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Article abstract

Both French and Spanish authorities saw the education of Amerindians as an essential tool in assimilating them to European ways. Both groups thought that the natives were either uneducated, and therefore clean slates for new teachings, or else sufficiently capable of understanding the superiority of foreign ways. In either case, education was the necessary vehicle for turning the natives towards European habits and norms of behaviour. The approach of each group was different. The Spanish, through the Franciscans, were able to take over an existing system, altering it to suit their own needs. They therefore devised a sophisticated system of institutions quickly, establishing a college by 1536. These efforts enjoyed a huge initial success, largely because the natives in their defeat experienced little difficulty in substituting one set of authority figures for another set already found wanting. The French were not conquerers, and did not face a native society in crisis, as had the Spanish. The French Franciscan friars also initiated christianizing education quickly after first settlement, but the Jesuits superceded them within two decades. The natives agreed to their ministrations because the French made it a condition of trade. Huron society differed radically from that of the Mexico, in its egalitarian structure and flexible institutions. The Huron, an unconquered people in a transitional phase of social and economic life, treated the missionaries as guests and often dictated the conditions of contact. In spite of quite different circumstances, the educational efforts of both groups seem to have reached a similar conclusion: native groups were neither as maleable nor as easy to assimilate as the Europeans had thought.

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Campaigns to Capture Young Minds: A Look at Early Attempts in Colonial Mexico and New France to Remold Amerindians

OLIVE PATRICIA DICKASON

Résumé

Both French and Spanish authorities saw the education of Amerindians as an essential tool in assimilating them to European ways. Both groups thought that the natives were either uneducated, and therefore clean slates for new teachings, or else sufficiently capable of understanding the superiority of foreign ways. In either case, education was the necessary vehicle for turning the natives towards European habits and norms of behaviour.

The approach of each group was different. The Spanish, through the Franciscans, were able to take over an existing system, altering it to suit their own needs. They therefore devised a sophisticated system of institutions quickly, establishing a college by 1536. These efforts enjoyed a huge initial success, largely because the natives in their defeat experienced little difficulty in substituting one set of authority figures for another set already found wanting.

The French were not conquerers, and did not face a native society in crisis, as had the Spanish. The French Franciscan friars also initiated christianizing education quickly after first settlement, but the Jesuits superceded them within two decades. The natives agreed to their ministrations because the French made it a condition of trade. Huron society differed radically from that of the Mexica, in its egalitarian structure and flexible institutions. The Huron, an unconquered people in a transitional phase of social and economic life, treated the missionaries as guests and often dictated the conditions of contact.

In spite of quite different circumstances, the educational efforts of both groups seem to have reached a similar conclusion: native groups were neither as maleable nor as easy to assimilate as the Europeans had thought.

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Les colonisateurs français et espagnols s'entendaient pour voir dans l'éducation des Amérindiens un outil indispensable d'assimilation. Des deux côtés, ils pensaient que les autochtones étaient soit sans éducation, constituant dès lors un terrain propice à de nouveaux apprentissages, ou bien qu'ils étaient en mesure de comprendre la supériorité de l'éducation étrangère. Dans les deux cas, l'éducation était l'instrument nécessaire si l'on voulait voir les autochtones s'adapter aux us et coutumes des Européens.

L'approche de chaque groupe était différente. Les Espagnols, par l'intermédiaire des Franciscains, furent à même de reprendre un système existant et de le modifier selon leurs propres besoins. Ils développèrent donc rapidement un savant réseau d'institutions scolaires, établissant un collège vers 1536. Leurs efforts obtinrent un immense succès, surtout parce que les autochtones conquis montrèrent peu de difficulté à passer d'une autorité à une autre qui correspondait à leurs désirs. Les Français ne se présentaient pas en conquérants, et ils n'eurent pas, comme les Espagnols, à affronter une société autochtone en crise. les Récollets français entreprirent l'éducation chrétienne dès leur premier établissement. Puis les Jésuites leur succédèrent en moins de vingt ans. Les autochtones acceptèrent leur ministère parce que les Français en faisaient une condition du commerce. Les Hurons différaient radicalement des Indiens du Mexique par leur organisation démocratique et par la souplesse de leurs institutions. Ce n'est pas en peuple conquis que les Hurons entrèrent dans cette phase de transition de leur vie sociale et économique. Ils traitèrent les missionnaires comme des hôtes et dictèrent souvent les conditions des échanges.

En dépit de circonstances bien différentes, les efforts des deux groupes touchant l'éducation arrivèrent au même résultat; les autochtones ne furent ni aussi maléables ni aussi faciles à assimiler que les Européens l'avaient pensé.

Europeans did not introduce Amerindians to the concept of education, despite the view, widely held during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that the natives of the New World did not have the knowledge necessary within their own cultures to be fully developed as human beings. All Amerindians, whatever their level of technological development — whether members of the cultivated society of preimperial Mexica[1] and their neighbours, of the semisedentary farming communities of the confederated Huron, or of purely hunting and gathering societies — inherited cultural traditions and learned skills through the medium of teachers. Some of these teachers operated within a structured school system, as with the Mexica; others functioned informally around a hearth, as with the Huron; but in any case the objective was to train the young in the ways and beliefs of their people. No sooner had Europeans established themselves in the New World, than they launched the first of their great modern missionary drives to lead Amerindians into European ways of thinking and believing. If evangelization was given front rank in importance, it could only be maintained if it went hand in hand with education. In the words of Pius IX (pope, 1846–78), "A mission without schools

1. This is the name by which the people whom the Spaniards called Aztecs knew themselves.

is a mission without a future."[2] It was thought at first that the task would be comparatively simple and straightforward, as Amerindians were seen either as *tabulae rasae*, clean slates, waiting for whatever Europeans chose to inscribe, or else as being so impressed with the obvious superiority of the European way that they would readily accept it. It was a process that would involve breaking and replacing established social practices and loyalties, particularly those of kinship, on the model of what had happened in Europe during the period of Christianization.

Aspects of two of these cultural assaults will be examined in this paper with the view of ascertaining their successes and failures. The first was launched immediately on the heels of military conquest by Franciscans (mostly Observant) in Texcoco (near Mexico City) in 1523, and in Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) in 1525, reaching a high point with the establishment of their famous elitist Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Santiago de Tlaltelolco in 1536. The second was an adjunct of the fur trade, the missionaries being allowed in by the practical-minded Huron because this was a condition laid down by the French for doing business. The mission began as a Franciscan (specifically, Recollet) enterprise in Huronia in 1615, for which the friars obtained the assistance of the Jesuits in 1625, finally reluctantly relinquishing the field to them in 1633. With the Mexica, the friars were dealing with an institutionalized hierarchical society that was in the process of working out the mechanics of empire. With the Huron, they found a comparatively egalitarian society with institutions that were flexible when they had been externalized at all, a society that was working out the problems of becoming sedentary and living within a confederation. In the first case, the Franciscans were to enjoy a huge initial success, largely because the Mexica in their defeat experienced little difficulty in substituting one set of authority figures for another, and found it easy to appear to conform, whatever their reservations. In the second, both Franciscans and Jesuits had more the status of invited guests, and quickly aroused the Hurons' amazed disbelief when they took it upon themselves to tell them what to do, and even to pass judgement on them. Since the appropriateness of the model that the Europeans were seeking to impose was not questioned in either case, the troubles that developed were attributed to the Amerindian character—either, as in the case of the Huron, their unassailable "primitiveness" (by which was meant lack of discipline, law, and government), or, as with the Mexica, as a persistent secret devotion to old ways that had been inspired by the devil. There were those, such as Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (d. 1590), who were perceptive enough to see that the process of cultural engineering in itself could lead to social and individual disintegration.[3]

2. V. Roelens, "Les catéchistes dans les missions," *Le Bulletin des Missons* (June 1930): 96-104 at 97. See also Robert Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, tr. Lesley Byrd Simpson (Berkeley, 1974), 207. Ricard's work was originally published in 1933.

