métissage was first an affair of politics to either encourage or to prevent mixed unions. It later unintentionally led to mixed-blood individuals and to their community formation in some regions of Canada. Intentionally it was an affair of words and led to the use of language to serve political demands. Fourthly, the discussion on the statistical extent of métissage has been shown and it was argued that the records are incomplete since priests did not record many of the mixed marriages that actually happened. Another task of the study was to show preliminary processes of sedentarization and conversion that either went hand in hand with métissage or that occurred as preconditions of mixed marriages. As such, this work claims that the French “mission civilisatrice” was already prevalent as an ideology in the early modern period. However, existing historiography has claimed that the French „*mission civilisatrice*“ was predominantly a phenomenon of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In contrast, it is proposed to extend the meaning of the term to early modern times, thus tracing the origins of this mission to civilize precisely to the point where Europeans set sail to meet so-called savage and barbarous peoples and tribes on the North American continent. The discourse of missionaries, ministers and kings was comprised of a vocabulary of superiority towards these peoples who were presumed to know nothing of faith and clerical doctrine. It was a vocabulary that not only insinuated, but also in fact explicitly stated that infidels needed to be converted in order to be brought to civilization, as the French understood the term. The French felt themselves superior for particular reasons: they were a people in possession of the scripture, part of a Christian civilization and elected to be part of a



Catholic mission. “*Mission civilisatrice*” indicates a will to civilize through conversion to Catholicism and to French manners and institutions. This project can be traced to around 1534 when explorer Jacques Cartier erected a Christian cross at Gaspé Peninsula. Métissage was, in fact, a “*mission civilisatrice*”, since it pointed at assimilation to French culture and religion rather than merely to an idealistic exchange and mixture of White and Indian cultures. That mixture occurred nevertheless was another story: *coureurs de bois* and *voyageurs* met Indian women of various tribes, mainly Ojibwa, Chipewya and Cree at trading posts or close to Indian villages, had sexual relations with them or married them. Male and female missionaries therefore received an increasingly important role in controlling and surveying this behavior and they were considered competent to either perform or prevent such unions. As such, my perspective has been mainly political and religious rather than biological or cultural. The argument is that in early modern times, métissage was shaped more by a political and religious discourse, than by the kind of biological or cultural discourse, which has become increasingly prevalent in modern and postmodern times.

## 2. History of Concepts and Métissage

To determine what “metis” and “métissage” meant to different agents and speakers and in different epochs and contexts poses difficult challenge. It is necessary to differentiate between the products and the processes of métissage. The *products* of métissage certainly always derive from a certain degree, i.e. half, triple or quadruple mixture (*ad infinitum*). In biological terms, it takes at least two individuals of different race for the end product of métissage to emerge; or three different races may be involved, if in earlier generations at least one of the parents of a mixed couple was of different origin to the partner. In some cases the *process* of métissage was engineered deliberately, albeit initially not in order to test the outcome of new human species. Similar processes are taking place in the confines of laboratory experiments and in embryonic production in test tubes. Métissage is a complex reality: it is a practice, a policy and a process all at the same time, and thus engenders new dimensions of existing and being that go beyond conventional forms of human existence. The ways and procedures that lead to métissage may be manifold, complex and contradictory and involve new languages,

new dresses and new ways of creating and living. While the processes of métissage can be reversed, sabotaged, enhanced or accelerated, policies and practices of métissage always generate mixed individuals. These can at the same time lead these individuals toward a special path of assimilation and adjustment or alternatively toward a path of discovering new horizons. Meanwhile those not involved in the process may be left feeling perplexed at the persistence and stubbornness of racial purity. Métissage may occur in existing state structures; or it may be the case that the creation of a new state lays at its culmination. In other instances this process may not succeed and may be aborted halfway. Yet, métissage is more than a mixture of single components, and thus certainly proves correct the dictum that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The topic of race mixture as such is a highly ideologically fraught subject, and every speaker, embedded in his own country, culture and time period, had preconceived understandings of what the meeting and mixing of races would entail. To certain agents, race mixture was about the decline of humanity, because they had seen cultural practices previously unknown to their “imaginaire”; to others it implied cultural richness since they had lived through narrow-minded societal conceptions that they sought to overcome.

The history of concepts of métissage had to be analysed according to three contexts: epochs, identities and assumptions. While it is evident that words generate into concepts at the point where the socio-political context “enters” the word,<sup>1031</sup> the question is at which point this penetration takes place and subsequently leads to changing conceptions of society and individuals. The concepts had to be determined according to contexts in which speakers used them: it was necessary to consider i) the historical epoch and the social and political circumstances in which terms are embedded, ii) the identity of the person who speaks and iii) the theoretical assumptions behind the chosen concept. For the first case (i), it can be argued that the historical circumstances of, for example, Canadian Metis in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>1031</sup> Hölscher, *History of Concepts*, p. 37. However, this differentiation is sometimes difficult to sustain in English language texts since “concept”, “notion”, “term” and “word” are often used interchangeably.

differed fundamentally from those of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, the Metis have achieved constitutional recognition not as a first nation, but as an aboriginal people of Canada together with a special legal status that distinguishes them from Indians, Whites and Inuit. While the term “Metis” has a more precise meaning today, travellers, colonial officials and missionaries in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century did not know how to properly designate mixed individuals: they oscillated between the terms *metis*, *half-breed*, *bois-brulé*, *canayen*, *pork eaters*, and many others. Speakers used those terms interchangeably, revealing either their ignorance or confusion as to the “true” identity of mixed-blood individuals; sometimes, they were also pointing to, or expressing contempt towards, the multiple natures of these “others”. Compared to the initial confusion of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the 20<sup>th</sup> century achievement of having created a single category designating all mixed-blood individuals as “Metis” regardless of cultural origin, geographical location, professional occupation or outward appearance, can be seen as a success and conquest on the part of mixed-blood individuals, while at the same time further discriminating against them.<sup>1032</sup>

For case (ii): In an epoch of rising scientific racism, Chateaubriand used the term *métissage* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in a negative way by ascribing it to a process which, in his view, led to vicious, ambiguous and depraved character. Chateaubriand was of noble origin and nobles regarded non-nobles, be it in social or racial terms, as repellent and inferior. In the 1950s, Senegalese writer Leopold Sédar Senghor, in contrast, - himself having experienced racial discrimination as a Black person - used the same term in a positive understanding in order to express his hope to overcome racial boundaries after the experience of the Second World War. The differences in the perception of others by nobles and non-nobles, or affected persons and outside observers are revealing as to the meaning of words and their impact on readers. *Métissage* as described by a 20<sup>th</sup> century person of black ethnic origin or dealt with by a nobleman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century can result in differences of evaluation ranging from hope,

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<sup>1032</sup> With thanks to Laurence Fontaine for this observation. See also Olive P. Dickason, “From ‘one Nation’ in the Northeast to ‘New Nation’ in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Metis”, in: Peterson/Brown (eds.), *The New Peoples* (Winnipeg, 1985), pp. 19-36.

acceptance, support, acknowledgment, identification to hostility, repugnance, disrespect or outright racist propaganda.

For case (iii): If one accepts the monogenetic view which sees all mankind as deriving from one single source - i.e. from Adam and Eve as described in the Bible - the concept of racial métissage, which divides mankind into different races, does not make sense. The same logic applies to philosophical discourses on the equality and dignity of human beings: if one accepts that human beings are equal regardless of their race, racial categories to describe differences between human beings become obsolete.<sup>1033</sup> Yet, some biological and medical scientists would strongly contest this view by pointing at racial characteristics such as skin complexion, colour, anatomy and hereditary diseases. Such conceptions have undergone vital changes in meaning and acceptance throughout history. While today a group of scientists deny that human beings acquire different qualities through so-called racial mixture and want to restrict discussion of mixture to the realm of the animal and plant world, 19<sup>th</sup> century scientists invented a whole range of models and explanations in reference to the character of mixed-bloods. To give a second example: if one holds that comparisons between human beings and animals are offensive, then the term “metif” as a variant and origin of the word “metis” as stated in *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* would have to be considered as contemptuous: “One does not know which sort of dog is meant; it is neither *métis*, nor is it *metif*.”<sup>1034</sup> The mention of “différente qualité” in Trévoux seems to imply the related possibility to classify personal worth. We find such classifications in European clerical and other discourses, which denied American Indians the status of human beings, starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1035</sup> Similarly, Blacks in America had been assigned the status of slaves mostly in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. As a consequence, people of different colour or of mixed-blood origin were considered in ethnocentric discourse as subhuman beings.

### 3. The Role of State and Church

In the past, scholars of Canadian métissage mostly looked at the phenomenon from socio-economic, cultural-anthropological or legal angles. Political implications of métissage, such as the colonial goals of the French state and its failures, as well as the societal formation that

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<sup>1033</sup> Obviously, these arguments only work for periods prior to Darwinist and evolutionary theory.

<sup>1034</sup> The French original reads: “On ne sait de quelle sorte de chien il s’agit; il n’est ni métis ni lévrier, il est metif.” *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*, 1743.

<sup>1035</sup> When Pope Paul III declared in 1537 that Indians were “veri hominess” - truly men - they were still regarded as inferior beings. See Jaenen, *Miscegenation*, p. 86.

derived from métissage have remained marginal. These implications are either couched in the above-mentioned perspectives or they are not given sufficient consideration of their own. Urs Bitterli has claimed that the writing of overseas history (from a European perspective) has been equated with the history of extension of European influence.<sup>1036</sup> Consequently, Jürgen Osterhammel has rightly pointed out that to write a non-euro centric colonial history it is necessary to look at the rise and fall of specific societal formations rather than at the actions of European powers.<sup>1037</sup> However, it might be justified still to look at the state's activities, i.e. less at the rivalry between European powers than at the rivalry of state agents among themselves and with church authorities. Indeed, the fact has not been recognized that the state and its elites figured in two ways in Canadian métissage. On the one hand, the French state and its officials were the promoters of processes leading to métissage. On the other hand, the state of Canada resulted from these processes. That is, in the period of the regime of New France since 1663 (actually starting in 1508), French authorities in the Parisian metropolis are considered as agents capable either of furthering or enhancing race mixture in the self-serving colonial interests of France. In a later period, that is after the end of the French regime in 1763, within the development towards first Canadian state structures, local authorities are considered as oppressors of mixed-blood individuals and groups. This becomes most striking in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the growth of the so-called Canadian „expansionist movement” led by Europeans, which expelled mixed-bloods from territories at the Red River region in the Western province of Manitoba and populated it with European settlers from the East. In consequence, in narratives of Metis historians the state is held responsible for the denial of Metis rights since it favoured a scrip system with which Metis were forced to sell lands to Whites from Ontario. In this scheme, métissage was embedded in a grander design of building up a modern state in which different ethnic groups were to coexist, and some of them to be repelled. Mixture, which had initially been promoted, was increasingly seen as harmful to state interests, which were directed towards assimilation to the dominant cultures of the French and the British. A modern state was built overseas upon policies that had been formulated in the French metropolis and did not always fit the realities in the colony.

Policy schemes had often been reformulated or dismissed according to the vagaries of colonial life. The power relations in question were shown to lie in the institutions of the French state and the Catholic Church, in the political systems of the Parisian metropolis and

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<sup>1036</sup> Bitterli, *Begegnung*, p. 231.

<sup>1037</sup> As done in classical diplomacy history, for instance. Jürgen Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (München, 1995), p. 30.

the New France colony, and in the cultural systems of Indian and White communities. Power in the political nature of métissage lay within agents who held offices or special status within systems, which gave them different scopes of action, sanctioning power and the capacity to make changes of policy. These changes of policy became most prevalent on the issue of mixed marriages. From a sociological and ethnological viewpoint, mixed marriages can be differentiated in three categories: racial, ethnic and tribal. The racial mixed marriage is a superficial category: it uses an overall label that does not further differentiate the cultural origin of the married individuals. The racial mixed marriage assumes the existence of distinctive races, which are seen as a subspecies of the “human” species. Therefore we have Black-White marriages or Black-Indian marriages, for instance. The ethnic mixed marriage is a more differentiated category: it describes the partners as belonging to an ethnic group such as German, French, Dutch, Portuguese, English (its equivalent „British“ is a nationality rather than an ethnicity). It perceives the partners of the couple as belonging to the category of „nation“ rather than of „race“ in classifying them. The tribal mixed marriage conceives of the married union as one between individuals belonging to different tribes living on the same or a neighboring territory. As such, the spouses belong to one ethnicity (in the case of Mohawk and Sioux, this would be „Indian“), but not to the same nation, since there exists no distinct single Indian nation.

