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**Disciplining Empire: Space, Communications and Governance In New France
(1524-1700)**

by

Peter Hodgins, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

School of Journalism and Communication

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

August 27, 1997

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Abstract

From its ‘discovery’ by Cartier onward, French governmental authorities envisioned the St. Lawrence river as the key channel which would link a French imperial network ranging as far east as China to Paris. Before this dream of empire could be realized, however, Laurentian space had to first be francisized. This involved the twin processes of capturing it in various devices of inscriptions such as maps, traveler’s journals and bureaucratic reports in order to ship it to Versailles where all these traces could be reassembled to create a ‘virtual Canada’ and, on the basis of that information, ‘civilize’ the Laurentian wilderness and the behavior of its inhabitants through the imposition of French spatial structures, social institutions and patterns of communication. This project of creating a ‘well-policed’ colony, however, foundered due to the state’s lack of financial and policing resources, communications and surveillance technologies and the peculiarities of Laurentian space.

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Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Introduction	1
Chapter 1	5
Chapter 2	26
Chapter 3	51
Chapter 4	81
Chapter 5	119
Chapter 6	162
Conclusion	203
Bibliography	208

*"I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill,
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.*

*The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild."*

-Wallace Stevens

"Government is a congenitally failing operation."

--Nikolas Rose & Peter Miller

Introduction

“I reassert the beauty and fertility both of the waters and the banks of this Great river, as well as the importance, likewise, of the post of Quebec, which I have heretofore named the mouth of the finest and greatest State in the world” (quoted in O’Callaghan, 1855, Vol. IX: 14). These words penned by the Baron d’Avaugour, one of the governors of New France, affirm the fact that for most of that colony’s history, the St. Lawrence River was the main channel by which messages, goods and people circulated within the colony and communicated with lands and peoples beyond its ill-defined territorial limits. In this passage, D’Avaugour’s description of Quebec as a ‘mouth’ hints at the complex relationship between the regulation of communication and the formation of a colonial state on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Though the St. Lawrence was as wide as 100 km across at Sept-Iles, it narrowed to less than 2 km wide at the site of the colonial capital, Quebec. Once this island is skirted, the channel narrows considerably until it is less than 2 km wide at Quebec. The Algonquin word “Quebec” reflects this fact—it means ‘narrowing of the river’; while the Abenakis called it ‘Quelibec’ which means “shut up”. This bottlenecking effect meant that nothing and nobody could pass directly from the Atlantic into the colony without first being seen by the various colonial authorities who were concentrated in the town. In other words, Quebec acted as a giant mouth which could open and close to regulate passage in and out of the colony.

There was another way, however, in which Quebec was to act as the ‘mouth of the finest and greatest State in the world’. The combination of the concentration of state, religious, military and commercial authorities within its walls, the orderliness of its streets,

the majesty of its public buildings, its role as a stage for the rituals of power ranging from fireworks displays to public brandings with the *fleur-de-lis*, the tolling of the police and church bells, the surveillance of its cabarets, public squares and streets and so on made it both a model of colonial order and a transmitter by which the King's glory was projected into the unruly Canadian wilderness. This belief that an ordered space communicates an orderly society comes clear in the sieur de Roberval's commission to create a settlement at Quebec in 1541. In that document, the king orders Roberval to travel to the new lands of Laurentian valley in order

to live in them with the said foreign peoples, if that is possible, and to dwell in the said lands and countries, build and create towns and forts, temples and churches for the communication of our holy Catholic faith and Christian doctrine; to constitute and establish laws in Our name, along with officers of justice, to make them live in law and order and in the fear and love of God (in Cartier, 1993: 144).

This dual meaning of Quebec as a 'mouth' reflects what Philip Abrams describes as the two processes of rule. First of all, there is what he calls the 'politically organized subjection' of the majority of people living within a territory by what he describes as the 'state-system'. He defines the latter entity as "a cluster of institutions of political and executive control and their key personnel, the 'state elite': 'the government, the administration, the military and the police, the judicial branch, sub-central government and parliamentary assemblies'" (Abrams, 1981: 71). Like rural bandits controlling a section of river or an important mountain pass, these institutions and actors use their control over superior financial, symbolic and coercive resources to force the rest of the populations to move through their channels of influence and to pay their tithes along the way.

Michel Foucault has argued that this desire to channel the activities is central to the understanding of the word 'government'. In its early modern sense, the word 'government' did not just refer to political structures or the management of states, "it designates the way in which the conduct of individuals or states might be directed... To govern, in this sense is to structure the possible field of action of others" (quoted in Hunt & Wickham, 1994: 24). Given this view of governance, Hunt and Wickham argue that political power loses its 'negative' connotations and is characterized as the "technical process by which governance drives the machine of society" (Hunt & Wickham, 1994: 80). These processes range from techniques of 'statecraft' like fiscal management to law to techniques of 'self-subjection' such as prayer and the inculcation of manners.

In viewing power as a process, we are forced to drop the notion that it 'belongs' to one group or another and instead must speak in terms of advantage and disadvantage. Hunt and Wickham argue that through deft manipulation of the financial, symbolic and/or coercive resources at their disposal, certain groups can come to control the techniques of governance in a social and historical setting. The existence of 'politics', however, ensures that that control does not go uncontested. Hunt and Wickham argue that 'politics' summarizes the processes which emerge to contest the techniques of governance. They reason that since the latter can never claim to completely control social reality, politics and resistance are inevitable outcomes of any attempt at governance.

While the metaphors of 'channeling' and structuring' movement reflect the first meaning of the word 'mouth', Abrams' second process of rule reflects the meaning of 'mouth' as a communications device. He argues that since the 17th century, the idea of the

state has been deployed by the 'state-system' as a means of securing its channeling activities against potential resistance:

The state, in sum, is a bid to elicit support for or tolerance of the insupportable and intolerable by presenting them as something other than themselves, namely legitimate, disinterested domination... Not to see the state as in the first instance an exercise in legitimation, in moral regulation, is... surely to participate in the mystification which is the vital point in the construction of the state... And in our sort of society at least mystification is the central mode of subjection. Armies and prisons are the back-up instruments of the burden of legitimacy... it is their association with the idea of the state that silences protest, excuses force and convinces almost all of us that the fate of the victims is necessary (Abrams, 1981: 76-7).