3. Bernadino de Sahagún, *Historia General de Las Cosas de Nueva España*, ed. Carlos Maria de Bustamante, 3 vols. (Mexico, 1829-30), III, "Relacion del autor digna de ser notada": 70-85 at 71-2. This was the first publication of Sahagún's work, which had been suppressed by the Spanish crown in 1577 on the grounds that it was not desirable to publicize such "superstitions" as Amerindian traditional beliefs. For a commentary on Sahagún's work methods, see Donald Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting* (New Haven, 1959), 46-8.

Although the French were more nationalistic in their approach than were the Spaniards, still the two colonizing nations were far more alike in their orientations and goals than were the peoples with whom they were dealing. The Mexica were moved at least to listen to the Christian message, although not always with enthusiasm, in view of the fact that their own gods had failed them. The Huron had no such motives; on the contrary, they dictated to a large extent the terms under which the missionaries could enter their country.[4] Despite the differences in circumstance and social conditioning, both peoples reacted against being remolded according to the notions of others. As the Jesuits were to observe sadly, conversion turned out not to be the work of a day.

Before the Spanish conquest, the early education of Mexica children began in the home, and was the responsibility of the parents. If the parents so wished, however, a child could be placed in a school at a very early age, although it was usually at adolescence or a year or so before. Boys could either enter a *telpochcalli* for civil and military training, or a *calmecac,* near a temple, for religious and ceremonial training. There were also calmecacs to train girls for temple service; otherwise, their education was in the home. Despite their different orientations, the schools were run along similar lines. These were prescribed by an ordinance of Motecuhzoma I (reign, 1440–69):

> All the wards will possess schools or monasteries for young men where they will learn religion and good manners. They are to do penance, lead hard lives, live with strict morality, practice for warfare, do bodily work, fast, endure disciplinary measures, draw blood from different parts of the body, and watch at night. There are to be teachers and old men to chastise them and to lead them in their exercises and not permit them to be idle or to lose their time. All of these youths must observe chastity in the strictest way, under pain of death.[5]

Sahagún added details: the sons of lords and noblemen, he wrote, were placed in a priests' house so that they might be taught to "live an upright life"; they also learned dancing, singing, and associated rituals, "all of which was concerned with the performance of penances."[6] Painting and astronomy were among the subjects

4. For example, the Jesuit "Instruction for the Fathers of our Society who shall be sent to the Hurons," in *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents,* ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1896-1901), XII: 121ff.
5. Fray Diego Durán, *Aztecs: The History of the Indies of New Spain* (New York 1964), 132. On pre-Spanish Mexican child-rearing practices, see *Codex Mendoza, Aztec Manuscript,* commentary by Kurt Ross (Fribourg, 1978), 69–96; Alonso de Zorita, *The Lords of New Spain,* tr. Benjamin Keen (London, 1965), 135–51 and 165; and Frances F. Berdan, *The Aztecs of Central Mexico, An Imperial Society* (New York, 1982), 85–90.
6. Bernardino de Sahagún, *General History of the Things of New Spain. Florentine Codex,* tr. Arthur J.O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, 12 vols. (Santa Fe, 1970–75), VIII:71–2; VI:209–18; III:61–3. The training of commoners is described in III:51–60, and men's training for temple duties in II:218–19.

taught. At the age of fifteen, a lad destined to be a warrior took up arms, and at the age of twenty, went to war. It was a rigorous routine that aroused the admiration of Spaniards.[7]

The Jesuit José de Acosta (c.1539–1600) observed that nothing "caused me so much admiration and seemed to me more worthy of praise and remembering than the care and discipline with which the Mexicans raise their children. In effect, it would be quite difficult to find a nation which in its time of paganism gave more attention to this element of highest importance to the state."[8] It was a system which, according to Sahagún, produced "prudent and wise judges." A University of Mexico professor, Francisco Cervantes de Salazar (1514–75), wrote that "Discipline and virtue appear to have been born Mexicans."[9]

There were enough resemblances to European practices in Mexica regimens to make it comparatively easy for Spanish religious orders to take them over. The efflorescence of educational activities and institutions that followed the conquest was remarkable, and perhaps most astonishing of all was the initial concentration on Amerindians.[10] The Dominicans, arriving in 1526, concerned themselves with primary schools in their missions, firmly opposed as they were to teaching Latin to the natives.[11] The Augustinians, who came on the scene in 1533, did not share such scruples, and established secondary schools in which they taught both Spaniards and Amerindians.[12] The Franciscans, upon whose educational efforts this paper will focus, concentrated on the Amerindian elite, with the view of training leaders, both secular

7. See, for instance, the description of Mexican child-rearing by Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta (c.1528–1604), *Historia Eclesiastica Indiana* (Mexico, 1971), lib II, caps. XX-XXIII. This is a facsimile of the first edition of Mendieta's work, first published by Joaquín García Icazbalceta in 1870. It was written in the last decade of the sixteenth century.
8. Cited by Miguel Léon-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, tr. Jack Emory Davis (Norman, 1963), 135.
9. Peggy K. Liss, *Mexico under Spain 1521-1556* (Chicago, 1975), 113.
10. "Será muy necessario haya un estudio general en Tenuxtitán de leer grammática, artes, teología, en que se enseñen los naturales de la tierra. Que a este estudio vengan todos los hijos de los señores y principales de la tierra". Memorial on good government done by an unknown on the Emperor's orders, 1526, cited in Mariano Cuevas, *Documentos Inéditos del Siglo XVI para la Historia de México*, ed. Genaro García (Mexico, 1914), 3.
11. In native education, the Dominicans encouraged crafts; one of their projects was to organize Amerindian ceramists at Puebla de Los Angeles into producing wares in the Talavera style, which is still associated with that city. In the wider educational scene, the Dominicans were active in establishing universities. The first university in North America, that of Mexico, was proposed in 1539 and inaugurated in 1553.
12. Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest*, 218. In New France, the Capuchin branch of the Franciscans in the 1620s established a school at Port Royal in Acadia where French and Micmac children were educated together.

and religious, for Christianized communities.[13] An initial reluctance on the part of native lords and chiefs to send their sons to be taught by Spaniards apparently did not last, at least not on a large scale.[14] Such hesitancy may have reflected the unfamiliarity of the Mexica with this basic procedure in empire-building; they themselves had not followed up their conquests by incorporating defeated peoples into their own political structures, although in some cases there were kinship ties. Apart from exacting tribute they had left those they had defeated to continue as they had before.[15] It has been estimated that by 1531, twelve years after the landing of Hernán Cortés (1485–1574), the Franciscans had founded twenty friaries in New Spain, each with a school for the sons of Amerindian caciques, and had baptized more than a million persons; by 1536, the figure was estimated at between four and nine million.[16] It is claimed that by the end of the sixteenth century, there was a school in every town in New Spain where there were friars.[17]

A striking characteristic of this early activity was the effort to learn native languages; this was seen as the first task of the missionaries.[18] In 1539, the first book published in the New World was a manual on Christian doctrine in Nahuatl (the language

13. This was also the policy of the Oriental misions of both the Spanish and the Portuguese.
14. Fray Toribio de Motolinía (Toribio de Benavente), (?1495–?1565), *History of the Indians of New Spain*, tr. Francis Borgia Steck (Washington, 1951), 301. This work, completed in 1542, was first published in full by Joaquín García Icazbalceta in Mexico in 1858. An earlier edition, in Lord Kingsborough's *Mexican Antiquities*, is incomplete and has errors in interpretation.
15. George C. Vaillant, *Aztecs of Mexico* (Garden City, NY, 1962), 175. In Peru, however, the Inca took particular care to see that the sons of defeated chiefs were sent to Cuzco for their education.
16. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York, 1953), 945; Francis Borgia Steck, "Education in Spanish North America during the Sixteenth Century," *Catholic Educational Review* (1943), I:14. The magnitude of the evangelical task facing the Franciscans was graphically described by Pedro de Gante in a letter written in 1529: see Mariano Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia en México*, 5 vols. (Mexico 1923), I:42–43. On the picture in New Spain in the context of Spanish and Portuguese empires generally, see Charles R. Boxer, *The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion 1440–1770* (Baltimore and London, 1978), 14–5.
17. Icazbalceta, *Nueva Colección de Documentos para la Historia de México*, 5 vols. (Mexico, reprinted 1971), II: *Códice Franciscano*, 64–5.
18. The Augustinians, for example, upon their arrival in Mexico employed an Amerindian who spoke Spanish and Nahuatl as teacher/interpreter. The monks were impressed with his intelligence and linguistic capacities: "Era cosa maravillosa ver que un Indio, qui avia communicado con tan pocos Españoles, no dudasse en cosa ninguna de quantas le preguntavan y estuviesse tan capas de la Doctrina que la traduxesse en buen sentido." Juan de Grijalva, *Cronica de la Orden de n.p.s. Augustin en las provincias de la nueva españa en quatro edades desde el aña de 1533 hasta el de 1592* (Mexico, 1924), 44. This work was first published in 1624.