Missionaries pursued several strategies with regards to mixed marriages: they consented to celebrate them when they saw advantages in terms of gaining new converts among Indians or in terms of refraining uncontrolled sexual activities; missionaries tried to prevent mixed unions when they expected that these would lead the French towards savage and pagan ways of living, which was, in fact, often the case. In return, Indians opted to cooperate with authorities whenever they saw advantages to be obtained in terms of gaining diplomatic allies or goods that were rare or non-existent, and highly sought after in Indian communities. The present study has shown that the developments that led to the creation of the Canadian state through miscegenation were not always intentional or consciously pursued by agents. Whenever co-operation between church and state authorities with regards to Indians succeeded, missionaries acted in the long run as agents of sedentarization. This was one of the utmost objectives of French officials with a view to regulating life in the colony, because sedentarization was seen as one of the prerequisites for conversion and assimilation. In this respect, co-operation of state and church authorities was vital in order to lead the colony towards a viable entity, and eventually towards state structures. At the same time, processes took place either despite or without the support of state and church authorities. For

instance, Indians and Europeans started to mix with each other without the explicit consent of authorities. However, in those cases where agents enforced marriage policies as a means of assimilation, they were surprised about the counterproductive results of certain acts that had been implemented to this effect, i.e. when policies did not lead to the desired goals, or when developments remained out of the control of authorities.

#### **4. Adaptations for Survival and Results of Contact**

The concept of *métissage* never was a purely humanistic ideal on the side of the French, but rather a colonial policy with “precise aims”. As such it became a socio-political reality which was shaped by changing conditions in the political systems of colony and metropolis, and the cultural systems of White and Indian communities. According to the intellectual foundations of *métissage*,<sup>1038</sup> which argues that the mixture of races is either conducive or degenerative to society, principal social agents opted for one of either views and pursued their policies and interests accordingly. As such, social agents were rather pragmatic and driven by policy objectives that were designed, in the best of cases, in order to stabilize the systems. Yet, there were also those who made attempts to destabilize the system through the pursuit of their own short-term objectives. It has been the task of this study to differentiate these cases and to show that *métissage* happened both in directed and in unexpected ways. While *métissage* was marked by conflicts, struggles and controversies, it was at the same time shaped by consent and commonality of interests of Europeans and Indians. Population mixture that was initially brought about intentionally and later happened in numerous ways, led to strengthening of territories that had previously been a “mere” colony. This had been due to strategic, yet half-hearted planning on the part of French authorities, which tried to find a co-operative basis with Indian populations. Indians, in turn, were willing to collaborate whenever they found that there were advantages to be gained or that their survival in the face of an intruding enemy was assured.

Economic developments and social interactions of state authorities and missionaries, on the one hand, and of Indians and these two groups in the colony, on the other hand, had both led to the mingling as well as the mutual exclusion of the cultural systems of European and Indian communities. The results were paradoxical: While new syncretistic customs went side by side with the suppression of old traditions, both old traditions and new customs coincided.

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<sup>1038</sup> See as formulated by writers such as Gobineau, Chateaubriand, Vandermode and Quatrefages de Bréau, and later by Nouss, Gruzinski, Toumson, Audinet and others.

This became apparent above all in marriage customs that showed characteristics of both Indian and European ways. In the former case, the marriage was celebrated among the Indian tribe and was named *à la façon du pays*; in the latter case the marriage was celebrated in the presence of a Catholic priest or missionary. However, syncretism often meant the parallelism of customs rather than mixture or fusion into new forms. This was the case with Christian religious customs in which Indians partook - such as being baptized and receiving Church sacrament or being buried on Christian cemeteries. Indians adopted certain Christian rituals while keeping some of their own spiritual ways of living and healing. Joceylne Dakhliia holds that a strong current in social science research through the notion of “métissage” or “hybridity” tends to relativise or even to overthrow enormous influence on the dominated society in order to show, to the contrary, a certain reciprocity in various processes of creolisation or to throw light on the production of a “third space” - in the words of Homi Bhabha -, or of a “third culture”.<sup>1039</sup> Irad Malkin describes this new creation as such: „The Middle Ground is a field in which each side plays a role dictated by what it perceives as the other’s perception of it, resulting from the mutual misrepresentation of values and practices. In time this role-playing [...] creates a ‚third‘ civilisation that is neither purely native nor entirely imported by the colonizer.”<sup>1040</sup>

Mixed marriages were central to the process since they not only constituted a vital demographic tool in order to increase population numbers. They also regulated the ethnic and gender composition of the colony. It became apparent, however, that regulations such as prohibitions or financial incentives with respect to the increase or the prevention of mixed unions could not always influence human behaviour. This was most pointed in the field of sexuality where missionaries were faced with difficulties in controlling Frenchmen’s behaviour towards Indian women and vice versa. It turned out that rape; illicit sexual relations and preference for exoticism could not be eradicated through legal restrictions or incentives such as money payments. Coercion was an important means within the French state’s and the Catholic Church’s colonising scheme: Indian children were taken away from their parents and were forced to live with French families or in Catholic missions; Indian women were bribed into sedentary way of life through the prospect of gaining land, and soldiers who counteracted regulations were imprisoned or executed. This, however, happened on the side of Indians as well, who showed no less tolerance towards traitors. However, some Indian tribes were more

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<sup>1039</sup> Dakhliia, *Langue franque*, p. 3.

<sup>1040</sup> Irad Malkin: “Postcolonial Concepts and Ancient Greek Colonization”, in: *Modern Language Review* 65 (2004), 341-364, p. 357.



willing to accept illegitimate or mixed-blood children who were often raised among them.<sup>1041</sup> Historian George Fredrickson has set up a typology comprising four different ways, in which modern nations decided to treat the issue of miscegenation. A first group opted for restrictive laws such as the Apartheid regime in South Africa after 1950 or Nazi Germany in 1935 and the Nuremberg Laws. A second group allowed concubinage and sexual exploitation of women of the so-called “inferior” group, while discouraging sex with women from the dominant group. Fredrickson holds that this was the dominant pattern in South America. A third group saw intermarriage as engendering a loss of status for the upper caste spouse and any offspring resulting from mixed unions, such as in European colonies in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Africa and Asia. A fourth group encouraged or promoted intermarriage in the wake of an absence of substantial migration and the desire to form a loyal colonial population. Fredrickson cites the examples of Dutch and Portuguese colonialism in the East Indies and Africa during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>1042</sup>

## 5. The Predicament of “Race”

The process of métissage was mostly conceived of in terms of racial relations rather than social or cultural ones, increasingly so towards the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, the term “race” had meant less a distinct human group rather than a certain quality. The term “race” derived from the Italian word “razza”, the Spanish “raza” and the Portuguese “raça” to designate good or bad lineage, species or type.<sup>1043</sup> In the biological sciences, “race” came to denote a subspecies of a species. It mainly refers to animals and plants of a single species with the same characteristics. It is held that “race” appeared in France from the 1480s onwards and expanded in the 1530s with equivalent meanings of “house” and “blood”. It differentiated hereditary nobility from nobility via professional function. Initially, race had therefore had a social function to designate the members of one family, pointing at the fact that every lineage

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<sup>1041</sup> On the other hand, Emmanuelle Saada has shown, for the case of Indochina, how French authorities rather tried to amalgamate the Metis into White society rather than to accept their distinct identity. In her study *“La question des métis” dans les colonies françaises: socio-histoire d’une catégorie juridique (Indochine et autres territoires de l’Empire français; années 1890 - années 1950)*, EHESS (Paris, 2001), she has analyzed the legal status of métis in French colonies, above all in Indochina in the period 1890 to 1950 and how this was linked to the question of citizenship and nationality and its extension to colonial territories. She shows how the legal category of “métis” came into being and how it gave importance and success to the notion of “race”.

<sup>1042</sup> He fails to name the prominent example of New France and acknowledges that this is a “quite complicated” case. Fredrickson, *Mulattoes*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>1043</sup> Arlette Jouanna, in: *Dictionnaire de l’Ancien Régime*, éd. Lucien Bély.

constitutes one type of men characterized by physical traits and hereditary morals.<sup>1044</sup> Towards the 17<sup>th</sup> century was the term transferred to signify humans belonging to different cultural groups. For the modern period, there is no doubt that the concept of race and racial terminology in the white mind increased with colonial expansion through the possibility of meeting foreign peoples and cultures on different continents. According to the *hamitische Sprachtheorie* of German Africanist Carl Meinhof, those peoples whose language possessed nominal classes were culturally superior to those who assimilated to the former. This theory among others provided the basis for colonial powers to justify the existence of “master peoples” in occupied territories, while being heavily inspired by Charles Darwin’s idea of evolution in its crudest social Darwinist bent. However, the idea of evolution in itself did not assert that there were inferior and superior forms of existence. Furthermore, Darwin held the view that human variety was so immense that it would not make sense to classify the species of human beings zoologically into races.<sup>1045</sup> In fact, there is no consensus up to the present day as to which groups do form races.<sup>1046</sup> The discussion turns around the question of how to

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<sup>1044</sup> See Arlette Jouanna: “Race“, in: *Dictionnaire de l’Ancien Régime. Le Royaume de France, XVI au XVII siècle*, éd. Lucien Bély (Paris, 1996), p. 1645. Latest studies on „race“ have tried to show that the concept is not valid in biological terms and that it is rather a social construction. Statements by the American Anthropological Association on the meaningless of the concept of “race” made in 1998 are referred to in order to stress that racial distinctions between humans are not useful to describe differences among them. See American Anthropological Association statement on “race”, in: *American Anthropologist*, vol. 100, no 3 (September 1998). At the same time, however, its derivative, racism, is considered to be a serious social problem. See Audrey Smedley/Brian D. Smedley: “Race as Biology Is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem is Real. Anthropological and Historical Perspectives on the Social Construction of Race”, in: *American Psychologist*, vol. 60, number 1 (January 2005), pp. 16-26. Such views on “race” have been supported by findings of the Human Genome Project (HGP) whose collaborators hold that every human being shares more than 99.9 per cent of their DNA with everybody else, i.e. variations differ more within ethnic groups than between them. That means that two Africans, though both of black skin, can differ more from one another than from people of other races. If this were true, it would destroy the belief that there are fundamental differences between the races. Furthermore, scientists of the HGP claim that it is impossible to look at people’s genetic code and deduce of which skin colour they are. These findings are used in order to undo claims that criminality and intelligence are linked to ethnic or racial origin. Also, they lead to consequences in dealing with diseases that have traditionally been linked to hereditary factors.

<sup>1045</sup> See Werner Conze: „Rasse“, in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, hg. von Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhard Koselleck, Bd. 5, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1984, p. 135.

<sup>1046</sup> In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, François Bernier was probably the first scholar to make a classification of human races. He distinguished at least four or five different ones. The 18<sup>th</sup> century, too, mainly spoke of four different races: Carl de Linné and Immanuel Kant, for instance, described four types. The former mentioned Europaeus, Americanus, Asiaticus and Africanus, while for the latter there were Whites, Negroes, Huns (“mungalisch” and “kalmuckisch”) and Hindus (“hindistanisch”). Because of their capacity for reason Kant placed White Europeans on top of the classification; their superiority is deduced from the fact that they have always “taught” others and have fought with weapons. Americans belong to the Huns, but are “noch nicht völlig eingartet”, which means that they do not yet wholly make part of that race. Next to Kant, it was Johann Friedrich Blumenbach who used “Rasse” in German-speaking publications. Blumenbach added a fifth race, that of the brown or Malayan race. It was him also who introduced the white or Caucasian race as master race, later on taken up by Artur de Gobineau and Huston Stewart Chamberlain who referred to Aryans. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Georges Cuvier spoke of three races, James Pritchard of seven, Louis Agassiz of eight and Charles Pickering of eleven. At times, one finds the acknowledgment that nations or peoples do form races, too, such as the Germanic, the French, the Turks, the Japanese, the Chinese or the Anglo-Saxons. The four basic types identified by Linné or the three big racial

define “race”: differences in skin colour, susceptibility for certain diseases, mental and bodily characteristics, mentality and eating and dressing habits.<sup>1047</sup> There is no denying that these differences throughout cultures and centuries do exist. Yet, not everybody would agree to differentiate such variance along the lines of “race”. Today, the word “ethnicity” is used in order to replace the historically fraught concept of “race”. In the past less suspect terms such as “group” (Gumplovicz) and “varietas” (von Eickstedt) have been employed. Different terms to describe race and according processes were paralleled by a similarity of understandings throughout epochs: speakers seemed to be aware that through the usage of race terminology they were fostering established social hierarchies. From antiquity to the modern period the majority of social agents have tried to maintain hierarchies through means of allocating or withholding rights and privileges to members and non-members. Debates on the purity of blood, the legitimacy of marriages and the social, racial, national or religious origins of the respective parents have led to a ranking in which offspring and progenitors have been allocated to specific positions. Images of purity as derived from religious imaginations such as in the Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary, and the purity of blood as a distinction from those who were contaminated with blood of foreigners or impure elements, were powerful. Therefore individuals of mixed origins were regarded as being inferior to those of pure blood. Furthermore, the debate over the purity of blood was paralleled by considerations of the question of illegitimacy: children born out of wedlock in concubinage with foreign women were regarded as shameful and were kept secret and raised with the mother. Although they had a difficult social standing they could overcome their underprivileged status and prove through professional success, legitimate and well-regarded marriage that they were worthy of obtaining citizenship, often precisely by the very means of success and marriage. Métissage, while being a necessity, also led to the misappropriation of rights. It started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with disinheriting Indian women who had married Frenchmen, and it ended in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with the dispossession of Metis lands.