In this study, I will attempt to reconstruct the elaboration of a state-system, its 'civilizing' projects and techniques of governance on the banks of the St. Lawrence from the beginning of the French exploration of North America through to the remarkable intendency of Jean Talon. I will also try to reconstruct the discourses and the communicational means by which this state-system legitimated its activities. I will also try to assess how well this system worked in channeling the behaviour of its subjects. In so doing, I hope to show that the space of the Laurentian valley, the distances separating the colony from France and the rudimentary communications and surveillance technologies at the disposal of the state-system hindered its efforts at governance and prompted the development of ever new techniques of governance in order to penetrate the opaque Laurentian space.

Chapter 1: Space, Communications & the French Imperial Project

Though the approach of this study diverges from ‘traditional’ histories of communications in that it does not focus on the role of a specific medium in stimulating social changes, I believe that it will prove valuable for researchers in communications for many reasons. First of all, it is concerned with a place and period of time in which space still mattered. Like most members of the European elite of the period, the various administrators and priests stationed in New France believed that most of the North American continent was nothing more than a vast empty space peopled by savages and, with the exception of a few outposts of civilization, barren of that which gave the world form, meaning and order, namely: kings, soldiers, priests, towns, forts, plowed fields, houses, churches, roads, signposts.

One visitor to New France, Pierre de Charlevoix, feared that those characteristics which made him civilized would be swallowed by this new land whose formlessness would be reflected by his own inarticulateness. The written word which linked him to the European ecumene would be submerged in the vastness of this new continent. The pages of his journal would be like the American landscape, nothing but a tabula rasa: “I am as yet at a loss where I am to find materials to fill it” (Charlevoix, 1966: 62). As he made his final preparations to leave France, he reported that he felt that, like Heidegger’s *Dasein*, he was being thrown out into an impassive and uncommunicative new world where spatial and cultural distances threatened to leave him, perhaps for the first time ever, terribly alone:

I am sent into a country, where I shall often be obliged to travel a hundred leagues and upwards, without so much as meeting with one human creature, or indeed anything else but one continued prospect of rivers,

lakes, woods and mountains. And besides, what sort of men shall I meet with? With savages, whose language I do not understand, and who are equally unacquainted with mine. Besides, what can men, who live in the most barbarous ignorance, say to me, that can affect me; or what can I say to them, who are full as indifferent and unconcerned as to what passes in Europe, and as little affected by it, as you and I Madam are, with what relates to their private concerns (Charlevoix, 1966: 62).

As Charlevoix reveals, the maintenance and extension of French 'civilization' in these 'barbarous' lands necessitated the creation of a faithful and stable circuit of communication linking the colony to the metropole. The development of such a communication system was a necessary condition for a state based in Paris, a merchant based in Rouen or a religious order based in La Flèche to able to exert influence over events in North America. In Espace et Pouvoir, the geographer Paul Claval argues that cultural systems cannot reproduce themselves without such communication technologies because they reduce what he calls 'the viscosity and natural opacities of space' in which the systems are embedded.

According to Claval, this 'viscosity and opacity' is a result of the two main ways in which space intervenes in social life. First of all, as the template of social activity, space is extension. The surface constitutes an active element in production whether it be agriculture, fishing, mining, hunting or herd-raising. This surface requires the implantation of equipment, of habitations—of channels of communications—in order for humans to achieve mastery over their environment and a minimum of social order.

Secondly, Claval points out that space is a barrier to the movement of goods and people. As a result, the spatial architecture of a given society is directly linked to the transportation technologies at its disposal. The capabilities of these technologies to overcome spatial barriers directly condition the span of goods and services which can be

normally exchanged. The placement of infrastructures of circulation and communication to facilitate this exchange creates a differentiation of space which gives some locations competitive advantages over others.

Space also hinders the transmission of information. Communication does not occur properly until signal degradation and static/noise are minimized. As long as information is passed along oral channels from intermediary to intermediary, the fidelity of transmission is never assured. Writing, Claval points out, dramatically improves an organization's capacity to extend its presence and ensure the fidelity of circuits of communication. By giving the transmitted text a material form, writing impedes its alteration and facilitates its distribution while reducing costs.

The French colonial elite were clearly aware of the organizational advantages of literacy. When the Sulpician priest Dollier de Casson finished his *A History of Montreal, 1640-1672*, he dedicated it to the "Monsieurs les Infirmes du Séminaire de St. Sulpice". Though there is nothing unusual about a priest dedicating a book to the elders of his order, the dedication itself deserves further scrutiny. In part, it runs as follows:

I send you this account, gentlemen, in order that it may serve you as a most convenient ship in which to come to Montreal without your having need of physic to prepare you for the hardships of the journey. If you are liable to be upset by headache, have no fear of the waves on this crossing, for the heaving of the ship will in no way contribute to your uneasiness. If you are feeble of stomach and are afraid of the qualms which a rough sea may cause, turn over the leaves with courage and you may set sail without fear; for I can promise that this great crossing will be so gentle that you will hardly perceive it. If you are afraid of these insects called mosquitoes, which give so much trouble to the inhabitants, rest assured that I will so effectively banish them from this book that you will not find a single one therein. (Casson, 1928: 53)

In this passage, the ship becomes a metaphorical vehicle for the printed account. Like the ship, the scratches and marks on the book's white page deliver to her door that which had formerly been obscured by the opacities of space and time. Unlike the ship, however, the book acts as a sort of prosthetic device with which even the most infirm reader can cross great expanses of space and time without having to withstand the rigors of a North Atlantic crossing by sail or face the perils of 32 winters in a struggling outpost. When Casson recorded his experience and that of the other settlers in a highly descriptive text, he, in effect, created a 'virtual' Canada in which the fields of the settlers, the war whoops of the Iroquois, the eddies, currents and cataracts of the St. Lawrence were shipped across the Atlantic in a condensed, transportable and immutable form with the bare minimum of corruption.

