

CATHERINE O'DONNELL, *Jesuits in the North American Colonies and the United States: Faith, Conflict, Adaptation*, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, Netherlands 2020, ISBN: 978-90-0442810-2, pp. 112*.

Jesuits, members of the Society of Jesus, explored territory, proselytized indigenous peoples, and participated in Spanish, French, and English imperialism in ways that shaped both local and transatlantic communities; Jesuits have also built and disrupted institutions in ways that have fundamentally shaped the Catholic Church and American society. As it grew, the society provoked renewed hostility from governments, Protestants, and some faithful Catholics. Conflicts over governance, over property, and over how to reanimate the society were inevitable.

The author, Catherine O'Donnell, is a scholar of early American history and religion who is presently an associate professor of History in Arizona State University. Her educational qualifications include Ph.D. in History from the University of Michigan, M.A. in History from the University of Michigan, B.A. in Spanish and American Studies from Amherst College.

Jesuits in the North American Colonies and the United States was written by Catherine O'Donnell and published by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, Netherlands in 2020. It is a historical book on religious studies that tells the history of Jesuits as a society committed to defending the Catholic power and protect the church against modernity, other faiths, and earthly injustice. The book spans 112 pages; the contents beginning with abstract and ending with bibliography (in MLA referencing style its sources from books and articles).U

When the European conquest of the Americas began in the late fifteenth century, Jesuits, just like members of orders such as the Franciscans and the Dominicans, saw the New World as a providential theater for the expansion of God's kingdom. Jesuits evangelized in New France and in the Pays d'en Haut. They labored in New Spain, including in the desert regions of what is

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now the American Southwest. Jesuits were among the earliest settlers in the English colony of Maryland. In each region, their message partook of shared Jesuit purposes and forms while also reflecting the distinctive contributions of the indigenous peoples among whom they worked and of the empires within which they toiled. As O'Donnell demonstrates, Jesuits in French, Spanish, and British colonies were both evangelists and agents of an empire.

The author revealed that the society's school and missions emerged from Jesuits' conviction that humanistic knowledge and Catholicism must be assertively spread and that the Jesuits were the ones to do that. She opined that Jesuit schools inspired some students to become Jesuits themselves, and the hardship of the missions offered a new golden legend for those studying and teaching in the schools.

After first facing banishment from particular realms, in 1773 the society was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV. Yet, O'Donnell reaffirmed, Jesuits remained part of the history of the American Church even when, in the view of the Church, they did not exist.

The Society of Jesus had close ties to France from its inception: a few of Ignatius's first companions were French and he held a fellowship at the University of Paris. In 1663, Louis XIV imposed direct royal rule over New France. O'Donnell recalled some historians who have argued that the change marked a defeat for Jesuit missionaries because it replaced Jesuit initiative with royal decree, imposing a policy of Frenchification that did not accord with Jesuits' willingness to integrate Catholicism into native practice.

As O'Donnell narrates, missionaries to New Spain unwittingly brought with them diseases that afflicted and killed the indigenous peoples and livestock, thus devastating native economies and cultures. She further narrated, as in New France, natives theorized that the priests were in some way responsible for the suffering, while Jesuits dismissed such theories as superstition and rushed to baptize the ill rendering themselves even more suspect when Indians observed that many of those recently baptized soon died.

Jesuits provided English Catholics with intellectual leaders and covert pastors. In England, Jesuits worked quietly as chaplains in aristocratic Catholic homes or as clandestine circuit riders, hearing confessions and saying Masses while travelling the countryside under assumed names and sheltering in "priests holes." The Jesuits in exile were bolder, advocating re-Catholicization of England. Jesuits entered the country surreptitiously, determined to reanimate English Catholicism which they found increasingly

hollow. The founding of the Anglican Church, the loathing of Catholicism, known commonly as antipapal, the author described this as a mainstay of Englishness.

At the time of the restoration, fewer than thirty Jesuits lived in the United States. Some were survivors of the original order, other novices or members of the Russian order. Some belonged to the corporation in Maryland; others belonged only to the Society of Jesus. O'Donnell recalled that during the nineteenth century, the Society would be expelled from every Catholic European country, and from many Latin American countries, as well. Many of those exiles made their way to the United States.

Jesuits' discipline and commitment to obedience cast them as rigid defenders of Catholic power and global ambition. Throughout the nineteenth century, members of the restored society, not least in the United States, came to interpret their vow as defense of the papacy, as a call to protect the Church against modernity and against change itself.

Conclusively, O'Donnell was able to capture the resilience of the Jesuit society, revealing how Jesuits were shaped yet not daunted by the opposition they faced: Jesuits working in the French and Spanish empires faced endless challenges but at least shared with imperial officials the goal of spreading the Catholic faith. Not so in the English and British endeavors. The author also consistently demonstrated Jesuits in French, Spanish, and British colonies as both evangelists and agents of an empire. This book is recommend to anyone interested in the history of the evangelism of the Catholic Church, and specifically to historians and scholars in religion.

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