Debates over race and race mixture have led to a ladder of ranks in which mixed-bloods were placed inferiorly to pureblooded individuals. The chimera of “pure blood” was a

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groups – Europoid (Europe, Near East, North Africa, India), Mongoloid (East Asia and America’s indigenous peoples) and Negroid (Africa) were popular and led to further differentiation into mixed forms such as Turanid, Australoid, Mestizos and Mulattoes. This multiplicity stems from the fact that initially the cultural specificity of ethnic groups was not separated from the biological. It was precisely rather used in an ideological bent to refer to the biological. See Werner Conze: „Rasse“, in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, hg. von Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhard Koselleck, Bd. 5, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1984, p. 135

<sup>1047</sup> Franz Boas, “Race and Progress”, in: *Science*, vol. 74, no 1905 (1931), p. 1-8.

powerful image, intended to cement white supremacy over other races and to justify anti-miscegenation laws, prohibition of mixed marriages and discrimination of mixed-bloods. The purity of a race was defined along the fact that it did not possess one single drop of blood of another race, defined as such. This “one-drop-rule” gave blood a prominent role in defining races. However, the fact that there is no consensus over the question which human groups do form distinct races shows how volatile the concept of “race” is: initially a social category, it led to current cultural and ethnic divisions that have been fostered and have become difficult to undo in order to move towards a monogenetic view of humanity. Therefore, the concept is rather sociological than ethnic in content.<sup>1048</sup> “Métissage” has mostly been perceived as a threat to traditional hierarchies and society’s order along class and gender: new gender roles, the offspring from either aggression (rape) or desire (love) and the coming together of groups and individuals that were considered as being unequal in status, family background or ethnic affiliation turned traditional, pre-discovery society upside down. Whenever “métissage” pointed at fruitful exchange and cultural richness authors who held that human crossbreeding was useful for human development and the selection of the fittest propagated it. This paradox, that métissage could at the same time have completely contrary meanings, shows its propagandist content: those who wanted to argue for racial purity saw it as degenerating, those who wanted to argue for race mixture stressed its progressive and humanistic bent. Métissage served both schools well, in that it helped to foster racial differences. However, George Fredrickson holds that “it is not essential to the concept of race that one group be considered superior to another. But if hierarchy is assumed we have passed beyond race or racialism per se and into the realm of racism as an ideology that uses a deep sense of difference to justify inequality of treatment.”<sup>1049</sup>

## 6. Racial and Racist Dimensions of Métissage

If métissage as event, métissage as sexual acts and métissage as the presence of mixed bloods are difficult if not impossible to represent, conceptualise or apprehend,<sup>1050</sup> it is not because blood was mixed. This would be relatively easy to grasp. Rather it was because of the fact that “two dramatically different worlds” were brought into contact, as held by Murray

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<sup>1048</sup> See also Arlette Jouanna, “Les Fondements de l’idée de race au XVIIIe siècle“, in: *L’Information Historique*, vol. 43 (1981), 165-173, p. 165.

<sup>1049</sup> Fredrickson, *Mulattoes*, p. 103. See also K. A. Appiah, “Racisms”, in: D. T. Goldberg (ed.), *Anatomy of Racism* (Minneapolis, 1990), pp. 4-5.

<sup>1050</sup> Jaret Sexton, “The Consequence of Race Mixture: Racialised Barriers and the Politics of Desire”, in: *Social Identities*, vol. 9, number 2, 2003.

Dobbin in his “The One-and-a-Half Men”, in which he tells the story of Jim Brady and Malcolm Norris, two Metis Patriots of the 20th Century. Yet, the components of mixture - different races -, too, have been controversially discussed. It is the social, the biological and the cultural all at the same time that flow into the meaning of the concept of “race”. Initially, race had social connotations and served to categorize the human population of the world according to status. Only later were the cultural and the biological dimensions added and they defined geographical confines, bodily and temperamental characteristics as well as mental abilities. Today, the debate on race mixture evolves around the issue of whether races are relics of a racist past or if they are still a meaningful category in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to describe human diversity.<sup>1051</sup>

In Canada, it transpires that the French merely paid lip service to the Indians and applied policies of métissage not for the purposes of true mixture, but in order to pursue their colonial interests in Canada. The fact that métissage was accompanied by policy schemes of assimilation to European, above all French and Catholic, ways that were endorsed by state and church agents, shows that it was a directed colonial policy. State and church authorities did not enact métissage in order to realise a humanistic ideal of mutual understanding between peoples, but because they pursued the self-interested goal to absorb Indians into French communities and to spread French and Christian culture. State and church authorities hoped to expand the French Empire and the long-term aim was to install French and Christian hegemony in North America. Explicit utterances on “mixture” or on assimilation of French to Indian ways were not mentioned in official discourse, and therefore French authorities were perplexed in the face of the actual results of colonial encounter. Rather than French culture being adapted one to one unexpected outcomes occurred: the French preferred to assimilate to the Indians, mixed-blood children were born and Metis communities formed. Yet, authorities devised new measures, which were to incorporate the Indians and the Metis to the national framework or they found other ways to deal with these groups on Canadian soil. Whenever Indians or Metis did not show any willingness to co-operate, authorities sought coercive or military means and propagated wholesale destruction, betrayal or neglect of tribes.

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<sup>1051</sup> “First, miscegenation as event cannot be confused with miscegenation as empirical acts of interracial sex, or miscegenation as the social presence of mixed race people. Such are the lures produced by the imaginary of white supremacy and predictably mirrored by its liberal opposition. The event of miscegenation, in this more radical sense, is what cannot be represented, conceptualised, or apprehended in either the form of interracial liaisons or the multiracial body (i.e., intelligible via the grid of racialisation). Rather, it is that which prevents either figure from attaining a coherent appearance, or a fixed and stable meaning, whether as object of aggression or desire.” See Jaret Sexton, “The Consequence of Race Mixture: Racialised Barriers and the Politics of Desire”, in: *Social Identities*, vol. 9, number 2, 2003, p. 243f.

In society, in contrast to academia, the use of the term “métissage” to denote the overcoming of racial differences through mixture, or rather as a racial term par excellence through the very stress on racial components, has not gained wide currency. Yet, it is the bias of racist thinking that needs to be constantly kept in mind when discussing métissage and its predicament. Albert Memmi was convinced that “there are no pure races, nor are there even homogenous biological groups. Were there any, they would not be biologically superior. Were they biologically superior, they would not necessarily be superlatively endowed or culturally more advanced than others. (...) In short, racist reasoning has no secure foundation, is incoherent in its development, and is unjustified in its conclusions.”<sup>1052</sup> In the modern French context, André Devyver has stressed the racial prejudices of French noblemen of the Ancien Régime who were more concerned with pointing at social differences between people than at racial and cultural ones: “One can effectively consider as “racist” the sentiments close to disgust that many French noblemen felt, with no doubt since the medieval age and certainly since the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, towards the “vile and abject” non-nobles.”<sup>1053</sup> This stress on social dimensions has led André Devyver to subscribe to the view that the definition of 19<sup>th</sup> century European racism as formulated by UNESCO needs to be extended to imply social differences next to the traditionally religious and cultural ones.<sup>1054</sup> Shortcomings of past scholarship on the history of concepts of *métissage* indeed are demonstrated in the fact that the social dimension has been neglected for the cultural and the racial. Furthermore, reference was made to etymological origins and to definitions without placing these sufficiently into historical contexts. One finds utterances on race mixture in literary, biological, psychiatric and anthropological texts that make only little mention of the socio-political forces of the specific historical context in which they were written.<sup>1055</sup> In the context of colonial politics in New France, it appears that aims were not as precise as authors such as Jacques Audinet have contended for métissage in general. New France agents had a range of aims that overlapped and that were not always precisely defined. Language instructions and settlement policies, for

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<sup>1052</sup> Albert Memmi, *Racism* (Minnesota, 1999), p. 19.

<sup>1053</sup> The French original reads: “On peut effectivement tenir pour “racistes” les sentiments proches de dégoût que beaucoup de gentilshommes français éprouvèrent, sans doute dès le moyen âge et en tout cas dès la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, envers les roturiers “vils et abjects”.” Devyver, *Le sang épuré*, p. 21.

<sup>1054</sup> Devyver, *Le sang épuré*, p. 24. For a UNESCO publication see H. Shapiro: *Les Mélanges de races*, UNESCO (Paris, 1954). Jacques Ruffié is discussing the concept in “Controverse sur les races”, in: *Science*, no 62-63 (1969).

<sup>1055</sup> See, for instance, Dr. Bérillon, “Le métissage et son rôle dans la production des enfants anormaux”, in: *Revue de psychologie appliquée*, no 36 (Janvier 1927), pp. 3-5. The author contends with a valorisation of aspects, which tend to show the abnormality of metis children without mentioning the children’s socio-political context.

instance, often remained at the level of general colonial directives that were not detailed on a state level, but were rather discussed among agents in the colony, i.e. such colonial policies were a general orientation along which local authorities were to realise specific policies in the colony. Money and personnel was provided, but directives remained vague and incomplete. With hindsight, it may be possible to discern “precise ends” in historical analysis, but for contemporaries, these ends were far from being precise.

## 7. The Purpose of a Language of “Race”

The present analysis has tried to move beyond ideological considerations of the heavily fraught concept of “métissage” by looking at the vagaries of a particular historical colonial context. It has tried to explain why métissage as envisaged by the French state in a specific context failed, and at the same time succeeded as a natural process that took place among Indians and Europeans. As such the study acknowledged that ideology played a major part in formulating métissage policies and in controlling its results, while trying to avoid formulating any ideological pitfalls itself. On the other hand, it is acknowledged that the study is, in fact, a contribution to discussions around the issue of “racism” in that it explains how colonial politics enhanced and justified a language of race. The study may not answer the question if races are a meaningful category, but it can show that the usage of this category had particular ideological purposes in colonial contexts. In the specific case of New France this included the purpose to build up a colony in the mainly economic interest of the metropolis, to bring about assimilation to Frenchness as being declared the superior race and to assemble Indians under the banner of “one nation”, i.e. under France.

The constitutional recognition of the Metis as one of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada in 1982, next to Indians and Inuit, marks the result of an ongoing struggle of Metis nationalist organizations for a separate identity and a distinct status for Canadian mixed-bloods. The final recognition can be taken as a conquest of mixed bloods and a success with regard to the usage of race terminology. An exact definition as to who should be included in the term “Metis” in Canada today, however, is lacking. In most cases, it is assumed that “Metis” still refers to the offspring of Indians and Europeans.<sup>1056</sup> Historically, as Emmanuelle Saada has convincingly

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<sup>1056</sup> See the definition proposed by Martin Dunn, *Access to Survival. A Perspective on Aboriginal Self-Government for the Constituency of the Native Council of Canada* (Kingston/Ontario, 1986). For the purposes of the present study, I will use the term “metis” for all mixed individuals regardless of social, cultural, religious, ethnic and geographical origin. Therefore I chose to write Metis without “accent aiguë”. I will refer to variants of the term “metis” whenever speakers use them in their respective discourses.

shown, the category of “Metis” came initially into being as an “affair of words”: to create a third term for the outcome of the sexual commerce between conquerors and the conquered population.<sup>1057</sup> According to Saada, colonial societies could have taken an easy exit by either assigning Metis children to the group of the father or that of the mother, to one of the two cultural groups involved, i.e. either to the conquered group or the conquering group. To Saada the existence of “Metis” is proof of an intervention, which does not only derive from the act of baptism, but also from producing “identifying signs” - dating back to a long history of signifiers.<sup>1058</sup> She further draws attention to the fact that speaking of “Metis” meant speaking of a “problem”, more precisely of a social problem marked by “angoisse”, expressed either in local media, administrative reports or requests of philanthropic societies.<sup>1059</sup> Yet, in a modern Canadian context, the fact of recognition could not resolve the question of definition. Rather the Canadian judicial text on Metis recognition means a compromise on the side of the state towards Metis nationalists who have campaigned for recognition of their identity.<sup>1060</sup> This has resulted in the notion of “Metis” being advanced as an ethnic and legal-political category in Canada.<sup>1061</sup> Theoretically, it has the function to serve as a means of self-identification of mixed-blood individuals in order to provide them with specific rights and privileges. William McGillivray, however, North West Company partner and the father of a half-Cree family, expressed his opinion on special status for Metis by referring to Metis of English extraction: “It is absurd to consider them legally in any other light than as Indians; the British law admits of no filiation of illegitimate children but that of the mother; and as these persons cannot in law claim any advantage by paternal right, it follows, that they ought not to be subjected to any disadvantages which might be supposed to arise from the fortuitous circumstances of their parentage.”<sup>1062</sup> Discussions on the question of Metis identity and respective rights have left the categorisation of “mixed-blood” open. Controversy over the components of this identity surrounds the question of ethnic criteria and extends to issues of regional and periodic limits and to genealogical proofs. It seems paradoxical that Metis are legally and constitutionally

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<sup>1057</sup> Saada, *La question des métis*. Her approach is an analysis of social problems and of the rhetorical construction of the Metis question. She also considers the social conditions of the possibility of its emergence and its solidification by identifying the agents, understanding the social constraints and seizing the circuits of the created topoi.