of the Mexica), and Spanish.[19] This was soon followed by "vocabularios" in Spanish and various Mexican languages; in 1559, a friar of French origin, Maturino Gilberti (fl. sixteenth century), published a grammar for teaching Latin to Nahuatl-speaking students.[20] Fray Andrés de Olmos (?1500–71) is reported to have learned to speak ten Amerindian languages well enough to preach, teach, and write in them. Works by Spaniards in Amerindian tongues number well over five hundred; according to one authority, Spain's record in this regard remains unequalled among colonizing nations.[21] Officialdom was behind such activity; for one, the first bishop of Mexico, Fray Juan de Zumárraga (?1478–1548), encouraged the publication of Christian doctrine in native languages because so many Mexicans could read, and at one point he even wanted the Bible to be translated in Nahuatl to make it available to the populace.[22] Initial concern was for teaching Christianity within a Spanish social and political framework, rather than for teaching Amerindians Spanish, although that was urged from time to time in royal instructions. There was even the suggestion that Nahuatl be retained as the language of the country, not only because so many already spoke it, but also because of its elegance.[23] Critics of such a policy were higly vocal, however, claiming that Amerindian idioms were not suited to Christian needs. By early in the seventeenth century what official tolerance there had been of native tongues had disappeared, and the use of Spanish was being insisted upon.

By far the most famous of the early educators was Pedro de Gante (Peter Van den Moere, 1479–1572), a Franciscan lay brother who arrived with two companions in 1523, the year before the "Apostolic Twelve," and spent the rest of his life teaching in the New World. Reputed to be a near relative of Charles V (Holy Roman emperor, 1519–56; as Carlos I, king of Spain, 1516–56), Gante founded the first European-style primary school system in the continental Americas. His classes in and around Mexico

19. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Bibliografia Mexicana del siglo XVI* (1886, rep. Mexico, 1945) 71–4, 121–3. See also *Nuéva Colección*, II: *Códice Franciscano*, 34–5. A printing press had been established in Mexico City in 1536 by Juan Pablos under contract with Juan Cromberger of Seville. Cromberger's father, Jácome (Jacobo), had secured the right to contract printing for the New World in 1525; see Arthur Scott Aiton, *Antonio de Mendoza, First Viceroy of New Spain* (New York, 1967), 106–9; José Toribio Medina, *La Imprenta en México (1539-1821)*, 8 vols. (Santiago, 1908–12); and Román Zulaica Gárate, *Los Franciscanos y la Imprenta en México en el Siglo XVI* (Mexico, 1939).

20. Icazbalceta, *Bibiografia Mexicana*, 157–8. Gilberti also published in the Tarascan and Michoacán languages, including a Spanish-Michoacán "vocabulario," and a Tarascan-Spanish dictionary, among other works. His unorthodox teaching methods for explaining the Christian mystery of transubstantiation resulted in his being tried by the Mexican Inquisition. See Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man* (Cambridge, 1982), 227, n.190. His Tarascan grammar was censured by the first Mexican ecclesiastical provincial council (1555) and placed under a ban.

21. Charles Lummis, *The Spanish Pioneers* (1893, rep. Chicago, 1929), 84.

22. Tomás Zepeda R., *La instrucción pública en México durante el siglo XVI* (Mexico, 1930), II; Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, 80.

23. Cuevas, *Documentos*, 159: Carta de Fray Rodrigo de la Cruz al Emperador Carlos V, 4 de Mayo de 1550.

City were said to count as many as five hundred Amerindian students, some of them from as far away as twenty-four leagues, brought in under order from Cortés.[24] Besides the catechism, reading, writing, numbers, music, and singing were taught. This was done in native tongues, principally Nahuatl, which already had been reduced to the Roman alphabet, and by means of picture books which Gante had developed by adapting Mexica pictographs.[25] Gante's Colegio de San Francisco was a complex that began as a primary school and soon had a college for secondary education, with a curriculum that included fine arts and trades, as well as religion.[26] A precursor of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco, it provided the first body of students for that institution when it opened its doors.

In 1528, the empress sent sixteen women, including nuns and *beatas,* to instruct native girls, augmenting them two years later with six more.[27] At first, few nuns came over, as it was considered inappropriate for them to come to the New World under the conditions that initially prevailed.[28] There is mention of a college, Nuestra Señora de la Caridad, for orphaned *mestizas* (mixed-blood girls) in 1530, although there is some uncertainty about the date; a Colegio de Niñas was operational in midcentury. In any event, what was called a college appears to have been more like a convent school; of the several that were launched, none had an academic programme of the quality available for boys. For one thing, there were not enough teaching nuns available, a

24. Jerome V. Jacobsen, *Educational Foundations of the Jesuits in Sixteenth-Century New Spain* (Berkerly, 1938), 41. The first European-style school in the new world was the convent school in Santo Domingo, established by the Franciscans in 1496.

25. For a description of the teaching methods of the period, see Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest,* 209–10. The friars quickly appreciated the value of imagery in teaching Amerindians; Fray Jacobo de Tastera, a French colleague of Gante's, also developed visual instruction techniques, in representational as well as in the performing arts. *Autos,* adapted from European morality plays, were being staged by the 1530s. See Liss, *Mexico under Spain,* 75–6. The "extreme" reverence of Amerindians for images was attested to by the proliferation of statues, statuettes, figurines, carvings, and paintings that adorned their temples and homes. Despite systematic destruction carried out by the Spaniards, substantial quantities survived; see Elizabeth Wilder Weismann, *Mexico in Sculpture 1521–1821* (1950, rep. Westport, Conn., 1971), 216, 190–1 and 218. Missionaries in Canada also noted the effectiveness of imagery in teaching Amerindians.

26. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, "Education in the City of Mexico during the Sixteenth Century," *Historical Records and Studies* 20 (1931): 99–157 at 105; George Kubbler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century,* 2 vols. (1948, rep. Westport, Conn., 1972), I:153.

27. Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, *Epistolario de Nueva Espãna 1505-1818,* 16 vols. (Mexico, 1939–42), II: 8-9: "Orden de la reina al marqués del Valle, que pasaba a Nueva España para que llevase en su compañía y la de su esposa, ciertas beatas religiosas que iban a enseñar la doctrina a las indias de aquella tierra," published in Madrid in 1530.

28. *Cartas de Indias,* 3 vols. (Madrid, 1877), I:162–5: carta de Fray Miguel Navarro y otros religiosos, San Francisco de Mexico, 6 de noviembre de 1569. According to Carlos Castañeda, the first nuns to come over were Conceptionists; there were also some Poor Clares.

problem that was not satisfactorily dealt with, so that much of the instruction had to be delegated to poorly qualified lay personnel. This was reflected in the courses offered the girls, which apart from religion and a basic literacy, concentrated on homemaking skills. It would be the mideighteenth century before an order of teaching nuns was fully operational in New Spain.[29] In 1529, an infirmary for orphaned mixed-blood boys, San Juan Letrán, was established, which became a college in 1533 as the result of a request by the president of the Audiencia of New Spain, Don Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal (d. 1547), who was also bishop of Santo Domingo; two decades or so later it was functioning as a normal school.[30] Christian doctrine was of course heavily stressed, but subjects taught ranged from Latin through the humanities to technical courses. At its height, San Juan Letrán counted two hundred students ranging in age from nine to fourteen years. The initial burst of enthusiasm began to fade with the deaths of the first wave of missionary/educators, especially Pedro de Gante. Success in educating *mestizos,* and more particularly Amerindians, entailed a backlash from settlers, more interested in exacting tribute and labour than in developing a native elite that would function within the Spanish imperial bureaucracy. These factors, compounded by the social dislocations arising out of the great epidemic of 1545–48, meant that by 1570, San Juan counted only seventy students, a situation that was not improved by another major epidemic in 1575–79. The school never recovered its early levels of performance, and finally closed its doors in the midnineteenth century. Even at that, it was a far more impressive record than that achieved by the girls' schools, some of which did not last out the decade of their founding.