Despite technological innovations like writing, statistics, mapmaking, etc., however, corruption could easily be introduced into the communication circuits linking colony and metropole. As Abrams argues, the extent of the majority's acceptance of its politically organized subjection by the state-system rests upon the ability of the latter to represent its activities as legitimate and to represent itself as a 'universal benefactor'. Similarly, in order for the metropolitan state-system to prevent its colonial agents from spinning off and forming their own countervailing kingdoms, it must also legitimize the authority of its rule to its own agents.

As Claval points out, there are definite spatial limits to a leader's capacities to personally oversee the activities of her agents. Though these limits can be expanded by the alteration of the physical landscape and the development of communication and surveillance technologies to increase their visibility and the range and depth of her vision,

this sort of exercise of political power over large territories is an expensive proposition: the articulation of spaces into continuous surfaces, the organization of their surveillance, the policing of borders, the accounting of subjects and the creation of registers for tracing their existence and monitoring their movements all require the siphoning off of a great of the society's resources into the state's coffers.

As a result, there comes a certain point at which finances or technological means are exhausted and she must trust that her agents will 'tow the line' out of their belief in the nobility of her projects or in hope of social advancement. The problem remains, however, that these bonds of trust weaken as one moves away from the metropole. As Jean Talon and some of the colonial authorities explained in one of their ordinances: "l'obéissance et la fidélité dûes au prince souffrent plutôt altération dans les pays de l'état éloignés que dans les voisins de l'autorité souveraine, résidant principalement en la personne du prince" (quoted in Roy, 1924: 64).

This occurs because the entire structure of command rests upon the incessant movement of orders from the top to the bottom of the command structure and information about whether those orders are being followed from the bottom to the top. For the power-holder, the problem arises that she can never be sure whether the information which she is receiving from her spatially remote agents is accurate or whether they are augmenting their own power at her expense by withholding or falsifying information. In this case, the ruler is obliged to either foot the cost of employing other functionaries to monitor the activity of those agents or to trust that the personal ties between ruler and agents are sufficiently strong to prevent her representatives from developing into potential rivals for control over distant possessions. Furthermore, as distances increase, so too do

difficulties in the transmission of messages. As a result of these factors, Claval concludes that the performative efficacy of the system decreases in proportion to the distance from the central seat of power. As I will argue, strategies to prevent corruption played an important role in the development of the colony's political structure.

Another way in which distances frustrated the French state's plan to create an empire based in the St. Lawrence were the spatial and social distances separating them from the Amerindians who occupied the Laurentian valley and whom they hoped to assimilate into the French state. Differences in languages, customs, religious beliefs and so on hindered the initial attempts by the French and Amerindians to use the other to gain military and commercial advantages over their rivals. One of the main conditions of the possibility of successful communication is the existence of a common system of signs and shared protocols for the exchange of goods and messages. Where these do not exist, a 'middle ground' must be hammered out. As Richard White explains it, this shared system is the result of a long process of negotiation:

On the middle ground diverse peoples adjust their differences through what amounts to a process of creative, and often expedient, misunderstandings. People try to persuade others who are different from themselves by appealing to what they perceive to be the values and practices of those others. They often misinterpret and distort both the values and the practices of those they deal with, but from these misunderstandings arise new meanings and through them new practices—the shared meanings and practices of the middle ground (White, 1991: x).

Following the work of Bruno Latour and Michel Callon, Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose argue that the most effective way of achieving 'government at a distance' is to first create such a middle ground of communication and then for one group or actor to reconfigure the meanings of its terms through the use of persuasion, intrigue, calculation

or rhetoric. This will allow the one group to persuade the others to buy into shared vocabularies, theories and explanations in a manner that “comes to convince another that their goals are intrinsically linked, that their interests are consonant, that each can solve their difficulties or achieve their ends by joining forces or working along the same lines.” (Miller & Rose, 1990: 10) Miller and Rose argue further that it is through the successful persuasion of those outside the ‘state-system’ to accept an explanatory structure which legitimates the system’s infiltration and presence into spaces in which it had previously been excluded:

It is, in part, through adopting shared vocabularies, theories and explanations, that loose and flexible associations may be established between agents across time and space... whilst each remains, to a greater or lesser extent, constitutionally distinct and formally independent. Each of these diverse forces can be enrolled in a governmental network to the extent that it can translate the objectives and values of others into its own terms, to the extent that the arguments of another become consonant with and provide norms for its own ambitions and actions (Miller & Rose, 1990: 10).

Like Abrams, Miller and Rose argue that political forces can only hope to realize their various schemes aimed at regulating behaviour if they can persuade and/or co-opt actors and institutions which they do not control into networks of alliances. This persuasion is greatly facilitated by the ability of those political forces to command these networks through their control over what ‘power centres’—locales in which an aggregation of agents, agencies and surveillance and policing technologies allow the state-system to mediate and regulate the way in which all the groups enrolled in its governmental network interact with one another so as to produce a grid of communications which furthers its own ends. They argue that once a particular locale establishes itself as such a ‘centre’, it can ensure “that certain resources only flow through

and around these technologies and networks, reaching particular agents rather than others, by means of a passage through 'the centre'." (Rose & Miller, 1992: 189-90)

It was through the creation of Quebec as a 'power centre' (along with 'signal boosters' at Trois-Rivières, Montreal and the forts which dotted the St. Lawrence drainage system) that the French crown sought to enmesh the North American interior into its imperial network. However, as both Claval and Miller and Rose argue, government at a distance is not a fail-proof system. The entities and agents of the governmental networks are not always faithful relays; technologies produce unexpected results; professional rivalries, under-funding, poor communications, unclear lines of command and so on produce opacities which hinder their efficacy. On the margins, there will always be things, persons, and events which elude incorporation into the network and rebels who challenge the validity of the system.