<sup>1058</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>1059</sup> I chose to use the French original here, since this word does not translate accurately into other languages. Its meaning lies somewhere between existential “anxiety” and “fear”.

<sup>1060</sup> Section 35 in *Constitution Act*, 1982, in: Boldt/Long, p. 364f.; see also Dunn, *Metis*.

<sup>1061</sup> Krosenbrink-Gelissen, *National Council*.

<sup>1062</sup> Cited in Brown, *Women*, p. 44.



recognised, while the question of definition is left open.<sup>1063</sup> Attempts by Metis organizations to either include only those with ancestry from the Red River region - a position that is supported by the anthropologist Krosenbrink-Gelissen<sup>1064</sup> - or to extend Metis membership to include all those with one Indian ancestor in their genealogy - as Martin Dunn for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples - have tried to fill the gap.

## 8. The Legacy of Colonialism in the Literature

The troubled legacy of colonialism was the price to pay for developments that colonial powers most often had not anticipated. On the one hand, contact with foreign races had been envisaged, but mostly under the precept of dominating them and ruling over them. To mix with them was not desired as a value in itself, unless this sort of mixture meant assimilation to the dominant group. Thus, not only in the Canadian context, *métissage* has had considerable racial, if not racist dimensions. In order to counteract this tendency and bias, members of the African *mouvement de négritude* have tried to stress the Universalist tradition in currents of thinking on *métissage*. In the 1950s, Senegalese writers Ousmane Socé, Aimé Césaire, Léon Gontran Damas and Abdoulaye Sadjji held this perspective. They tried to establish cultural rather than biological understandings of *métissage*. *Négritude* authors were motivated by the desire to undo racial boundaries in order to overcome National Socialist policies of eugenics that had prevailed during the Second World War. Critics, however, have accused this avant-garde movement of adding to renewed forms of boundaries through the use of dichotomist categories such as “Europe” and “Africa”, “modernity” and “tradition”.<sup>1065</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre called their literary opposition “racisme anti-raciste”.<sup>1066</sup> Yet, as legitimate as it may be to name different continents according to their respective designations and to differentiate “modernity” from “tradition”, problems arise when new boundaries are drawn for the sake of boundaries that one initially set out to criticize as racist. While it is justifiable to speak of cultural and political differences in the respective traditions of Europe and of Africa, it is at the same time necessary to be aware of any bias in favour of one over the other.

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<sup>1063</sup> See also Dunn, *Metis* and Dunn, *Definition*.

<sup>1064</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1065</sup> See above all the critique of Sonja Lehner, *Koloniale Leidenschaft: Die literarische Vermittlung von kolonialen Diskursen und historischer Praxis von métissage am Beispiel der französischen Kolonialen in Westafrika, 1920-1960* (Bremen, 1997).

<sup>1066</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 93.

The French author Raphael Confiand has stressed the universal character of Metis as opposed to purist conceptions of non-mixed standards and described a Metis positively as “a porous man, open to all civilisations of the world, rich in multiple cultural strata which constitute the modern Saint-Lucian culture; first Amerindian, then French and finally Asian, English and African.”<sup>1067</sup> For anti-racist authors, for instance, “Metis” is synonymous with cultural richness and living proof of fertility among different racial groups. Historian Nathalie Zemon-Davis is aware of the racial bias of métissage and in 1995 stated: “I am using the word métissage by recognizing that this word, and with it that of hybridity, both have their origin in a world dominated by racist thinking.”<sup>1068</sup> While avoiding the explicit recognition that métissage and hybridity may in some cases be taken to be in itself racist terminology, Zemon-Davis refers to their “contexte mondiale”. Furthermore, Zemon-Davis does not answer the question of why racist thinking dominates the world and why individuals have felt the need to delimit themselves according to race. She holds that in a strict sense, “métis” is synonymous with children born of an ethnic division, and “métissage” with a state of the culture, a mental universe, tied to such families and such milieus, or rather to choices made in these milieus and to the experience of emigration and travel.

To counteract racist tendencies in writings about métissage, modern-day authors have stressed the multiple character of the process. With a view to North America, Jennifer Brown sees métissage as a biological, cultural, social and racial phenomenon at once: “Biologically, métissage in North America can be described in a unitary way, as the meeting and mingling of Indian and white racial groups. Socially and culturally, it has had a complex history over many generations - one that continues into the present, as people of this dual descent decide which of their many ancestral roots they wish to tap in defining a contemporary identity.”<sup>1069</sup> In reality, however, this self-identification is often not as easy a matter of choice as Brown describes. According to the self-confessing Metis Martin Dunn, for instance, most Metis in Canada today live in ignorance of their Metis roots and ancestry. He himself contends that he did not know of his roots for most of his life. While Régis Guyotat describes the Americas from the 16th to 19th centuries as “laboratoire de métissages”,<sup>1070</sup> Serge Gruzinski identifies the Catholic Church as the central vector of the process. Gruzinski believes that the Church’s policy was “to impose the Christian marriage upon the whole world, regardless of race, skin

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<sup>1067</sup> Raphael Confiand, *Metis*, 1992, p. 26.

<sup>1068</sup> Nathalie Zemon-Davis, in: *Le Monde*, 19 juin 1995, cited in Lüsebrink.

<sup>1069</sup> Brown, *Women*, p. 40.

<sup>1070</sup> Régis Guyotat: “Un laboratoire de notre modernité”, in: *Le Monde des Débats* I (Octobre 1992), p. 19.

colour, and even social origin.”<sup>1071</sup> He neglects the fact, however, that the French state, too, next to, and often in co-operation with, the Catholic Church, propagated mixed marriages, the preconditions for which - according to edicts of French kings - was the Catholic conversion of the pagan partner. Yet, Gruzinski rightly points at the fact that métissage appears as a process of spreading Christian customs, and more precisely Christian marriage in areas in which it was uncommon. The central aspect of Gruzinski’s argument is that this was imposed rather than accomplished by convincing people of the necessity, desirability or righteousness of such a custom. This argument is certainly valid as far as agents of colonialism are concerned. The argument does not hold with regard to those individuals who deliberately opted for a colonial mixed marriage either without or under the tutelage of Christianity. It would be wrong to assume that Indians only accepted the celebration of Christian marriage because missionaries imposed it upon them. The sources show - to the extent that they reflect the Indian viewpoint - that there were Indians who embraced Christianity because they wanted to become Christian, and to acquire a new religion, even if the motivation was more out of a desire to survive and to adapt to new conditions.

Negative connotations of métissage were prevalent mostly in 19<sup>th</sup> century discourses: in anthropological, medical-psychiatric and literary texts. Race mixture as equivalent of social degeneracy rather than inferiority was the theme of Joseph-Arthur de Gobineau’s *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* written between 1853 and 1855. Gobineau’s anthropology asserted the idea that human mixture would inevitably lead to degeneration in all aspects of societal life. Gobineau himself was a diplomat in the service of the short-term French Foreign Minister Alexis de Tocqueville in 1849, who during his “Journey to America” attributed the frequency of métissage relations in Louisiana to “national character and temperament”.<sup>1072</sup> Gobineau, as to him, had been influenced by his encounter with Germans during his diplomatic service and was inspired to write his book in order to prove the superiority of his own noble lineage.<sup>1073</sup> Consequently, André Devyver has drawn attention to the fact that Gobineau’s racist prejudices cannot so much be accounted for by the author’s white origins, but by his noble background, or rather his aspirations thereto. Furthermore, Devyver believes that the emergence of Gobineau’s essay is further explained by three factors: “It was because he belonged to the nobility - or aspired to be part of it - and not because he belonged to the

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<sup>1071</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>1072</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Journey to America* (New Haven, 1959).

<sup>1073</sup> William L. Shirer, *Aufstieg und Fall des Dritten Reiches* (Köln/Berlin, 1962), p. 101.

White race, which was the master of Africa and the world at the time, that he took so many years to develop his book.” Devyver notes that factors “such as the French Revolution, the elimination of the aristocracy as the dominant group, previous Germanic theories, explain the famous essay more than contemporary history.”<sup>1074</sup> The argument was that “race” was the driving force in human history, which he divided into three racial types: white, yellow and black (leaving out the “red” one) - of which the white race was considered as superior. According to Gobineau every race descended from the white race and no race could exist without its participation. Gobineau identified the origins of Aryans in Central Asia where they had degenerated through mixture with other races and ceased to be pure. Paradoxically, Gobineau excluded the majority of Germans, those living east of the Rhine and the city of Hannover from the Aryan race, which was composed, according to him, by the French, the English, the Irish, the Dutch, the Scandinavians and the Germans west of the Rhine and Hannover.<sup>1075</sup> Houston Stewart Chamberlain extended Gobineau’s ideas into the assertion that the Jews were the racial antitype to the Aryan. He postulated a historic ultimate battle, which would lead to either victory or destruction.<sup>1076</sup>

According to Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, *métissage* appeared at the crossroads of racial theories, experimental biology and the emergence of National Socialism. However, there is no written evidence that processes of race mixture and cultural encounter have been labelled with the term *métissage* at that time. This is particularly true for the context of French colonialism in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in which social agents never used the term *métissage*. One finds mention of the term *marriages mixtes* in missionary and state officials’ reports and letters when reference is made to marriage policies, or the terms *assimilation* and *francisation* when reference is made to policies of French colonial expansion and to according long-term objectives in the colony.<sup>1077</sup> Only with hindsight the term *métissage* is introduced to explain and name the process of colonial encounter. Yet, in 1989, for instance, *Grand Robert de la Langue Française* defined *métissage* as “the production of metis individuals in a society” - without any reference to colonial contexts. The dictionary uses it as synonym for “croisement, mélange (des races)” and for biological and zoological hybridation. In order to illustrate the ideological context *Petit Robert de la Langue Française* adds that “racists fight against

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<sup>1074</sup> Therefore, André Devyver suggests seeing the divide between races as being based on social and class alignments rather than purely along colour lines.

<sup>1075</sup> Shirer, *Aufstieg und Fall*, p. 102.

<sup>1076</sup> Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (München, 1912).

<sup>1077</sup> See the correspondence between Jean Talon, intendant of New France, and Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert in Paris.

métissage”, and that the antithesis to métissage was “purity (of races)” and “selection”,<sup>1078</sup> i.e. these terms are the counter concepts to métissage: selecting as opposed to mixing, purity as opposed to mixture. Yet, one could also think of “dividing”, “segregating” or “separating” and according nouns. In present-day French intellectual circles, dichotomies have been adopted in order to contrast “métissage” to forms of purism such as “race” and “nation”. Thus, in its present form the concept serves multiculturally inspired ideologies of “one world” which have become en vogue and are visible in titles such as *Métissage ou barbarie* or *Le temps est au métissage*.<sup>1079</sup> This programmatic literature tends to see in the avoidance of race mixture an existential threat to humanity and a challenge to humanistic values.<sup>1080</sup> Caribbean writers such as René Depestre have introduced variants of the term métissage such as “brassage”, “relations interculturelles”, “métabolisme” and “syncrétisme” in an attempt to combine the spheres of biology, culture, architecture, religion, diet and language.<sup>1081</sup> Raphael Confiat puts the terms “créolité”, “métissage” and “brassage” into the same context and with a view to the Caribbean contends: “The notion of “créolité”, just as cultural “brassage” or “métissage”, imply a syncretistic vision of the Caribbean world in its everyday life and its symbolic expressions, but also the will to redefine a thought identity, since the discovery of America, through the schemes of perception and conceptualisation which are coming from outside and are essentially of colonial origin.”<sup>1082</sup> In fact, Marimoutou and Racault have described the process of métissage as an unexpected and paradoxical result of colonial expansion. Since agents of colonialism desired cultural and linguistic assimilation, métissage accompanied such aims, and therefore was part of the colonial assimilation process. Marimoutou/Racault are right when they contend that métissage led to transformation. They state: “Paradoxically, the colonial endeavour has without doubt been an involuntary agent of métissage. Be it animated by a universalistic project of cultural assimilation or by a differentialist perspective of preservation of identities, in any case the colonizing culture is transformed by the colonized cultures just as she herself transforms *them*; does she thus not

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<sup>1078</sup> *Le Petit Robert de la Langue Française*, p. 1192.