The best known of the early educational institutions was the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Santiago de Tlaltelolco. Rodrigo de Albornoz, auditor-general for New Spain, had been among those who had advocated such an institution. In 1525, four years after the fall of Tenochtitlan, he urged the emperor:

> In order that the sons of Caciques and native lords may be instructed in the Faith, Your Majesty must needs command that a College be founded wherein there may be taught reading, grammar, philosophy, and other Arts, to the end that they may be ordained priests. For he who shall become such among them, will be of greater profit in attracting others to the Faith than will fifty Christians.[31]

29. This problem is discussed by Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest,* 210–12, and William Kane, *An Essay Toward A History of Education* (Chicago, 1938), 530.
30. Jacobsen, *Educational Foundations,* 44–5.
31. Cited by Boxer, *The Church Militant,* 14–5. In a letter to Charles V dated 8 August 1533, Fuenleal had appealed for funding to train lay instructors in Latin. See Francis Borgia Steck, "The First College in America—Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco," *Catholic Educational Review* 34 (October 1936): 450–1. However, it was 1548 before Charles V lent royal support with a grant of one thousand ducats from the royal treasury, and by that time the college was already in trouble; Carlos E. Castañeda, *Nuevos Documentos ineditos o muy raros para la Historia de México* (1929), 1.

The college was opened with great pomp on 6 January 1536, despite inadequate quarters in the *barrio* Santiago de Tlaltelolco.[32] Sponsors were the newly arrived first viceroy of New Spain, Don Antonio de Mendoza (reign, 1535–50), Bishop Zumárraga, soon to become the first archbishop of Mexico, and Fuenleal, whom we have seen had been influential in establishing San Juan Letrán. Hopes were as exalted as the sponsorship for this project to groom sons of Amerindian aristocrats into becoming Spain's "most elegant subjects, very useful in enlightening their republics, causing the divine cult to flourish in all the cities of their origin."[33] The prevailing optimism was reflected in the observation of Fuenleal, to the effect that in the acquisition of Latin, "the natives are showing such intelligence and capacity that they are a great deal better at it than the Spaniards. Without a doubt whatever, within two years there will be fifty Indians who will know grammar and teach it."[34] Mendoza was even more categoric: he did not believe that evangelization would be really successful without a native priesthood. In 1538, the Council of Bishops in Mexico agreed to the ordination of Amerindians and mestizos, and some were ordained in the period immediately following.[35]

The college's selected faculty was made up of Franciscans, although they had Amerindian helpers from the beginning. Besides such prominent figures as Pedro de Gante and Sahagún (who was associated with the college for forty years), the faculty included Fray Arnaldo de Bassacio (Armand de Bassaco), a Frenchman who may have been the first to teach Latin in the New World. He was one of two graduates from the University of Paris on the first roster, and the others were as well qualified. Usually not more than two friars taught at any one time, with an Amerindian assistant. One of these assistants, Miguel, was reputed to be very learned in Latin; as he lay dying during the epidemic of 1545, he conversed in that language with the friar who had

32. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga, Primer Obispo y Arzobispo de Mexico* (Mexico, 1881), 212-3. Because Epiphany (6 January) symbolized the call of the gentiles to the true faith, the Mexicans considered this feast as "properly theirs." See Motolinía, *History of the Indians*, 132–43. There is abundant literature on the college. Contemporary accounts, besides that of Motolinía already mentioned, include those of Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquia Indiana*, 3 vols. (1723, rep. Mexico, 1969), III, bk. XV, cap. XLIII; Mendieta, *Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana*, bk. IV, cap. XV. Maps of Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco are in Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting*, plates 55–7.

33. "Elegantissimos suxettos que Illustration sus Repúblicas con grande utilidad, aumenttando el culto Divino en ttodos los Pueblos de donde heran originarios"; Fernando Ocaranza, *El Imperial Congelio de Indios de La Santa Cruz de Santiago Tlaltelolco* (Mexico, 1943), 24.

34. Cuevas, *Historia*, I: 394; see also Sahagún, "Relacion del autor," in *Historia General*, 70–81.

35. Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, 93; Aiton, *Antonio de Mendoza*, 106; Constantine Bayle, "España y el clero indígena de América," *Razón y Fe* (10 February 1931), 216. See also Francisco Borgia Steck, *El Primer Colegio de America—Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco* (Mexico, 1944), 18-62.

come to comfort him.[36] Besides Latin, the curriculum included reading, writing, rhetoric, philosophy, logic, music, native medicine, and printing. Notably absent was Spanish, which, according to Ricard, had been dropped in favor of Nahuatl.[37]

On its inauguration day, the college counted sixty pupils, which expanded to close to two hundred at its peak. Mendieta's description makes its student living arrangements appear to be rather like that of a *calmecac.*[38] Wealthy Amerindians bequeathed properties for the support of the school, which was also similarly endowed by Mendoza and by his successor as viceroy, Luis de Velasco. All that support did not prevent the school from quickly developing difficulties, and within a year the Franciscans had handed over its management to the Crown, claiming lack of resources.[39] Within two decades, the building was in disrepair, following the epidemic of 1545 which had carried off many of its best students. A decade later, the college, taking a cue from Mexica practice, turned over its operation to its graduate students, this time because of lack of manpower within the order. The students were not able to cope either. The inadequacy of the college building was bothersome enough, but this was soon aggravated as deficiencies in its construction revealed themselves, despite the fact that Mendoza had undertaken at his own expense to replace the original adobe structure with one in stone in 1538. Within two decades, its condition had become an embarassment.[40] An attempt to revive the project in the 1570s, with the active support of Sahagún, only partially succeeded. In the seventeenth century, two of the building's rooms were reconstructed for a primary school. So ended the promise of its founding, when for a while

36. Mendieta, *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana,* lib. IV, cap. XXIII, 447; Augustin de Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano* (1698, rep. Mexico, 1971) pt. 4, 67–8. Inventories of the school's library holdings are listed in *Códice Mendieta* (Mexico, 1892), II: 255–7, 259–61, 267–9. On the school's teaching methods, see Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting,* 43–5.
37. Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest,* 224. Apparently the students already spoke Spanish. The college has often been compared to Harvard, founded one hundred years later in the English colonies. Francis Borgia Steck says the two institutions were strikingly similar in purpose, method, and administration. However, Harvard was for the benefit of the sons of English colonists, while Santa Cruz was for Amerindians. Steck, "The First College," 449–50.
38. Mendieta, *Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana,* lib. IV, cap. XV.
39. Cuevas, *Documentos,* 56, Zumárraga to the Council of the Indies, Mexico, 24 November 1536.
40. Kubler says practically nothing is known of the original appearance of the college (*Mexican Architecture,* 219–20); however, an illustration of what is captioned as the exterior of the college is in Zepeda R., *La instrucción pública,* facing 38, and translator/editor Emily Walcott Emmart equates the college building with that of the convent, which is illustrated in *The Badianus Manuscript* (Baltimore, 1940), 19. Photographs of some of the college ruins are reproduced by Fernando Ocaranza, *El Imperial Colegio de Indios de La Santa Cruz de Santiago Tlaltelolco* (Mexico, 1934). Sahagún blamed administrators for the college's rapid deterioration, claiming negligence (*Historia General,* "Relacion del autor," III: 83–5).

it looked as though a Mexica bureaucracy under Mexica leadership would be formally incorporated into the Spanish imperial administration. Instead, Mexica lifeways were seriously disrupted as Spaniards took over.[41]