This brings us to another way in which space affected the French colonial effort. As Claval points out, space is more than distance, it is also extension--the template of all social activity. For most of the period under discussion, the spatial characteristics of the Laurentian valley would prove to be one of the most difficult obstacles to the state-system's project of civilizing the 'savages' of both the noble Amerindian variety and those from undisciplined French peasant stock. Though the vast forests and myriad waterways of the new continent were described in Edenic terms by the early explorers, the authorities merely viewed them as unpoliceable, their lushness a mere cloak for the Iroquois, vagabonds, smugglers and deserters who threatened at any moment to shatter the hard working and orderly society which they were trying to nurse into being.

This belief that the forest could only harbour evil was one of the primary reasons why, as Michel Foucault points out, the city emerged as the model for the governance of the whole state in the French political thought of the period. Foucault argues that this model held that “a state is like a large city; the capital is like its main square; the roads are like its streets. A state will be well organized when a system of policing as tight and efficient as that of cities extends over the entire territory” (Foucault, 1984: 241).

This model emerged from several often conflicting sources. First of all, there was the classical tradition. As Anthony Pagden points out, classical writers ranging from Aristotle to Cicero were in general agreement that cities were the only places where civic virtue could be practiced. They were communities governed by law which demanded adherence to living within the strictures of civil society. Aristotle, for example, describes the city in transactional terms as a partnership, association or community in which the members of that partnership create political, economic and social networks in hope of attaining virtue which is defined as “a perfect and self-sufficient life—and that, we hold, means living happily and nobly” (1280b29).

The city was also the foundational metaphor for the most influential non-Biblical text in Western Christianity, St. Augustine’s ‘City of God’. Augustine agreed with the classical tradition that civil society consisted of an assemblage of individuals endowed with natural proclivities towards communication with one another and associated by a common acknowledgment of right and by a community of interest aimed at the common good of attaining justice. He breaks with the classical tradition in arguing that all human attempts at creating a just society have failed and that in order to achieve perfection, human justice

therefore has to be supplemented with divine justice. Ernest L. Fortin writes that according to Augustine,

Justice in the highest sense prescribes the right ordering of all things according to reason. This order requires the universal and complete subordination of the lower to the higher both within man and outside of him. It exists when the body is ruled by the soul, when the lower appetites are ruled by reason, and when reason itself is ruled by God. The same hierarchy is or should be observed in society as a whole and is encountered when virtuous subjects obey wise rulers, whose minds are in turn subject to divine law. (Fortin, 1987: 182)

Only by living this life of obedience, piety and reason, Augustine argued, can the individual ever hope to assume his place in the state of virtue and grace which Augustine names the City of God.

The third main tradition of opinion came from writers who were less concerned with philosophical questions about the nature of justice than with more pragmatic questions of statecraft. One of the pioneers of the study of how to extend and maintain empires, Niccolo Machiavelli, argued that the city was also the source of empire, providing both the men and the source of authority to retain provinces once they have been conquered. Giovanni Botero, the author of Reason of State, lauded the Portuguese project of drawing the natives of Brazil out of their dispersed settlements into “some certain place together more convenient for their purpose [of converting the natives], where living in a civil conversation they might be more easily instructed in the Christian faith and governed by the magistrate and ministers of the King” (Botero, 1956: 228). In a cynical twist on St. Augustine’s arguments about the need to supplement the interactions of civil society with a sense of divine justice, Botero argued that no state can have a secure foundation without the power of religion. The Christian religion was particularly

useful to rulers because according to Christian law, “not merely the bodies and possessions but even the souls and consciences of his people are subject to him: their affections and thoughts are bound, as well as their hands, and they are enjoined to obey wicked rulers as well as moderate ones, and to suffer all rather than disturb the peace” (Botero, 1956: 66).

Finally, in the aftermath of the religious upheavals, economic depressions, social dislocations and wars which wracked the late 16th and early 17th century, a new conception of order which also used the city as its model began to emerge. As Robert Muchembled points out, most of the members of the clerical and governmental elite of the period lived in the larger cities of France. This elite was highly conscious of the civility of urban and courtly life and despised and feared the rural masses. In fact, as the discovery of America entered into the European consciousness, they quickly began to represent rural populations as “savages” whose society shared many of the same attributes which Europeans associated with the Amerindians.

In some ways, they were not wrong. Like the pre-contact Amerindians, difficulties in transportation and communications meant the rural populations had little or no contact with this urban elite. As a result, for much of the 16th and 17th centuries, the Word of God and the Law of the King were known to the country dwellers only in a diffused and refracted manner. In the countryside, the agents of the central power such as the police, tax collectors, inspectors of weights and measures were rarely, if ever, seen. The cash-poor state would often either decentralize these activities to local notables or simply hope that the peasants would police themselves. Similarly, the frequent development of heresies and the endurance of pagan traditions in the countryside in this period seems to suggest

that the Church's hold over its parochial representatives weakened as one moved away from its urban power centres. Similarly, communication via the printed word was stymied by the low rural literacy rates.

The enclosure of populations within the walls of the town, however, provided the elite with many more opportunities to survey and channel their activities. Muchembled writes that

numerous institutions such as the royal tribunal in charge of judging the peasant population had their seats in the towns. Entryways and exits were subject to tight surveillance in order to bar the marginals who sought to enter the towns in order to find work or often simply refuge. We should not be surprised, therefore, to see that the criminal justice system tended more often than not to try to shape the morals of the permanent inhabitants rather than blindly punishing them. (Muchembled, 1990: 133, my translation)

Similarly, within the closed walls of the town, the townspeople would never be out of hearing range of the bells summoning them to church where they could be castigated by the 'auxiliaries of absolutism', the local *curés*, for their sins and wrongdoings and admonished to obey the 'three pillars' of French society—God, King and father.