<sup>1079</sup> Duboux, *Mythologie* and Audinet, *Le Temps*.

<sup>1080</sup> Other writers, however, are rather referring to the paradoxes of the concept of “métissage” such as Jean-Luc Bonniol: *Les paradoxes du métissage* (Paris, 2001), or to its historical development such as François Laplantine/Alexis Nouss (éds.): *Métissages de Arcimboldo à Zombi* (Paris, 2001).

<sup>1081</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 98.

<sup>1082</sup> Lüsebrink, *Métissage*, p. 98.

turn herself into a mixed culture?<sup>1083</sup> It is correct to assume that the colonizing power in turn became mixed itself, yet at least on the state level, this was never its intention.

Therefore, Roger Toumson not surprisingly claims, “The ideology of métissage is, in effect, ambivalent. Two problems go hand in hand: that of philosophical legitimacy of cultural relativism and that of the sociological rehabilitation of dominated cultures.”<sup>1084</sup> Toumson sees métissage as an ideology - a view, which presumes that it is directed at obtaining specific aims and at realizing political planning. The ambivalence that Toumson seems to point at, indeed plays a part in discourses on métissage since authors are seldom sure which issues they are treating when they are referring to métissage. The phenomenon runs the danger of becoming all-pervasive and of eluding the clear understanding of the authors. The problems that Toumson addresses with respect to the philosophical legitimacy of cultural relativism and the sociological rehabilitation of the dominated cultures point at the possibility of solutions. They are related to the acceptance of cultural relativism and by setting those cultures that have a long history of colonial experience free. Indian tribes in Canada have experienced a colonial history of about a millennium if one takes as a starting point the turn of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> century with first incoming Vikings. In the present day, Natives continue to grapple with questions of status, resources and rights in a white dominated society.

When Herván Pérez de Oliva, a Spanish humanist, expressed in 1528 what Christopher Columbus had aimed at during his second voyage, namely “to mix the world and to give to these strange lands the form of ours”, he got to the point of what métissage was about in the European mind:<sup>1085</sup> mixing through assimilation and making similar, two aims that seemed to contradict went hand in hand. In fact, in a slight alteration of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg’s dictum: when the first American discovered Columbus,<sup>1086</sup> the former discovered what discovery was about: not about rapprochement or true mixture, but about the incorporation of the Americas into European design. The original Native American had ample opportunity to find out that Columbus and his counterparts were, in fact, in themselves a “vile discovery”. And after this “discovery”, more accurately named “disembarkment” in the words of Isabelle Perrault, métissage developments and processes unfolded which were partly controlled, and

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<sup>1083</sup> Marimoutou/Racault, *Métissages*, p. 7.

<sup>1084</sup> René Toumson, *Mythologie du métissage* (Paris, 1998), p. 77.

<sup>1085</sup> Cited in Federico Mayor, Préface: La rencontre de l’autre et de soi-même, in: Destins Croisés. Cinq siècles de rencontres avec les Amérindiens, UNESCO Paris 1992, p. 9.

<sup>1086</sup> “Der Amerikaner, der den Columbus zuerst entdeckte, machte eine böse Entdeckung.” Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Aphorismen*, cited in: Urs Bitterli, „Wilde“ und „Zivilisierte“, p. 205.

partly developed without state and church guidance. As such, the results of métissage were surprising and unexpected; they certainly did not signify true mixture, but were embedded in a colonial ideology that aimed at subjecting Natives rather than truly mixing with them.

The main arguments of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. On a state and church level, métissage was sometimes derived from a humanistic ideal of intercultural coexistence. For the most part, however, it was a pragmatic policy and a discursive and material practice in the interest of French colonial, i.e. above all economic, religious and cultural aims.

2. This said, métissage was not only an instrument of state and church power, but it also fulfilled sexual, cultural and economic needs of the parties involved, mainly Indians and Whites. Power and specific needs were at the centre of the process and there was a reciprocal exchange in which all participating agents systemically depended on each other.

3. Métissage served the goal of assimilation to French culture. Thus, métissage and assimilation were from time to time congruent, but sometimes also contradicting concepts. I.e. colony building was led by assimilation processes, which were not necessarily motivated by métissage ideals of true mixture in the sense of Michel de Montaigne. Contrary, métissage ideals were realised despite of the politics and interests of state agents.<sup>1087</sup>

4. The concept of métissage was pushed to the background at the expense of the category of “Metis”, i.e. the politics of métissage unintentionally resulted in the creation of a new social and judicial category for mixed blood individuals, which implied a differentiated social standing of the parents and therefore stigmatised the mixed-blood as being a product of unequal partners.

5. Métissage as envisaged by the French was a failure, since agents changed their minds and policies without pursuing a linear course of action and showing effective results. Indians were mostly resistant to the French way of life, apart from some who became sedentary. Many Frenchmen acquired rather an Indian lifestyle and French customs were spread among

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<sup>1087</sup> I am using the expression “métissage ideals” in a universalistic understanding in the sense of Michel de Montaigne. This view holds that mixture of races is desirable in order to pacify antagonistic groups. However, I am aware that métissage itself is more than an idealistic notion.

Indians only when the latter saw advantages therein such as in conversion, sedentarization and marriage as a way to obtain commercial gain or because they held superstitious beliefs.<sup>1088</sup>

6. Assimilation to French culture and the creation of a French nation overseas failed, and métissage led to increasing racial thinking. Nevertheless métissage as a process had happened in substantial proportion among Indians and Whites. It was most widespread in Acadia, the Great Lakes and in the Red River Region of Manitoba. In these areas Metis communities sprang up and Metis tribalisation was enhanced because the Metis started increasingly to marry endogamous.

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<sup>1088</sup> Thomas-Edmond Giroux has bluntly put the question as follows: “Pourquoi l’Indien a-t-il accepté la Croix et refusé la Civilisation?”, in: Thomas-Edmond Giroux: *Le Jour de l’Indien* (Ottawa, 1954).





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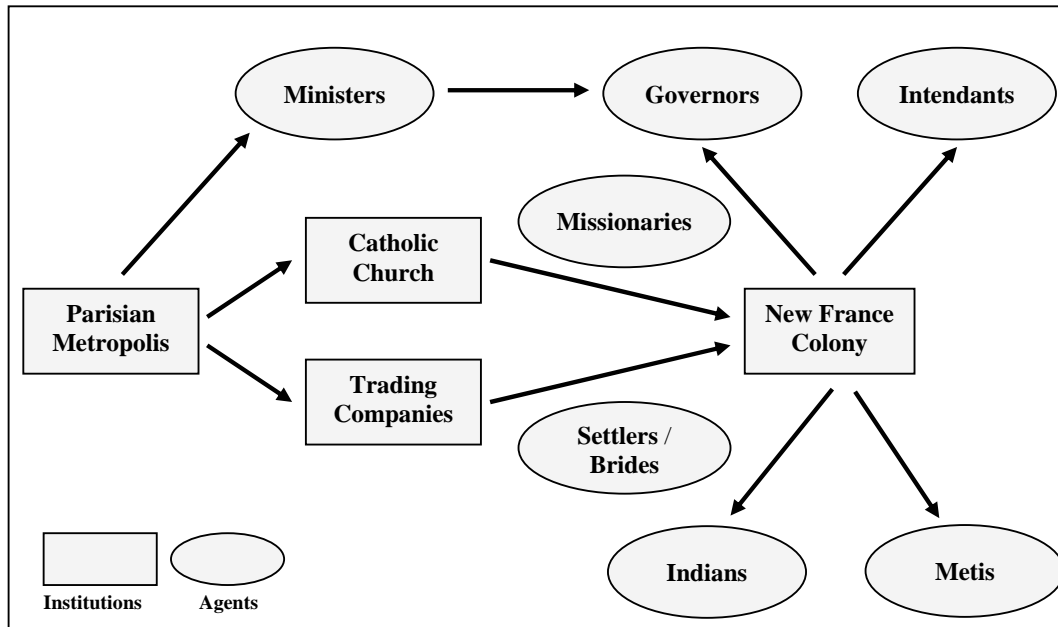
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## Appendix 1 – Graphic: Métissage as Shaped by Social and Political Agents and Institutions



## Appendix 2 – Chronological Table of the Main Developments in New France and Canada 1508-1886

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>1508</b>      | First Indians hijacked to France  |
| <b>1534</b>      | Jacques Cartier at Gaspé Peninsula  |
| <b>1537</b>      | Pope Paul III holds that Indians are „veri homines“   |
| <b>1538</b>      | Baptizing of Indians in St. Malo  |
| <b>1538</b>      | Theologian Francisco de Vitoria expresses the right of Europeans to evangelise Indians      |
| <b>1541-1543</b> | Expansion by Jean-François Roberval and Jacques Cartier                                     |
| <b>1559</b>      | Term <i>metis</i> is used for humans in Amyot’s „Vie des hommes illustres grecs et romains“ |
| <b>1566/67</b>   | Inuit woman and her child brought to La Haye, France  |
| <b>1581</b>      | Tadoussac explored  |
| <b>1599</b>      | François Pontgravé and Pierre Chauvin ship settlers to Canada                               |
| <b>1600</b>      | Tadoussac established as settlement by Pierre du Gua de Monts                               |
| <b>1601</b>      | First Metis communities at Canada’s Atlantic Seaboard                                       |
| <b>1603</b>      | Pontgravé and Chauvin found trading posts with Samuel de Champlain                          |
| <b>1604</b>      | First Franco-Indian <i>tabagie</i>  |
| <b>1605</b>      | Pierre du Gua de Monts takes artisans and settlers to Canada                                |
| <b>1604-1606</b> | Exploration of Fundy Bay by Samuel de Champlain   |
| <b>1607-1615</b> | 8 missionaries make requests to be sent to Canada   |
| <b>1607</b>      | Samuel de Champlain becomes lieutenant of New France  |
| <b>1608</b>      | Lieutenant-governor of Acadia Poutrincourt asks to introduce missionaries in New France     |
| <b>1609</b>      | Marc Lescarbot speaks of populating New France  |
| <b>1610</b>      | King Louis XIII stresses French expansion   |
| <b>1610</b>      | Marquise de Guercheville supports the Jesuits   |
| <b>1610</b>      | Jessé Fléché baptizes Micmac chief Membertou  |
| <b>1611</b>      | Jesuits Pierre Biard and Edmond Massé arrive in Acadia                                      |
| <b>1612</b>      | Marc Lescarbot warns of disruption of traditional customs of Indians                        |
| <b>1613</b>      | Further hijacking of Indians to France  |
| <b>1615</b>      | Montchrétien’s „Traité Économique“ published  |
| <b>1615</b>      | Confrontation between Five Nations Iroquois and French                                      |
| <b>1615</b>      | First Recollects arrive in New France   |

- 1616** Father Biard notes that the Acadians are dying out
- 1619** Recollect Father Sebasti en arrives in Acadia
- 1620** Father Sebasti en opens an Indian mission at Bay de Chaleur
- 1621** First Franco-Indian marriage mentioned in the Qu ebec registers
- 1625** Jesuits Fathers follow to New France
- 1627** Noblemen attract only 107 settlers to New France
- 1627** Company of One Hundred Associates founded
- 1627** around 100 settlers living in New France
- 1628** The British Kirke brothers capture Port Royal, Acadia
- 1628** 4.000 new settlers brought to New France
- 1629** Father Br euf baptizes a Huron child
- 1632-1650** 46 Jesuits altogether have come to New France
- 1633** Jesuit Paul Lejeune stresses Indian sedentarization
- 1633** Samuel de Champlain exclaims towards the Hurons: „Our sons will marry your daughters and we will be one people“
- 1634** Norman colonizer Robert Griffard baptizes an Indian child at six months
- 1634** First „filles du roy“ sent to the colony
- 1634-1635** Hurons are faced with the Virgin Soil Epidemics
- 1635** Commissar General of the Company of One Hundred Associates complains towards the Hurons that they have not allied themselves to the French through marriage
- 1635** Company of the Isles in America stresses conversion
- 1635** Seminary founded in Quebec
- 1635** An Iroquois woman, a little boy and three Montagnais girls sent to France
- 1635** Pierre Chaumonot holds that there is no need for a conversion doctrine
- 1635** „R eduction“ founded at Sillery
- 1637** Present-giving to the Hurons
- 1639** Ursulines arrive in New France
- 1639** Village council in Huronia decides to attack missionaries, but refrains from doing so
- 1642** Royal Edict to the Company of the Isles in America
- 1642** Marie de l’Incarnation stresses conversion successes
- 1645** Work of Company of One Hundred Associates interrupted
- 1648** Augmentation of the colony and conversion stressed
- 1649** Pierre Boucher, governor of Trois-Rivi eres, marries the Huron woman Marie Ouebadinskoue
- 1657** Sulpicians arrive in New France