Early results had appeared to justify the founders' hopes. It had been reported that Amerindians were endowed with "great talent and aptitude to learn all the sciences, arts and crafts that have been taught them. . . . By merely observing and seeing how things are made many of them became experts in crafts that in Spain it takes many years to learn. . . ."[42] In the fine arts, native craftsmen incorporated European styles and techniques into their own traditional architecture, sculpture, and painting. According to Motolinía, the Mexicans were quickly producing a wide variety of objects "in a thousand different styles" needed in the colony, including "so many chairs that the houses of the Spaniards are full of them." The natives particularly excelled at tailoring, designing garments in the latest fashion "just as well as those made in Spain." The introduction of wool inspired this particular development, as previously the Mexicans had only had native cotton, which they acquired through trade. Occasionally, their entrepreneurial enthusiasm got the better of them, as in one instance when an Amerindian copied and attempted to sell *sambenitos,* a garment of the type imposed by the Inquisition to be worn in public as a penance. Amerindians were not only soon making European-style musical instruments, including organs, but were playing them and composing as well; there is even a report that a native singer composed an entire mass. The work has not come down to us.[43] In any event, native interpretations of religious motifs soon aroused Spanish authorities to control and even suppress such artistic expressions. The first Mexican ecclesiastical provincial council in 1555, ruled that

> no Spaniard nor Indian shall paint Images nor Altarpieces in any Church... nor sell an Image, unless such a Painter has been first examined and given a license to paint... and we order that our Visitadores who inspect churches and pious places, should see and examine well the Stories and Images which have been painted up to this time, and should have removed those which they find apocryphal, bad, or indecently painted.[44]

Secular restrictions followed hard on the heels of religious censorship: when the first Guild of Sculptors was constituted in Mexico City in 1589, Amerindians were

41. The great epidemics of 1531-32 and 1545-48, with their consequent famines, caused the native population to shrink to one fourth of its preconquest level by the midsixteenth century; Liss, *Mexico under Spain,* 118-31.
42. Motolinía, *History of the Indians,* 295. The importance of art and artists in preconquest Mexico is dealt with by Léon-Portilla, *Aztec Thought,* 169-76.
43. Motolinía, *History of the Indians,* 300 and 296; see also Mendieta, *Historia Ecclesiástica Indiana,* IV, cap. XIV; and Alonso de la Rea, *Cronica de la orden N.S. Padre San Francisco, provincia de San Pedro y San Pablo de Michoacan en la Nueva España* (1643, rep. Queretaro, 1945).
44. Weismann, *Mexico in Sculpture,* 190.

specifically excluded, and their scope of operation limited to making birds, animals, flowers, etc., but no saints. Within those limits, they could carry on their craft, but it had been made illegal for Spaniards to buy from them. Neither were Amerindians allowed to compete freely with Europeans in other arts or crafts, although initially painters had been encouraged, and Pedro de Gante had taught European techniques of the art to natives.[45]

The initial drive to excel on the part of the Mexica was also evident in academic pursuits. It was as if the Spanish takeover had spurred the natives to prove themselves. Within a few years, Amerindians were not only full members of the teaching staff at the college, they were also instructing in schools that had been established for Spanish and mestizo children, and even in those for religious novices. This apparently caused less surprise at the time than it has among twentieth-century scholars, one of whom referred to "the astounding paradox of natives teaching Europeans and Creoles and spreading European culture."[46] The Mexican scholar, Joaquín García Icazbalceta (1825–94), did not comment on the "paradox," but simply observed that native teachers did very well, demonstrating not only their own capabilities but also the excellence of the college, "which has not been well noted."[47] One of the college's Amerindian teachers, Antonio Valeriano of Atzcapotzalco, served as governor of the Amerindians of Mexico City for over twenty years from the 1570s into the 1590s, a position that would later be filled by his grandson of the same name. Famed as a Latinist, the elder Valeriano was one of the college's corps of graduates who collaborated with Sahagún on the latter's *Historia General.*[48] High religious office was attained by the Amerindian Antonio Elejos, who after entering the Franciscan order in its province of Zacatecas and teaching theology for fifteen years, was elected minister provincial. In 1552, another alumnus of the college, Juan Badiano of Xochimilco, translated into Latin a herbal

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45. Ibid., 201–2; Kubler, *Mexican Architecture,* II:366–7. According to Zumárraga, Amerindian artists were "muy ingeniosos, especialmente en el Arte de Pintura;" Torquemada, *Monarquia Indiana,* III: 456. Painters had been of the highest importance in preconquest Mexico, as they were the ones who painted the codices, recording Mexican thought and belief as well as their history.

46. Jacobsen, *Educational Foundations,* 48. One of these native teachers, Augustin de la Fuente of Tlaltelolco, reportedly wrote a comedy in Nahuatl which he translated, ineptly, into Spanish; Frederico Gómez de Orozco, "Dos Escritores Indígenas del Siglo XVI," *Universidad de Mexico* I (1930–31): 128–30.

47. "La raza indígena daba maestros á la española, sin despertar celos en ella. Hecho histórico digno de meditarse, y excelencia del colegio de Tlatelolco que no ha sido bien notada." Garcia Icazbalceta, *Zumárraga,* 218–9. See also Mendieta, *Historia Eclesíastica Indiana,* 691.

48. The eminent Latinist Cervantes de Salazar described Valeriano as "in no way inferior to our grammarians." *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of New Spain,* tr. Minnie Lee Barrett Shepard (Westport, Conn., 1970), 62. This work was originally published in 1554 under the title *Mexico en 1554.* Later, however, Cervantes de Salazar would suggest that the colegio be transformed into a Spanish school.

catalogue that had been compiled in Nahuatl by a native physician who taught at the college, Martín de la Cruz. It was illustrated by Amerindian artists, and the text was written in Roman script.[49] Juan de Torquemada (c. 1557–1624) was another of the scholars who availed himself of this native facility in languages to gather the information for his *Monarquia Indiana.*[50] On one much-reported occasion, an Amerindian student bested a friar in a verbal duel in Latin.[51] There were other similar incidents, which caused glee in some quarters, but were not approved of in others.

With such a record, the blending of the two cultures appeared to be well on its way, in a benign atmosphere of official approval. There was a cloud, however; from the first there had been opposition to admitting Amerindians to the halls of higher Christian learning, above all those leading to the priesthood, but also those leading to civil administration, particularly its upper echelons.[52] With the accession of Felipe II to the throne of Spain in 1556 (he was to reign until 1598), and the passing of Viceroy Velasco in office in 1564, the opposition became steadily more effective. Actually, a severely crippling blow already had been delivered in 1555, with the decision of the ecclesiastical provincial council to close the doors to priesthood for Amerindians. This was based on the growing conviction that they were incapable of mastering the mysteries of the faith. In the face of that decision, which was reaffirmed even more stringently in 1570,[53] the efforts of such prominent figures as Sahagún, Mendieta, and Bautista to

49. Steck, *El Primer Colegio*, 53. See also Gibson, *Aztecs*, 300 and 404. Three of the manuscript's illustrations were reproduced in the edition of Sahagún's *Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España*, ed. Angel Maria Garibay K. (Mexico, 1956), lib. X:129; lib. XI:241 and 336. The Badianus manuscript is in the Vatican Library. Martín de la Cruz is referred to as a mestizo by Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, 128.
50. Fray Juan Bautista (1555–?1615) described some of these native translators, who worked in Latin, Spanish, and Nahuatl, in a prologue to his *Sermonario en lengua Mexicana*, published in 1606. He included the text of a letter Valeriano had written to him in Latin shortly before the latter's death, as an example of native skill in that language; see Icazbalceta, *Bibliografia Mexicana*, 474–8. Ricard lists the names without the detail, but includes the letter in *Spiritual Conquest*, 222–4. For an expanded treatment, see Steck, *El Primer Colegio*, 48–59.
51. Motolinía, *History of the Indians*, 297–8; Steck, *El Primer Colegio*, 44–5.
52. Apparently such opposition was present at the Spanish court from the first day of conquest; see Alfredo Chavero, "Colegio de Tlatelolco," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 40 (1902): 517–29 at 526. Francis Borgia Steck is categoric that colonial "rivalry and jealousy" was responsible for the failure of the Amerindian educational programme in his "Education in Spanish North America," II: 71–2.
53. Francisco Antonio Lorenzana, *Concilios provinciales primero, y segundo, celebrados en la muy leal ciudad de México, presidiendo el Illmo. y Rmo. Señor D. Fr. Alonso de Montúfar, en los años de 1555, y 1565* (Mexico, 1769), 105–7; Icazbalceta, *Nueva colección* II, *Códice Franciscano*: 110; both cited by Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest*, 230. See also Constantine Bayle, "España y el Clero indígena de América," *Razón y Fe* (25 March 1931), 521–35. The arguments of the first Dominican provincial for Mexico, Domingo de Betanzos (d. 1549) against ordination of Amerindians are in Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia*, I: 398. In Peru, the first Council of Lima had ruled against the ordination of Amerindians in 1552.