Muchembled argues that this chasm between 'policed' town and 'self-regulating' country began to narrow in the 16th century. In that period, the activities of the French absolutist monarchy and its ideological wing, the Gallican Church, were propelled by the desire to realize St. Augustine's utopian 'City of God' over all of French soil. In its ecclesiastical form, Gallicanism was a doctrine which developed in the late middle ages and held that the pope was not infallible and that he could not overrule the decisions of local ecumenical councils. Born of the Great Schism, Royal Gallicanism reiterated the arguments in favour of the independence of the French church from papal authority and

further asserted that the French king was absolutely independent of the Vatican in temporal affairs and that it was the King's and not the Pope's right to appoint bishops. As Peter Robert Campbell argues, the subsequent French institutional development along Gallican lines meant that the ancient régime church and state were virtually indistinguishable:

Even at the lowest level, the parish was usually the area adopted as a civil administrative division and the curé was expected to read out edicts from the pulpits. In the confessional, he would encourage, through the redefinition of sin and moral duty, the payment of taxes and obedience to the temporal powers. In fact, church and state were hand in hand. (Campbell, 1988: 53).

The totalizing project of realizing the 'City of God' was the result of the emerging central powers need to legitimate the greater taxation demands which their expanding military and bureaucratic operations were placing on their national economies. The French state began to characterize itself as a universal benefactor and to introduce new entities in political discourse such as 'national interest' and 'public problems'. Jonathan M. Smith writes that, though these issues and problems were generally problems for the elites only, this discourse was "nevertheless novel in viewing the nation as an organic whole that was subject to systemic difficulties rather than as an aggregation of practically autonomous households" (Smith, 1996: 93).

Robert Muchembled argues that these institutions went to great lengths to delineate for each and all its subjects their role in the establishment of an ideal city in which "there reigns a divinely-ordained, theoretically fixed social order; where obedience and respect for hierarchies (particularly the King and the agents of the Church) are to be natural virtues; where work, piety and morality are demanded of the laboring classes in

order to conserve the harmony between the three orders which constitute the French 'nation'" (Muchembled, 1990: 127-8, my translation). In the 16th century, the keyword to describe this project was the word 'police'. Though in modern usage it has come to refer to an activity, 'living in police' originally referred to living in the ideal state of affairs which Muchembled describes above.

This project of attempting to realize the City of God by preaching obedience, piety (understood in the Roman sense as obedience to local obligations and customs as well as the Catholic religion), hard work, a settled life and morality would soon encounter its *bête noire*. In sixteenth century Europe, a demographic boom combined with improvements in agriculture technology and changes in land ownership patterns to gradually reduce the overall percentage of the country's population needed to work the land. As a result, a class of economically redundant workers sprang up who, since they could no longer be supported by their native communities, had no choice but to take to the road in hopes of finding work. Once on the road, they eluded traditional mechanisms of social control such as the reciprocal surveillance and communal responsibility of the small village and the master-apprentice relations of the guild system. Governmental authorities soon came to believe that these 'vagabonds' were

too listless and too numerous to be tamed and domesticated by the customary method of familiarization or incorporation. They appeared and disappeared from sight without warning, they stubbornly remained strangers and vanished before the community could absorb them by subjecting them to its all-penetrating gaze. (Bauman, 1987: 40-1)

Bauman writes that the state's reaction to this errant population was swift and intense. The uprooted peasants were quickly demonized and marginalized by the religious and political authorities of the period who reasoned that it was easier to destroy these

groups of wanderers than to try to reintegrate them economically and morally back into the community. In 1520, Francis I changed the role of the 'prévôts des maréchaux' from that of a military police to an institution dedicated to policing the roads and the pursuit of the homeless. These marshals were given the unrestricted power to round up suspected robbers, vagabonds, deserted soldiers and beggars, subject them to trials on the spot and impose and carry out penalties of torture and/or death. As the sixteenth century progressed, these policing methods were gradually supplemented by what Michel Foucault calls the 'great enclosure' of various marginal groups within prisons, workhouses, insane asylums. These 'carceral spaces' were designed to economically and morally rehabilitate these wanderers by placing them within an architecture whose goal was to "permit an internal, articulated and detailed control—to render visible those who are inside it; in more general terms, an architecture that would operate to transform individuals; to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry the effects of power right to them" (Foucault, 1984: 190). Unlike the walls of the castles or the arquebuses of the marshal, this new social architecture did not aim at stopping movement, it sought to channel the movement of persons, goods and messages into a pro-social pattern. It became a regulatory schema concerned with the "calculation of openings, of filled and empty spaces, passages and transparencies" (ibid.).

As the 17th century progressed, the example of these 'carceral spaces' in which circulation was tightly controlled was meshed with the city model of governance to form what Colin Gordon describes as the 'police' conception of order. This model of governance had at its roots the belief that the space of the nation should be transformed

into a visible grid of communication which would provide no shelter for subversives of the society of order. As Colin Gordon explains:

Police disciplines, compartmentalizes, fixes: but this gridwork of order watched over by the agents of a geometer-king is also a network of movements and flows... One formulation of the objective of police was that of organizing the whole royal territory like one great city. Public spaces, bridges, roads and rivers are prominent among the objects of police attention: this physical infrastructure of connection and mobility is seen by the police-theorist Jean Domat as the means whereby the policed city can function as a place of assembly and *communication*, a term whose meaning embraces all the processes of human intercourse, exchange, circulation and cohabitation within a governed population. (Gordon, 1991: 20)

For the 17th century governmental authority, the key to statecraft, therefore, was the reconfiguration of hitherto opaque space into a transparent and regulated grid of communication. In other words, the entire system of governance relies upon the partitioning of territories into what Michel Foucault calls 'disciplinary spaces'. Foucault writes that the aim of such a partitioning was to "establish presences and absences, to know where and how to locate individuals, to set up useful communications, to interrupt others, to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual" (Foucault, 1979: 143). This process of distinguishing legitimate communications and communicators from their transgressive others requires a delimitation of space and clearly defined boundaries within which activities and interactions are to be channeled. The optimum locale for the creation of such zones was a territory like the French countryside in which all the land was occupied by a population which was of average density, uniformly distributed and fairly sedentary.