- 1657** Intermarriage, on the initiative of Sieur d'Iberville
- 1657** Pierre Couc marries Marie Mitromigoucoué
- 1658** Maisonneuve adopts a little Indian girl at ten months
- 1660** Population at 2.300 in New France
- 1660s** First voices raised against intermarriage
- 1663** New France becomes a royal colony of France
- 1663** Colony hosts six to seven white men for each white woman of marriageable age
- 1663** More „filles du roy“ sent to the colony
- 1663** Company of the West Indies joins in conversion endeavour
- 1664** „Coutume de Paris“ is introduced in New France
- 1665** Four-year-old French girl Jeanne Baillargeon kidnapped by the Hurons
- 1666** Colbert stresses colony building
- 1666** Colbert explains why he supports intermarriage
- 1666** Total of 3.418 families in the colony
- 1666** Talon introduces police measures
- 1666** Colbert stresses assimilation measures
- 1667** 286 persons arrive in the colony
- 1667** Colbert stresses the need to teach the French language
- 1667** King Louis XIV promulgates that couples that want to marry need the consent of their parents, a public celebration, benediction of the priest and proper registration of their marriage
- 1668** King Louis XIV stresses the idea of „a single people“
- 1668** Colbert writes to Laval on behalf of the teaching of children
- 1668** Colbert expresses his hope that the Indians would join the French in marriage
- 1669** Intendant Rémy de Courcelles wants to send 150 girls to be married in the Colony
- 1670** Bishop Laval reports to Colbert that a large number of the 150 girls are already married
- 1670** Talon reports to the King that 30 of the girls got married
- 1670** Colbert insists that colonists should marry at an early age
- 1671** Recollects' prohibition to enter Canada dismissed
- 1670s** Mixed settlements of Sauk, Fox, Potawatomi and Winnibago Indians discovered
- 1673** Proportion of Whites in the colony numbers 6.000
- 1671** Talon issues that all single men of marriageable age should marry instantly under the threat of losing their fishing, hunting and trading rights
- 1671** Frontenac urges for more „filles du roy“ to be sent to the colony



- 1671** Officer Lamothe Cadillac wants to reform the Indians rather than completely assimilate them
- 1672** There are 7.000 inhabitants in New France
- 1672** Frontenac holds that francisation should come before evangelisation
- 1673** King asks Governor Frontenac to work for colony building
- 1673** King cuts down expenses for the colony
- 1673** Francisation extended to imply the learning of French professions
- 1673** The British pass the anti-Catholic Test Act
- 1674** Frontenac convinced of the righteousness of teaching Indian children
- 1675** Father Leclercq develops a written language of hieroglyphs for the Micmac
- 1675** Father Maupassant reports that there are six Recollect priests in Canada
- 1679** Colbert opts for segregationist policies
- 1680** Around 800 or one-fifth of French Canada's male population between 20 and 60 years leave the colony towards the interior of the country
- 1681** Du Chesneau reports that the youth is being brought up à la Française
- 1681** Population in New France numbers 10.000
- 1682** De Meulles complains that Ursulines only work at francisation and conversion, whereas Indians should be turned into French peasants
- 1682** Governors and intendants are further instructed to convert the Natives
- 1682** King Louis XIV urges intendants to pursue the policy of francisation
- 1682-1683** 20.000 Indians attracted to Fort Saint-Louis du Rocher by La Salle
- 1683-1701** With a few exceptions, no officers are accompanied by their wives
- 1684** Edict on punishment of deserters to the English and the Dutch
- 1684** The King sends 500 livres to the Sulpician mission in Montagne
- 1684** Financial incentives to French brides instead of Indian ones
- 1685** Governor de Brisay disappointed of the failure of assimilation
- 1685** Jesuits and Sulpicians decide for segregation of French and Indian settlements
- 1687** King stresses the need to increasing Indians in French settlements
- 1687** King issues permission for military marriages
- 1687** Champigny prefers the term „civiliser“ to „franciser“
- 1690s** Colonial officials start to recognize Metis communities
- 1691** Governor Frontenac favours francisation of Indians
- 1693** Hospitalers of the Mercy of Jesus arrive in New France
- 1696** Frontenac writes to Colbert that the issue of libertinage is widely exaggerated
- 1698** Lengthy report on the Western posts by Champigny and stress on sedentarization successes

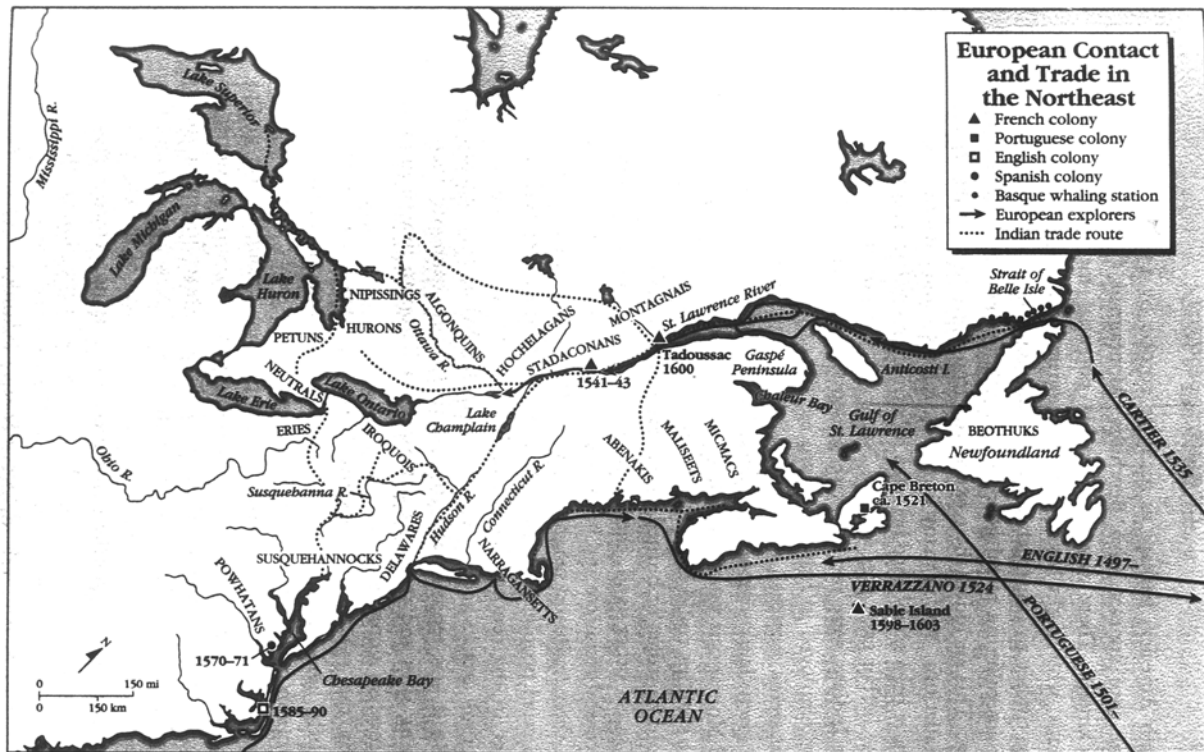
- 1699** Missionary St. Cosme reports on baptisms of Indian children and prevention of libertinage in Michilimackinac
- 1699** King Louis XIV reiterates his tolerance for intermarriage and asks for the future Indian spouse to be Christian
- 1701** There are around fifteen married French women in the colony
- 1701** 4.000 Indians attracted to Detroit by Lamothe Cadillac
- 1702** D'Iberville wants to have more Indians transmigrate
- 1703** Missionary Carheil complains towards Colbert on the sexual conduct of soldiers
- 1703** Marie Rousensa marries French trader Michel Accault in the Pays des Illinois
- 1703** Laurent Dubosq de St. Maclou marries Huron woman Marie-Félix in Québec
- 1704** Cleric in Louisiana lists the obstacle to Indian conversion
- 1706** Recollects in Acadia are instructed that they should perform mixed marriages only with the approval of the Governor
- 1706** Governor Vaudreuil urges Lamothe Cadillac to prevent libertinage by prohibiting marriages between French and Indians because of the latter's „bad quality of blood“
- 1707** A mixed marriage is prohibited because the mother of the groom did not consent
- 1708** Governor La Vente sees no harm in the mixture with the blood of savages
- 1708** La Vente complains that there are no new soldiers sent to New France
- 1708** La Vente reminds authorities that girls had been urged to found families
- 1710** La Vente tries to persuade metropolitan authorities to drop ban on intermarriage, without success
- 1711** Father Marest complains on libertinage in Kaskaskia
- 1712** Pontchartrain agrees to send more „filles du roi“ and sets up criteria
- 1713** „Filles du roi“ are sent from the metropolis
- 1714** La Vente repeats the necessity of mixed marriages
- 1714** Governor Samuel Vetch in Port Royal notes that through marriage with Indians local Acadians could influence the latter
- 1715** Adjutant Pierre d'Artaguiette denounced the instability of mixed marriages
- 1715** Duclos joins in the racist discourse on mixed marriages altering the skin colour of children
- 1715** Number of mixed marriages in Kaskaskia outnumbers the French by seven to one
- 1716** Naturalisation letters for foreigners coming to New France
- 1716** Mixed Marriages prohibited by Conseil de Marine
- 1717** Blacks allowed entering Canada
- 1717** Marriages *à la gaumine* prohibited
- 1717** Pays des Illinois comes under the government of Louisiana

- 1718** Indian tribes assembled at Rivière St. Jean
- 1719** Island of Saint-Jean to be colonised by Louis-Hyacinthe Castel
- 1719** Vaudreuil complains that the Bishop of Québec continues to perform marriages of officers and soldiers without permission of the governor general
- 1720** Maréchal d'Estrée recommends that 30 girls be sent every year from France to found stable marriages
- 1721** Governor Vaudreuil sends Father La Chase to an Abenaki village
- 1721** Permission asked for the Bishop to perform marriages of soldiers and officers
- 1722** Company of the West Indies allotted the Capuchins the parish of New Orleans
- 1725** Missionary Beaubois holds that religion is the only way to bring Indians closer to European habits
- 1725** Sending of Indians to the Royal Court in France
- 1725-1726** Seven baptisms of Metis children in Fort de Chartres in Ste. Anne
- 1726** New contract between Company of the West Indies and the Jesuits
- 1731** French population in Acadia numbers 6,000
- 1732** Anonymous memorandum on the corruption through mixed marriages
- 1733** Beauharnois and Hocquart stress the settling of soldiers
- 1735** Report to Comte de Maurepas on the deplorable state of the Québec seminary
- 1734** Report that marriages between Frenchmen and Savage women have become frequent in the Illinois Country because missionaries comply too easily
- 1738** Missionary Tartarin takes up debate on the prohibition of mixed marriages
- 1740** Order of the Grey Nuns founded in Montreal
- 1740s** Relations between the French and the Choctaw deteriorates because of raping practice of the French towards Choctaw women
- 1744** Acadians fear that high prevalence of intermarriage can lead the new British administration to treat everybody as enemy
- 1747** Officer Boishébert stresses that Franco-Indian relations depend on the co-operation of the Indians
- 1748** Instructions on mixed marriages from Bishop Pontbriand to Du Jaunay, in charge of the St. Ignace mission
- 1749** Governor Galissonnière thinks that mixed marriages are harmful to the state and issues that missionaries should perform them as little as possible
- 1749** New France threatened by the Kirke brothers
- 1751** Bossu encounters a Metis at the Mississippi River
- 1754** Seven Years War with the English breaks out
- 1755** British take-over of Acadia
- 1755** Vaudreuil optimistic on prospect of colonising Detroit
- 1755** Bogard de Lanoue marries a Metis, in spite of the interdiction of the commandant of Cape Breton