save the humanities in the college's curriculum were unavailing. Funding problems developed, which the support of wealthy Amerindians was not able to counteract.[54]

The ecclesiastical provincial council's decision had been the result of a long debate into the capacities of Amerindians. Serious doubts had been vehemently expressed as to the wisdom of teaching them sciences, and above all Latin, so that they would have direct access to Holy Scriptures, "to be read and interpreted as they pleased." For one thing, it was argued, this would lead directly to heterodoxy, as native traditional beliefs and practices still had a strong hold. This line of thought was expressed by a viceregal clerk, Jerónimo López, in a letter to Charles V in 1541, when the college was already graduating students who were "speaking Latin as elegantly as Tullius": "It is good that they know the faith; but to read and write is as dangerous as the devil. . . . A people so new and rude in matters of the faith, and having lived so wickedly, if they begin to expound and preach... will sow doubts and give rise to heresies."[55] He referred to the college as an "inferno" and its students as "disciples of Satan." Objections also came from Dominicans who opposed the teaching of Latin to Amerindians in principle. In 1544, the Dominican provincial of Mexico vigorously denounced the development of a native clergy. In 1585, however, the door was opened slightly for mixed bloods, when the third ecclesiastical provincial council ruled that "Mexicans who are descended in the first degree from Amerindians, or from Moors, or from parents of whom one is a Negro" could be admitted to holy orders, but only with the greatest of care and selection. Full-blood Amerindians remained excluded.[56] It appears, however, that despite all this regulation, ordination of mestizos had continued, if not of full-blood Amerindians. In 1561, the archbishop of Mexico noted that "muchos mestizos" were being ordained. When the prior of St.Augustín was questioned concerning a particular candidate, he replied that he was "español siendo mestizo" - Spanish although mestizo.[57]

The extent to which Amerindians rejected their traditional faith and accepted Christian teaching was a problem that reached beyond the college to the whole missionary and educational movement in New Spain. The conflict between the two systems of

54. Steck, *El Primer Colegio*, 65-6.

55. "La doctrina bueno fué que la sepan; pero el leer y escribir muy dañoso como el diablo...una gente tan nueva é tosca en las cosas de nuestra fe, y viva en toda maldad, se les comenzó á aclarar é predicar los artículos de la fe é otra cosas hondas, para ponelles dudas y levantar herejías." Icazbalceta, *Zumárraga*, 220-1. See also Sahagún, "Relacio del autor" in *Historia General*, 82-3; Steck, *El Primer Colegio*, 61-82; Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia*, I: 396-8; and Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest*, 224-35.

56. Boxer, *The Church Militant*, 15. In Peru, the second Ecclesiastical Provincial Council of Lima (1567-68) affirmed the 1552 ban against the ordination of Amerindians, but the third council (1582-83) relaxed somewhat when it decided that the rules of the Council of Trent must be followed; see ibid., 15-6.

57. Paso y Troncoso, *Epistolario*, IX:93-101: Carta al rey del arzobispo de México contestanda a los cargos que le habían hecho de no querer ordenar frailes y ordenar mestizo y españoles, Mexico, 4 de febrero de 1561.

belief sometimes led to murderous confrontations. Motolinía tells of some boys, students at the Franciscan school in Tlaxcala, who paused to pray at a cross that had been erected in the marketplace, and were upbraided for having abandoned the old ways by a ''minister in the demon's attire'' (actually, a priest who served the pulque god *Ometochtli*). The boys, apparently convinced that the minister was actually the devil, stoned him to death. The friars were horrified when they heard the story, and ordered the boy who had cast the first stone to be whipped. The situation could also be reversed, as it was with Cristóbal of Tlaxcala, the thirteen-year-old son of a principal chief, who had been only very relucantly yielded to the care of the Franciscans by his father. When Christóbal, upon returning home, admonished his family about their beliefs, and destroyed ritual objects, the father maltreated and then killed him and his wife, the mother of the lad. The Spaniards responded by trying and executing the chief. Cristóbal's behavior had been encouraged by the friars, who on occasion sent out their students to search Amerindian homes, to remove idols or else smash them on the spot. Cristóbal was not the only lad to meet death in this way.[58] Despite such incidents, the friars depended heavily upon the services of their child helpers, continually plagued as they were with personnel shortages.

Children were also used to testify against their parents, as happened in a celebrated case that involved an alumnus of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz. In 1539, three years after the founding of the college and nineteen years after the conquest of Mexico, Don Carlos Chichimecatecuhtli, tlatoani of Texcoco, was charged with concubinage and idolatry. A grandson of Netzahualcoyotl, best known of Texcoco's former rulers, Don Carlos had grown up in the household of Cortés, and had been a pupil of Gante's. Witnesses denounced the tlatoani as ''a preacher of heresy,'' and his son claimed he had prevented him from being taught the Christian faith; indeed, Don Carlos appeared to have adapted Christianity to his own traditional beliefs. While admitting to concubinage (which he defended on the grounds that it was an established Amerindian tradition), he persistently denied the other charges; however, no one testified on his behalf, and he complicated the issue by claiming that Mexico belonged to the Amerindians, who were its true lords. With the approval of Mendoza, he was publicly burned in an *auto da fe* in Mexico's principal plaza, the last Amerindian of Mexico to be so punished.[59] Even the inquisitor general in Spain found the sentence too harsh, and Zumárraga, who had conducted the trial, lost his inquisitorial office a few years later.[60]

58. Motolinía, *History of the Indians*, 301-11; see also Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia*, 1:454-60.

59. An Account of the trial is in Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia*, I: 374-89, and Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest*, 272-3. The actual proceedings are published in ''Proceso Inquisitorial del Cacique de Tetzcoco,'' *Publicaciones del Archivo General y Publico de la Nacion* (Mexico, 1911). Sahagún was among the interpreters; most of the witnesses were Amerindians. During Zumárraga's seven-year term as inquisitor (1536-43), out of 131 hearings, thirteen were against Amerindians. Carlos was the only one of the 131 accused to be sentenced to death.

60. The 1555 ecclesiastical provincial council, on the other hand, censured Zumárraga's treatises for treading too close to the line in their pro-Amerindian sentiments, and placed them under ban; Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, 93.

Both he and Mendoza had been sponsors of the college; the bishop held the title of Protector of the Indians.

Doubts as to Amerindian capacity to absorb Christianity had become apparent so fast that one can only question the depth of the Spanish commitment to the college in the first place. By 1540, Zumárraga was already wondering how long the institution would last, complaining that no matter how good the students were, they were not much interested in the celibacy that a Christian religious calling entailed.[61] In other words, the bishop seemed to expect instant results in the conversion of Amerindians. Such hopes could have been fostered by the speed with which the students learned Latin and the Roman script, as well as their facility with music and European crafts; in their efforts to prove themselves, the Mexica may have overshot the mark. On the other hand, the conviction ran deep that Amerindians were not yet fully human (as in the case of migratory hunters and gatherers, living like "beasts in the fields"), or in the service of the devil (as in the case of the Mexica, who had practised human sacrifice and cannibalism), or perhaps both. In the end, the opposition won out.