Conversely, in zones like most of 17th century North America in which population densities are low and the main activities of the inhabitants involved the seasonal movement

of the population in search of food, game or markets, this strategy of establishing useful communications encounters problems. Furthermore, the existence of nearby virgin space into which no power holder can extend her reach often mitigates her ability to exact compliance from the subject population who know only too well that the neighbouring forests provide them with a refuge from her demands. Claval suggests that this factor was the main contributing factor in the construction of forts along the frontiers of many states—their purpose was not to keep marauders out so much as they were erected to keep subject population within the state's confines.

To return to New France, I contend that, following Foucault, the state-system's attempt to create useful channels of communication was at once an activity of spatial restructuring, moral tutelage and communication regulation. In order to secure the 'salvation' and the 'happiness and prosperity' of the population in its far flung empire, French authorities endeavoured to channel colonial communication in the manner that permitted 'lawful' interactions and hindered deviant or disruptive communications.

This meant above all regulating movement along the St. Lawrence river, the main axis of colonial communication and its tributaries. Unfortunately for colonial authorities, however, those waterways also left the colony open to attack from the powerful Iroquois tribes and the Anglo-Dutch settlements to the south while their dense impenetrable forests sheltered those French renegades who sought to elude and even subvert their efforts at creating a 'well-policed' Christian empire based in the St. Lawrence valley. It was hoped that once those disorderly movements could be stopped or reformed, the St. Lawrence could become the main road in the French imperial network and Laurentian valley would

be a 'virtual' France in which the viscosity of space was somehow canceled out and the Word of God and the Law of the King could be broadcast in a fairly uncorrupted form.

However, before Canadian space could be articulated within these imperial networks, it first had to be drawn into the European world picture. Much like Adam initiating his God-given dominion over the earth by giving names to all the animals, European explorers, missionaries, traders, soldiers, settlers and administrators swarmed over the New World, compulsively cataloguing and naming all those things and peoples who caught their eyes. These names were inscribed in their journals and histories, they gave structure to the map, the bureaucratic report and all the other means by which the inert and insensate North American continent was gathered up and shipped across the Atlantic to 'centres of calculation' where it would be worked upon and articulated.

Secondly, contemporaneous with the mapping out of the hardware and its capabilities was the hammering of a communication protocol which would connect the existing users of the system, the Amerindians, into the French imperial network. After a few decades of fumbling and misunderstandings, prolonged intercultural contact led to the gradual development of shared conventions of communication and a loose network of alliances. The problem remained, however, that their new partners remained fiercely autonomous and, in the eyes of colonial authorities, utterly lawless. In order to secure both their souls for God and their hunting, paddling, warmaking and labouring abilities for the King, many and sundry attempts were to convince them to abandon their 'vagabondage' in favour of a settled Christian life. By francisizing the Amerindians, it was hoped that they could be turned into stable envoys linking kings and hatmakers in Paris with the fur-rich lands west of Lachine.

In order to protect both the French and their Amerindian allies, the course of the river had also to be protected from attacks by the rivals of French power and illicit movement on the river by vagabonds, smugglers, poachers, heretics and other 'unlicensed' nomads. Militarily, this involved the turning the course of the St. Lawrence into a 'power container' through construction of forts at 'nodal points' like Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Montreal, the deployment of soldiers and police, the creation of a militia, the maintenance of military and trading alliances with the Amerindians of the area, the keeping open of the lines of communication with the home country, the creation of a licensing system and the encouragement of agriculture and industry in order to ensure colonial self-sufficiency.

Agriculture and industry were also dear to the hearts of the colonial authorities for their contributions to social control. If the vagabond was the *bête noire* to the bureaucratic dream of creating a 'well-policed' colony, the settled farmer was its ideal. Pious, hard working and content to remain fixed (hence visible) on one plot of land, the latter were lauded for their enduring contribution to the maintenance of police. In the countryside, the land was parceled into a series of semi-feudal fiefdoms known as seigneuries in which a member of the *haute bourgeoisie*, the lesser nobility or religious orders would be granted a large tract of land and certain privileges in return for his acting as the king's eyes, ears and arm in the district. Furthermore, the seigneurs were instructed to make every effort to encourage settlers to clear and cultivate the land. This was held to be vital to the future prosperity of the colony because it fulfilled the military requirements of agricultural self-sufficiency, it was an effective tool of social control—a hard working farmer is not a smuggling farmer and it helped to make the Laurentian valley transparent to the gaze of the colonial authorities. While reams of legislation were issued in hopes of

attracting colonists to the settled life, an equal amount was pumped out in hopes of deterring them from succumbing to the lure of slipping into the unpoliced spaces west of Montreal where they would dwell *'ni foi, ni loi, ni Roi'*.

The concentration of administrative, religious and military personnel within the walls of the town, on the other hand, meant that its denizens were subject to greater scrutiny than their rural counterparts. Exacting police regulations reached into many aspects of the city-dweller's life ranging from where and how houses could be built to how they could dress while various religious and political ceremonies ranging from Mayday celebrations to public executions demonstrated God and King's power to them. Furthermore, the towns themselves were laid out in a manner which 'carried the effects of power' right to its denizens. In Quebec, the most striking example, the merchants and the artisans occupied the lower town--a narrow shelf along the banks of the St. Lawrence while the castles, forts and convents of the secular and spiritual authorities loomed above them on a promontory which overlooks both the lower town and the river.