- 1756** Marquis de Montcalm concerned about the commandant's prohibition of officers' marriages with Indians
- 1757** Commandant in the Upper Country describes a Metis community
- 1758** Voltaire wages a polemic against the Canadian endeavour
- 1760** Population number of New France numbers 70.000
- 1763** British take-over of New France
- 1763** Expertise of Sorbonne jurists sought over issue of mixed marriages
- 1763** Governor La Varenne in Louisbourg describes a Metis community
- 1765** Abbey l'Isledieu complains that in the colony of Louisiana there are only Capuchins left after the abolition of the Jesuit order
- 1766** Laterrière reports on Indian-Indian intermarriage practices
- 1768** Bishop of Québec sends a priest to Illinois, another to Acadia
- 1770** Cornelius de Pauw uses „metis“ in his „Recherches Philosophiques“
- 1774** Bishop of Québec Briand marries a mixed couple against the interdiction of the government
- 1777** Entrance of Whites into Indian villages is prohibited
- 1783** Abbé Raynal uses „metis“ in his „Histoire des deux Indes“
- 1791** Julien Raymond uses „metis“ to designate the child of a fourth degree of intermarriage
- 1800** Priest Sigogne marries a mixed couple against the interdiction of the government
- 1806** Superintendent of the Savages receives message that the Hurons no longer want to send their children to the Québec seminary
- 1809** Second generation Metis begin to establish families of their own
- 1812** D'Estimaerville speaks of the military character of the Metis
- 1816** Number of Metis households rises to 63 % in Michilimackinac
- 1816** Metis Battle of Seven Oaks
- 1826** Abbey Roupe objects to a mixed marriage at Lac-des-Deux-Montagnes
- 1826** Priest Fauvel brings the Indian Teorgaron to France and Rome
- 1843** A Frenchman wants to marry a Black woman
- 1845** Painter Catlin brings twelve Indians to Paris
- 1851** Metis Battle of Grand Coteau
- 1853** Priest Marcourt writes in „The Moniteur Canadien“ of the reasons he opposes mixed marriages
- 1863** Pembina Band signs a treaty with the US government
- 1869** North West Territories ceded to the Hudson's Bay Company
- 1869/70** Manitoba Metis Insurrection
- 1870** Creation of the Province of Manitoba

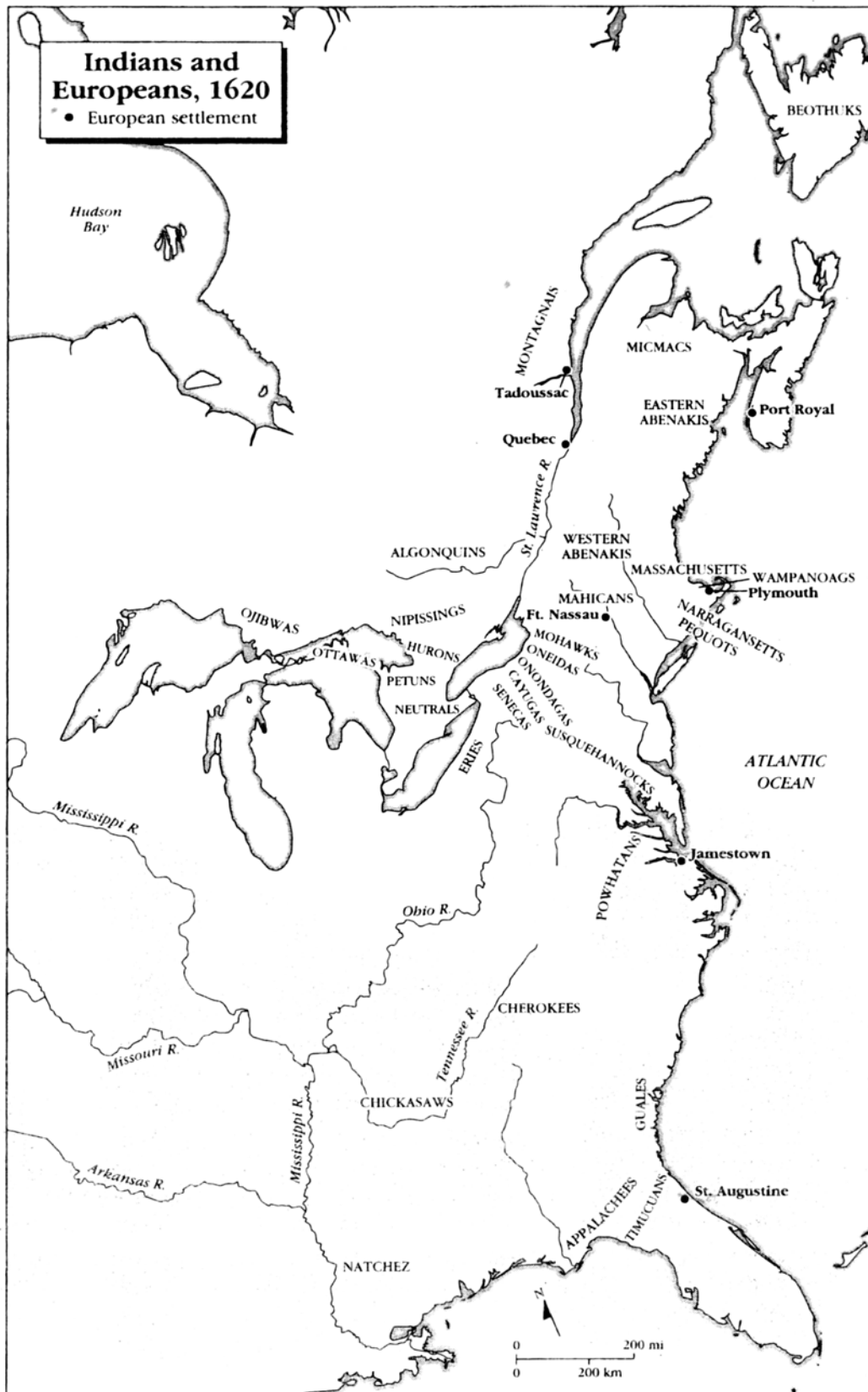
- 1870** Metis Provisional Government at the Red River
- 1870s** Intermarriage with Natives disappears from imperialist discourse
- 1878-1884** Louis Riel in exile in the United States
- 1879** Louis Riel tries to convince Indian chief Crowfoot to join in a revolt against the Canadian government
- 1879** Havard estimates that there are 18.000 mixed bloods in Canada
- 1882** Two Métis townships in the Southeastern Part of Turtle Mountain are turned into reservations
- 1885** Metis North West Rebellion
- 1886** An Algonquian dictionary uses the term „Metis“ to express the fighting spirit of the Metis
- 1886** Trial against Louis Riel
- 1886** Act of Savages distinguishes between „Indians“ and „Metis“