In New France, the different type of civilization of the Amerindians meant that the educational goals of the French missionaries were also different. Where the early drive in New Spain had been aimed at producing candidates for the priesthood and Christian leaders for self-governing native communities, with only as much emphasis on hispanicization as was thought necessary for a smoothly functioning membership in the multinational Spanish empire, in New France the first impulse was to transform the natives into full-fledged French citizens. The Recollets appear to have initially entertained the hope of training natives as priests, but this was not realized, nor could it have been in view of the prevailing sentiment against ordaining Amerindians.[62] However, Amerindian girls did take vows as nuns; in this aspect, the French got off to a quicker start than had the Spanish.[63] The first to do so was Geneviève-Agnès Skannudharoi, a Huron who became a Hospital nun in 1657 at the age of fifteen, only to die within hours of the ceremony; *métisses* were being accepted at about the same time.[64] Besides Christianization and the French language, the aim of this educational

61. Icazbalceta, *Zumárraga*, 137.
62. Chrestien Le Clercq, *First Establishment of the Faith in New France*, 2 vols., tr. John G. Shea (New York, 1881), 1:176 and 189.
63. It would be well into the eighteenth century before Amerindian girls were admitted as nuns in New Spain; Kane, *History of Education*, 530; Cuevas, *Historia de la Iglesia*, IV, cap. VII. However, mixed bloods appear to have been admitted from an early period; Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, "Menologio Seraphico," 13, 26, 38, 40, and 49-50ff, lists daughters of "Mexicanas" and "naturales de Mexico" who were taking religious vows from early in the seventeenth century. Catalina de Santa Ines, who took vows at Convento de Nuestra Madre Santa Clara, is listed simply as "Mexicana"; she died in 1610; ibid., 26.
64. Olive Patricia Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton, 1984), 263.

programme was to impart the skills necessary for a sedentary way of life, considered essential for both Christianity and civilization.[65] Where the Spanish had more or less respected cultural differences as long as they did not conflict with Christianity or with their civil administration, the French aimed at implanting "a French heart and spirit."[66] Because the Huron were already farming and living in semipermanent villages, they were seen as prime candidates for this type of training, although children of their hunting and gathering neighbours, such as the Montagnais or Algonquins, were also included. The following sketch of Huron educational practices applies to those more migratory neighbours as well.

The native system of education prior to the arrival of the French in Canada (as New France was popularly called) was in some respects a far cry from what the Franciscans had found in Tenochtitlan and other cities in New Spain a century earlier. There were similarities between the two, however, particularly at the primary level, when children in both societies were educated at home. Huron as well as Mexican children were initiated into the adult world more quickly than in Europe, especially in economic aspects; this has been attributed to the fact that production in both societies depended upon handwork rather than mechanization.[67] Instead of the two-tiered system of Tenochtitlan and other Mexican cities, education in Huronia and in Canada generally remained closely integrated in the pattern of every-day living. Children were indulged, never scolded or physically punished, in contrast to the Mexica who devised ingenious punishments for keeping their young in line.[68] Yet as toddlers, Huron children had their assigned duties in the daily round of activities, and were already beginning to learn the skills that would be needed in adulthood.[69] Qualities that would aid survival in an uncertain world were encouraged from a very early period, such as the capacity to bear fatigue

65. See, for example, Sagard's strictures on the subject in *Histoire du Canada et voyages que les Frères Mineurs Recollects y ont fait pour la conversion des infidèles*, 4 vols. (1636, rep. Paris, 1865), I: 166-7, and Le Clercq, *First Establishment*, I: 222, citing the Recollet Joseph Le Caron (1586–1632). In Peru, jurisconsult Juan de Matienzo (d. 1587) had observed that Amerindians could "neither be instructed in the faith nor can they become men if they are not gathered into towns." *Gobierno del Perú*, ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena (1567, rep. Paris, 1967), 48. What he meant, obviously, was that they be gathered under Spanish supervision, as Peruvians were already sedentary. The first Spanish attempt at accomplishing this had been in Hispaniola in 1517, and had not been successful; see Lewis Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Toronto, 1965), 42–53. Repeated failures eventually taught Spaniards that to make such a project work, they had to incorporate Amerindian patterns of authority within colonial administration; Karen Spalding, *Huarochirí, an Andean Society Under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford, 1984), 266ff.
66. William Lawson Grant, ed., *Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604–1618* (New York, 1917), 1: 264–5.
67. Vaillant, *Aztecs in Mexico*, 90, concerning the Mexica.
68. Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 5:219–21; 6:153–5; *Codex Mendoza*, 69–83.
69. Gabriel Sagard, *The Long Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, ed. George M. Wrong and tr. H.H. Langton (Toronto, 1939), 133. This work was first published in 1632. See also idem, *Histoire du Canada*, II:323–8.

and pain without complaint, and to endure extended fasts with good humour (the Mexica also were taught to be moderate in their eating). Huron youngsters very early learned the importance of cooperation within the group, and of the avoidance of direct confrontation. It was a type of training directed at encouraging self-reliance rather than obedience, the self-directed warrior rather than the other-directed soldier. At the same time, it aimed at fostering community cohesiveness expressed through generosity and sharing, in contrast to the individualized accumulations of wealth characteristic of European societies. As a result, there was no question of the French taking over an existing system, adapting and expanding it to suit their own ends as the Spanish had been able to do in Mexico. Rather, they sought to recreate familiar French models under the alien conditions of New France, and then tried to persuade the Amerindians that this was the better way, the way of things to come. The Huron, of course, had no reason to believe this, as it was the French who had come to them from across the sea, seeking their trade. Nor had they any means of knowing the extent of the civilization or the kind of nation the few French traders and missionaries they met represented. In other words, they had no reason to fear what the future might bring from these strange new trading partners. The fact that the new system that was being imposed was not only largely irrelevant, but even contradictory to the lifestyle of the natives does not seem to have been taken into consideration by the French, perhaps because they believed that the native way was doomed, and would soon be supplanted by their model. Such a replacement would also involve the elimination of native languages, as Friar Gabriel Sagard (fl.1614-36) urged, pointing to Mexico and Peru as examples of native initiative in encouraging the use of a single tongue.[70] However, missionaries quickly realized that the practical thing to do was to follow the custom of the traders, and to learn native languages, even if, as the Jesuit Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot (1611-93) was to complain in the case of Huron, it was "the most difficult of all those of North America." Lawyer Marc Lescarbot had observed while visiting Acadia in 1607-08, that it was not so much scholarly learning that missionaries needed, as the willingness and capacity to learn "the language of the tribe whom they wish to reduce to the Christian faith." In 1632, Segard published a Huron dictionary of 132 pages as an appendix

70. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, II: 340. The Incas' active program for the use of Quechua within their empire was a better illustration of Sagard's point than the comparatively relaxed attitude of the Mexica, who did not impose their language in areas they conquered. The multitude of languages in Mexico was one of the factors exploited by Hernán Cortés in his conquest; Cuevas estimates that at least seventy-three were spoken in precontact times; *Historia de la Iglesia*, I: 17-28. In Huronia, not only were the natives not motivated to learn French, but they had difficulties in pronouncing it, as they did not use labials; see Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, I:331.

71. *History of New France*, tr. and ann. W.L. Grant, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1907-14), II:180. Lescarbot also observed that "it will be the part of prudence in the pastors to teach them carefully and not in ways fantastical." Chaumonot eventually composed a Huron grammar for the use of new arrivals to the mission.

to *Le Grand Voyage au Pays des Hurons.* More accurately, it could be described as a phrase list, the first published for a Canadian language since Cartier's brief vocabulary.[72]

In the circumstances, it is not surprising that the early taste of success—however ephemeral—enjoyed by the Spanish in Mexico eluded the French in New France.[73] Day schools were tried first; Sagard conducted one such class in Huronia in 1623-24, but without much to show for his efforts;[74] Jesuit Jean de Brébeuf (1593-1649) had a similar experience. Although the children were able and appeared to be fascinated by the books of the missionaries, it was soon realized that if they were to become French in spirit, it would be necessary to remove them from their home environments. With the aid of royal funding, the Recollets built a "seminary" at Notre-Dame-des-Anges, near today's Quebec City, in 1620, but it attracted few pupils, despite the Recollets' efforts to get the Huron to send children. Colonial rivalries complicated the picture; the English investment of New France, 1629-32, closed the school. When the French returned in 1633, they brought the Jesuits with them; the Recollets would not come back until 1670. Paul Le Jeune (1591-1664), superior of the Jesuits of Quebec from 1632 to 1639, reopened the residential school to which some Huron boys were brought in 1636, but experienced the same difficulties as the Recollet in obtaining pupils, despite some hard negotiating; those whom they did attract were connected to headmen who were profiting from the French connection.[75] There were also those who considered the missionaries to be ambassadors, urging the adoption of Christianity as a sort of an alliance.[76] Five years later, the school was closed once more, for want of students, and the Jesuits were making plans to concentrate on converting adults rather than children. In 1640 the building was destroyed by fire. In the meantime, Brébeuf again had taken up the task, and had established a mission school in 1634 in Ihonatiria (Saint Joseph I) in Huronia, in a flush of optimism that was soon cooled by stiffening resistence. The epidemics of 1634-39 aggravated the situation to the point where Brébeuf