All of these seemingly disparate social phenomena ranging from licensing systems to urban design emerged out of the state-system's project of creating 'policed' and orderly channels of communication in an alien space where most of the institutions which they relied upon to maintain the 'society of orders' in France simply did not exist. Though they sought to directly implant many of those institutions in Laurentian soil, they often had to adapt those institutions to suit colonial realities and create entirely new ones in order to achieve their project of canalizing colonial communications. Even with these changes, this regulatory system stood or fell on the capacity of the metropole to 1) use its intermediaries to convince the majority of the population of the legitimacy of that network, 2) to

monitor and police that network and 3) perhaps most importantly, to monitor the activities of its own intermediaries and to convince the latter of the legitimacy of the network. A proper assessment of this system, therefore, will require an examination of both the elaboration of the 'hardware' and the 'software' of the network—the spatial arrangement of the communication axis as well as the creation of a series of formal and informal rules and procedures such as military alliances, laws and shared ceremonies which define both orderly and transgressive uses of the system and the ability of the central authority to exact compliance with those rules.

In the pages that follow, I will document the double movement which I have been sketching above of attempting to capture New France in writing and then to civilize it by transforming it into a transparent text. I will argue that it was the hope of French authorities that this transformation would eradicate the social and spatial distances which troubled Charlevoix but that this hope was never realized because their attempt to inscribe and articulate Laurentian space in a certain manner failed because they lacked the resources to invoke closure on how it was used. In other words, I will argue that the Laurentian text, like all texts, was polysemous. Before I begin my account of this agon of interpretation, I will summarize some of technological conditions which facilitated the French irruption into North America.

Chapter 2: Communication, Reconnaissance and Conquest

Before Verrazzano

Of all the European voyages of discovery which began in the mid-15th century, the ‘discovery’ of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 is easily the most famous. This ‘discovery’, however, was made possible by a whole series of developments in navigation, cartography, shipbuilding, and seamanship which allowed the explorer to venture beyond known waters with the reasonable certainty that he would be able to find his way back home. Perhaps more importantly, these developments also gave him the power to precisely reconstruct his path and communicate it to others so that they would be spared the rigors of stepping into *terra incognita*. In the first section of this chapter, I will briefly examine these developments before I go on to discuss the beginnings of the French reconnaissance of the New World.

The development of the carrack and the caravel in Portugal and Spain around 1450 provided the Iberian sailors with vessels which were large enough to withstand ocean waves, fend off attacks from smaller boats and carry enough provisions that their crews would not have to stop in mid-journey in order to replenish stocks. The combination of square and lateen sails used on these vessels increased their maneuverability while reducing the number of crew needed to sail them. These factors decreased transit time, increased their independence from their environment and allowed the Iberians to sail further and remain in their ships longer than traditional European vessels.

These developments in ship design were paralleled by developments in the science of navigation. As a general rule, navigation is heavily dependent on accurate information about the area being traversed. In **The Voyages of Giovanni da Verrazzano**, Lawrence

Wroth identifies the four main mechanisms by which this geographic/hydrological information was disseminated across Europe. First of all, there were the logbooks, sketches of coastlines, manuscript maps and first hand oral reports made by explorers and their crews as well as second hand reports made by associates and families of the adventurers. This information was next diffused through the diplomatic and mercantile and professional networks of the seafarers. However, as Wroth writes, “If it was through common report and manuscript maps that matters of this kind came to be known, it was by means of the printed book that they were given verification, record, and wide dissemination” (Wroth, 1969: 20). Finally, all the information gathered these reports, diplomatic correspondences, traveller’s journal, chorographic maps would be collated, sifted, synthesized and given spatial form in the printed world maps, atlases and globes which began to appear in this period.

In the 14th and early 15th centuries, most of the navigators on the Atlantic were, in the words of the author of an important treatise the subject, nothing more than “common navigators”. They were able to guide a ship from port to port based on their knowledge of the intervening coastlines, water currents, shoals and sandbars and tidal activity in the area as well as their ability to use the compass and the lead line to determine their bearing and speed. The literate pilot could also rely on the descriptions of the coasts, tides and sea floor published in books known as rutters. In the Mediterranean, on the other hand, sailing instructions were usually codified in the form of portolans. These were mariners’ maps of the old Greek *oikoumene*—the coast lines of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Atlantic shores of Western Europe and North Africa—drawn on vellum in colored inks. In the tide-free waters of the Mediterranean, the drawing of compass lines and

windroses and the marking of shoals and sandbars on these maps provided the navigator with all the information necessary to safely ply its gentle waters.

During the period of Italian commercial supremacy in the Mediterranean, the production of these maps was centred in the chart houses of the great mercantile ports of Venice and Genoa. In the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Italian control of the market in portolan charts shifted to the Iberian peninsula as a result of the glut of new geographic information accompanying the Portuguese and Spanish reconnaissance of the world's oceans (though many of the chart makers in Portugal and Spain were Italian born and trained and maintained extensive contacts with the Italian map making fraternity).

The late fifteenth century also witnessed some of the first attempts since Ptolemy to produce cartographic representations which purported to collate and synthesize all the geographic knowledge of the day into one global picture. In 1489-92, for example, a German cartographer working in Venice produced a portolan map of the world which incorporated the geographical information produced by the voyages of Cadamosto, de Sintra and especially Dias' rounding of the Cape of Good Hope. According to Penrose, this portolan tradition of world map making reached its culmination in the works of Diego Ribeiro, a Portuguese map maker who was in charge of maintaining the *Padron Real*, the Spanish state's map of the world, and an intimate friend of Ferdinand Columbus, Sebastian Cabot, and Ferdinand Magellan.

The availability of these graphic sailing instructions combined with the development of several other technologies to greatly increase the mariner's ability to consistently follow a set transoceanic course. Beginning in the 15th century, a whole series of technical developments in astronomy, navigation and seamanship led to the rise of the

“grand navigator”. Distinguishing between pilotage (“common navigation”) and “grand” navigation, Parry writes that

navigation, in the narrow sense, was the preserve of a relatively small aristocracy of experts whose business took them across great oceans. These men were still expected to possess the traditional skills of ship-handling and pilotage...they possessed, in addition, a rough knowledge of astronomy, and knew how to apply mathematical rules to astronomical observations in order to find a ship’s position, at least approximately. This specialized knowledge had come to be recognized as a study in its own right. It could only come from books, and so could only be acquired by literate seamen. (Parry, 1963: 83-4)

If grand navigation was all about plotting a ship’s movement along the lines of the windroses and later, the lines of latitude and longitude, on the map, the mariner’s eye had to be trained to “see” those lines in his phenomenal world. As sailing distances increased, however, it became increasingly necessary for navigators to be able to position their ship according to longitude and latitude. Though a reliable way to determine longitude did not evolve until the late 17th century, the method of dead reckoning worked sufficiently well to give the mariner a decent idea of his location. The problem with this method was that the further the mariner sailed from his home port, the more the chances of error increased.