## Appendix 3 - Maps

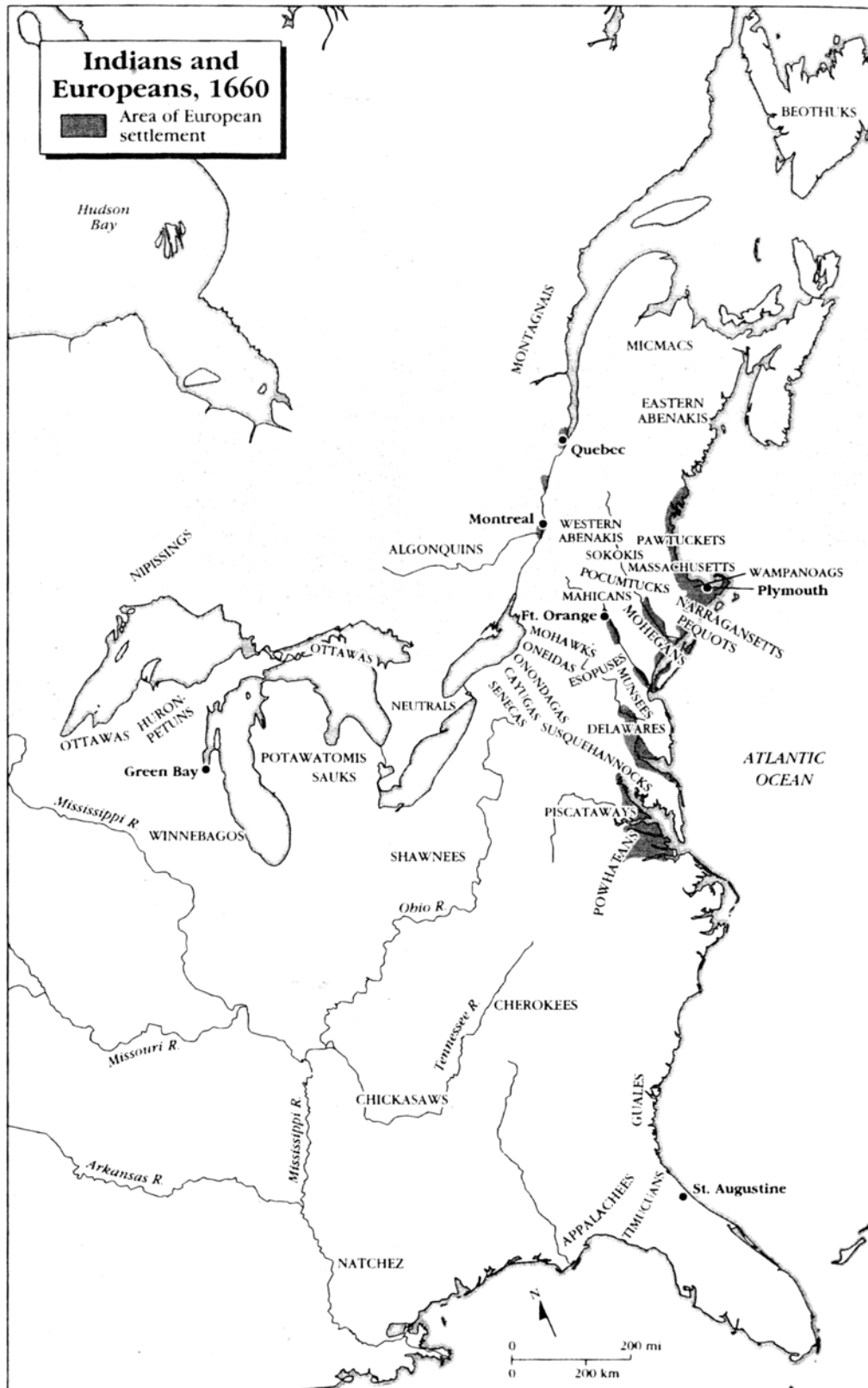


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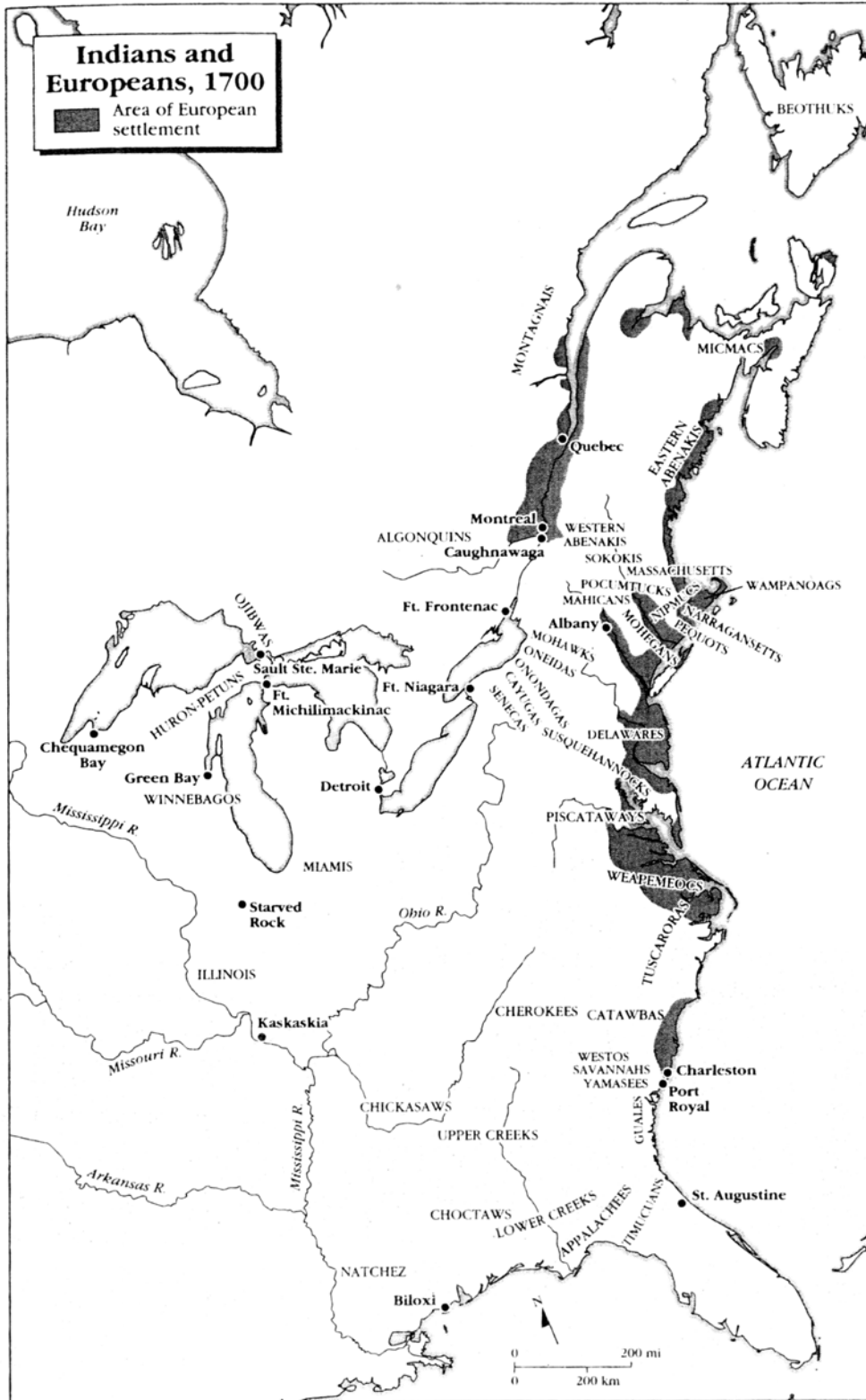
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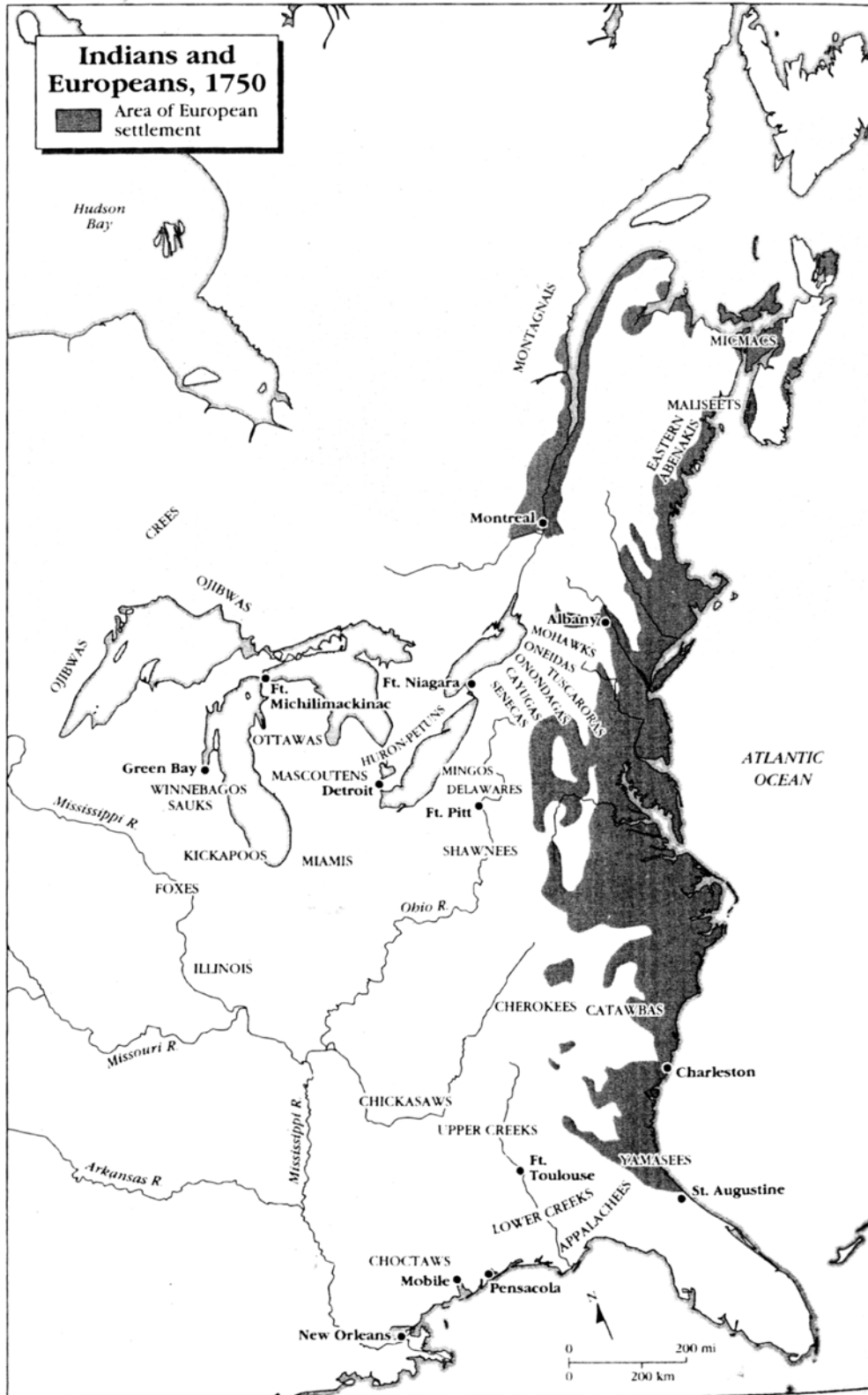
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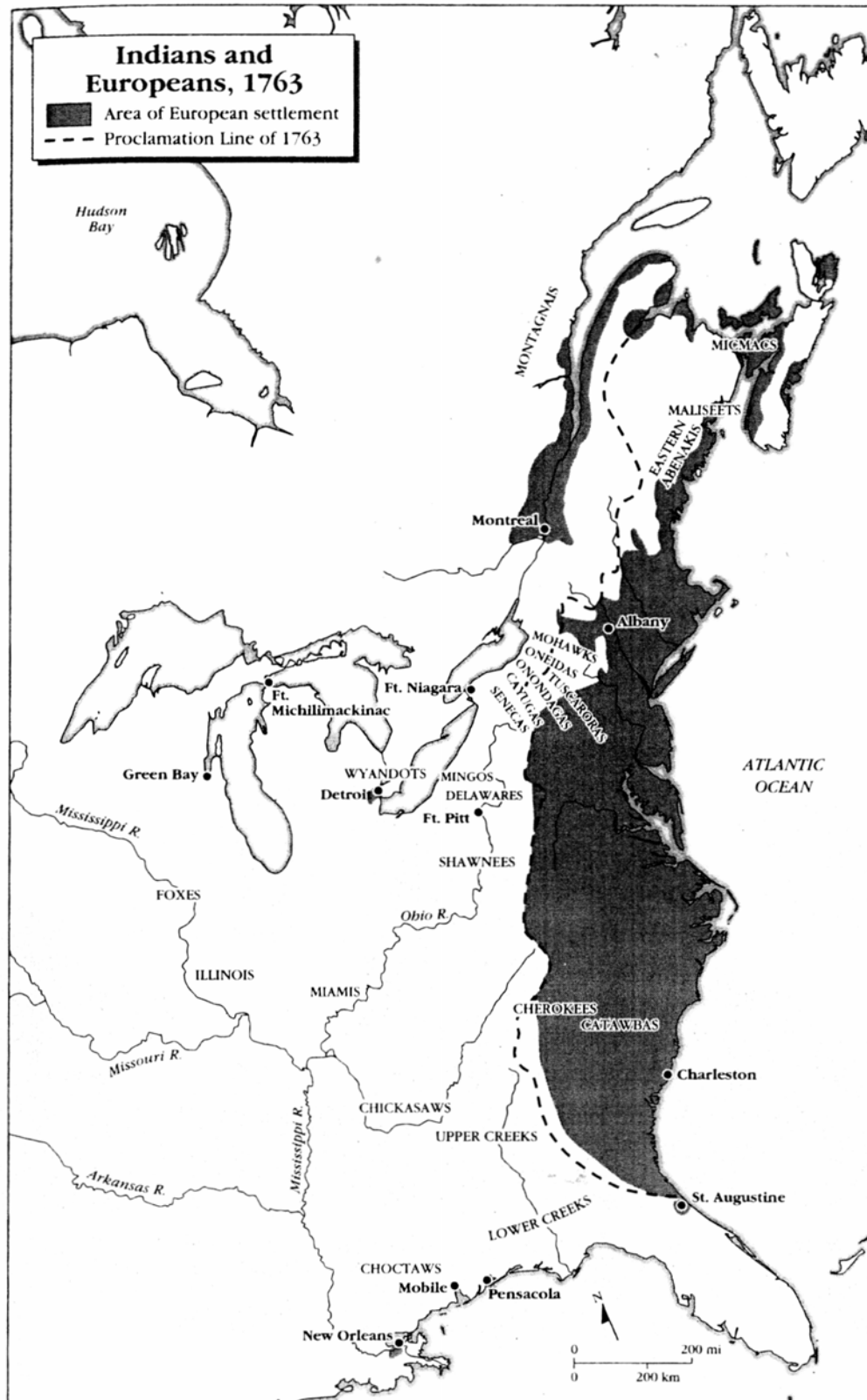
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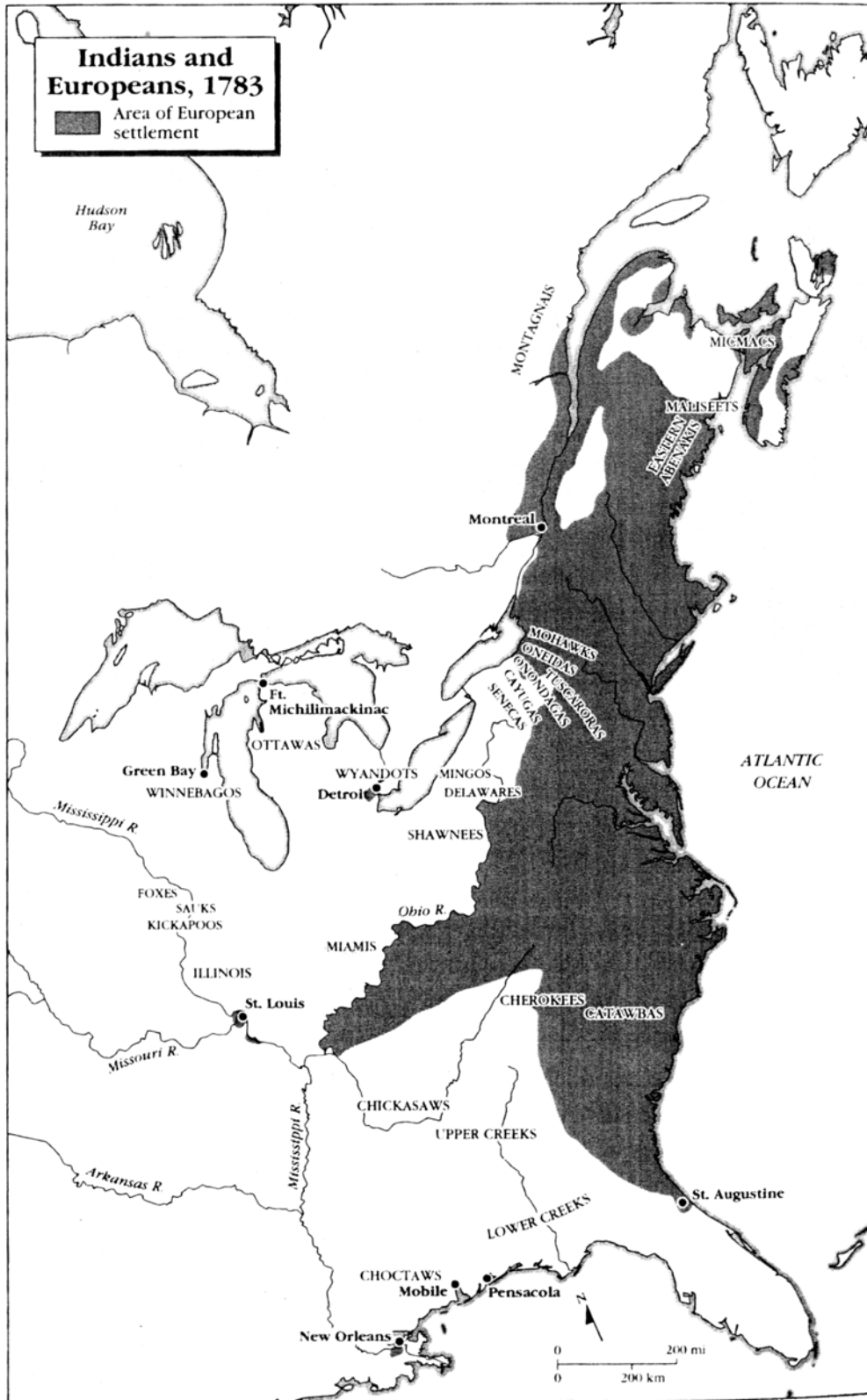
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