72. According to Marcel Trudel, a "work of such magnitude on a North American native language had never before been realized," but this would be true only if the Spanish sphere were excluded; Trudel, *The Beginnings of New France 1524-1663,* tr. Patricia Claxton (Toronto, 1973), 156-9.
73. Good general resumes of these early efforts are those of Cornelius J. Jaenen, *The Role of the Church in New France* (Toronto, 1976), ch. II; and idem, "Education for Francization: The Case of New France in the Seventeenth Century," in *Indian Education in Canada: The Legacy,* eds. Jean Barman, Yvonne Hébert, and Don McCaskill (Vancouver, 1986), 45-63. The best account for the Huron is by Bruce Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic,* 2 vols. (Montreal and London, 1976), I:379-80, 395, 430, 460-61; II:522-26, 554-8. See also Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage,* 217-21 and 258-62.
74. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada,* II:330. See also Le Clercq, *First Establishment,* I:188-9.
75. Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic,* II:522-6. See also Le Clercq, *First Establishment,* 1:210: "some came to instruction only from interested motives and to get knives, beads, and the like from the religious." Jesuit views of some of the difficulties in keeping Huron pupils are expressed in Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 14:231-3.
76. Le Clercq, *First Establishment,* I:405.

warned his superiors that the missionaries' lives were in danger. When the Five Nations stepped up their raids and dispersed the Huron Confederation in 1649, they also aborted a plan to open a college in the region. Brébeuf had been working in Huronia for fifteen years when he met his death during the final confrontation.

Early Amerindian willingness to give up children to be raised by the French had quickly evaporated in the face of the deaths of some of the children involved, and of reports of the cruelty of French discipline.[77] Authoritarian institutions were so alien to the native way that the children tended either to run away or to sicken and die. Realizing that the switch to the French diet also was probably a factor, the Jesuits tried feeding the children partly in the Huron way, partly in the French. Despite some improvement in the situation, keeping these young students alive remained a problem.[78] Those placed with French families stood a better chance of survival. Some parents of Huron day pupils cooperated with the missionaries to the extent of turning their children over to them for discipline. When that happened, Chaumonot reported, such "exemplary Punishment has made little savages so well-behaved that one can now do with them whatever one wishes."[79]

Neither, at first, had sending Amerindian children to be educated in France produced more positive results. If the children survived, they tended upon their return to their own communities to revert to their traditional manner of life instead of acting as ambassadors for the French way. In one particularly disappointing case, Pastedechouan (fl. 1620–36), a young Montagnais who had given rise to high hopes during his schooling in France, ended his days by starving in the Canadian woods, unwanted by his own and no longer acceptable to the French. He had been an apt pupil in France, and had learned to read and write in both French and Latin, skills that were not useful in his native environment.[80] Even a student whom the French considered successful, such as Amantacha (?1610–c.1636), remained essentially Huron.[81] The one considered to be the most successful of all, Chihwatenha (?1602–40), whose family was involved in the fur trade, was slain under mysterious circumstances.[82] Results with girls were hardly more encouraging. The Ursuline nuns, who had come to New France in 1639 expressly to educate Amerindians, quickly learned that if a student showed signs of not adapting, it was better to allow her to leave the convent, or else she might die.[83]

77. Savignon, a Huron lad who had lived with the French, had apparently found them to be cruel and unjust; see Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic*, I:395.
78. Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 12:53 and 16:187.
79. Ibid, 57:61.
80. Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic*, II:461. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. Pastedechouan. The Spanish had also experimented with sending children to be educated in Spain, and found it unsatisfactory; see Castañeda, *Nuevos Documentos*, 10–1.
81. Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic*, II:461; *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. Amantacha.
82. Ibid., s.v. Chihwatenha.
83. Guy Oury, ed., *Marie de l'Incarnation, Ursuline (1599–1672): Correspondance* (Solesmes, 1971), 801.

Some successes were claimed in those early years, but on an individual basis. The cost in winning them had been unexpectedly high. These meagre results, on the other hand, did not invite the cultural backlash that had developed among Spaniards in Mexico.

The situations faced by the French and the Spanish in these first attempts at cultural metamorphosis are admittedly very different in many ways, yet there are points for comparison. The Western world had traditionally underestimated so-called "primitive" civilizations, even those of its own antecedents, an attitude that had been encouraged during the period of Christianization.[84] The missionary experiments in the New World all fell into this trap, but the reasons they did not always fulfill hopes were not necessarily the same, or even similar. The Spaniards, in seeking to transform the Mexica elite into a Christian elite, had in effect encouraged cultural syncretism. In doing so, they not only had not counted on the vitality of native traditions, but had also misjudged the sentiments prevaling among their own colonists, compounded as they were by a pervasive fear of an Amerindian uprising.[85] Defeated in their own lands, the Mexica had set about excelling in those things which they observed that the Spanish prized. Their initial success inflamed the opposition of the settlers, and even the church had its doubts, as the 1555 ruling against the ordination of Amerindians attests. The French, one hundred years later, interested in cultural substitution rather than in cultural mixing, sought instead to make Amerindians French, with the degree of Christianity necessary for the purpose. The first native reaction was puzzlement as to why the French sought to change them. Not only had the Huron not been defeated by the French, at first they had no way of knowing that such a thing was possible. Still, the superiority of European technology was recognized. The disparity between the Huron mode of life and the cultural pattern the French sought to impose, a situation that was complicated by colonial and tribal rivalries, as well as by divisions within the church itself, in the end ensured disorientation and maladaptation for the Huron rather than the birth of a brave new world. In both New France and Mexico, in conformity to the usual experience in such situations, certain areas in the societies involved changed quickly, such as those bearing on crafts and technology. Other areas, particularly those related to religion and ideology, changed much more slowly; Christian beliefs were certainly absorbed but were given meaning within traditional frameworks.

Religious change, it has been observed, is a creative process which can lead to new forms of rituals and beliefs, in Christianity as well as indigenous systems.[86] The Mexica, for instance, understood the Virgin Mary from the aspect of their own Tonantzin, "Our Revered Mother"; for the Huron, it was the sky-dwelling Aataentsic, the mother of mankind. It was when the Spaniards, and later the French, became aware of this process, along with the even more serious realization that traditional practices

84. Kane, *History of Education*, 17.
85. On Mexico City's concern about its defenses, see Kubler, *Mexican Architecture*, 1:77–80.
86. Jane Schneider and Shirley Linderbaum, "Frontiers of Christian evangelism: essays in honor of Joyce Riegelhaupt," *American Ethnologist* 14 (1987):4.

were continuing in secret, that initial enthusiasm for quick conversions began to wane and doubts as to Amerindian capacity to become fully Christian began to gain more weight. The complexity of the problem was recognized very early; Sahagún, for one, acknowledged that in some respects there was a good deal to be said for prehispanic ways. Like Olmos and others, he worked to preserve those elements of indigenous cultures which did not conflict with Christianity and which he felt to be worthwhile.[87] The irony of the situation was that even as the Europeans laboured to transform the Amerindians, they themselves were being changed, so that today "Canadian" (or "Canadien") is not synonymous with "French," nor "Mexican" with "Spanish." In a sense, from the European aspect, the Americas still remain a New World.

87. Sahagún, "Relacion del autor," in *Historia General,* 73–4; Jacques Lafaye, *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe* (Chicago, 1976), 211–30. On the Mexica adaptation to Christianity, see Berdan, *The Aztecs of Central Mexico,* 184–6, and Weismann, *Mexico in Sculpture,* 192; on that of the Huron, Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic,* II:705–10 and 848–9; and on the Algonkians, Alfred G. Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures 1504–1700* (1937, rep. Toronto, 1969), ch. 13, 157–91.