Beginning in the 13th century, mariners began to use the astrolabe and the cross-staff to gauge the sun’s altitude above the horizon at noon in order to determine their latitude. This procedure was greatly refined by the introduction of tables of the sun’s declination which had been computed by the Arabs. In the late fifteenth century (circa 1475), these Arab tables were superseded by the works of Abraham Zacuto and Johann Müller which were disseminated across Europe via the printing press. By the turn of the 16th century, another important work, the *Regimento*, was produced by one of Zacuto’s colleagues, Joseph Vizinho. Penrose writes that this important work “shows great

advance over the simple tables of the sun's declination...it was the manual for all following manuals" (Penrose, 1963: 265).

By the early sixteenth century, the portolan chart had begun to fall out of favour for very good reasons. As J.H. Parry points out, when it came to crossing great distances which involved passing through many lines of latitude and longitude and determining the relative positions of places on both sides of the ocean, the portolan chart was dangerously misleading because it could not be corrected for magnetic variation nor did it take the sphericity of the world into account. As a result, a mariner following the course suggested by the map might find himself hundreds of miles off course.

Like so many of the other scientific advances in this period, the answer to this problem lay in the rediscovery and reproduction of classical scientific texts. In the early fifteenth century, a Greek manuscript of 2nd century A.D. text which had been lost to European eyes since the fall of the Roman empire was brought from Constantinople to Rome in order to be translated. This was the *Geography* of Claudius Ptolemaius and it would have lasting effects on European cartography. Ptolemy, as he came to be known, was a Hellenized Egyptian who, thanks to his access to the largest library in antiquity at Alexandria, was able to construct a map of the world based on all the knowledge available to a literate citizen of the Roman Empire. Though the actual map produced by his efforts contained many errors and oversights which would both hinder and incite geographical speculation and discovery well into the 17th century, it was his method of representing space which was his most enduring contribution to the European expansion.

Unlike the portolan which treated the earth as two-dimensional, Ptolemy conceived of the world as a sphere which could be divided into 360 degrees of latitude and

longitude. Parry writes that his *Geography* “gives a method of adjusting the length of a degree of longitude for any given latitude, and explains how to construct a grid of parallels and meridians for maps drawn on a conical projection” (Parry, 1968: 9-10). The Renaissance art specialist Samuel Edgerton suggests that this new method of projection had revolutionary effects on the way Europeans saw the world:

Since the longitudes and latitudes were absolute, every location on the earth could be properly designated by coordinates. Instead of perceiving the world as a series of isolated places separated by heterogenous hindrances, our man in Florence could see a picture of the lands and cities of the earth united in mathematical order. He could sense immediately direction and distance apart of these places on the abstract grid without being distracted by individual curiosities or topographic abnormalities. (Edgerton, 1978: 145)

As Edgerton points out, the rediscovery of the Ptolemaic system of coordinates allowed for the development of a system of representation in which spatial entities could be stripped down to their barest form (presented in-form) and reproduced in a neutral and consistent ‘language’. This representation of the world as ‘information’ allowed all the various local knowledges to be compared and combined to form a synoptic world picture. In “Drawing Things Together”, Bruno Latour suggests that this creation of a homogenous visual language greatly increased the ability of those situated within what he calls “centres of calculation” to exert long distance control, to force absent things to present themselves:

if we cannot go to the earth, let the earth come to us, or, more accurately, let us all go to many places on the earth, and come back with the same but different homogenous pictures, that can be gathered, compared, superimposed, and redrawn in a few places, together with the carefully labelled specimens of rocks and fossils. (Latour, 1990: 37)

This ability to gather the world in one place was greatly increased by the invention of the printing press. Following Eisenstein, Latour argues that the immutability of the

visual image was “ensured by the process of printing many identical copies; mobility by the number of copies, the paper, the movable type” (Latour, 1990: 32). This proliferation of what he calls “immutable mobiles” combined with the development of a homogenous visual language to create a context out of which the incremental character of modern ‘science’ can be said to have emerged:

errors are accurately reproduced and spread with no changes. But corrections are also reproduced fast, cheaply and with no further changes. So, in the end, the accuracy *shifts from the medium to the message*, from the printed book with which it establishes a two-way connection. A new interest in “Truth” does not come from a new vision, but from the same old vision applying itself to new visible objects that mobilize space and time differently. (Latour, 1990: 33)

In the context of the problematic of how America was initially transported to Europe, cartography emerges as possibly the most important of all of what I will call the colonial sciences of communication because as the great Dutch cartographer Willem Blaeu wrote to Louis XIV: “maps enable us to contemplate at home and right before our eyes things that are farthest away” (quoted in Alpers, 1983: 159). Under the rubric of “the colonial sciences” I include all the discourses by which the geographical, hydrological, botanical, mineralogical, agricultural and ethnological phenomena of the New World were given names, catalogued and arranged into systems of classification by European agents.

Like all the colonial sciences, cartography has always been tightly linked to the exercise of power. In “Deconstructing the Map”, J.B. Harley argues that power is both exerted on cartography—powerful interests such as kings and merchants lie behind most cartographic enterprises and exerted with cartography. Harley writes that

In modern Western society maps quickly become crucial to the maintenance of state power—to its boundaries, to its commerce, to its internal administration, to control of populations, and to its military strength... In all these cases maps are linked to what Foucault called the exercise of 'juridical power'. The map becomes a 'juridical territory': it facilitates surveillance and control. (Harley, 1989: 12)

Harley next describes the power internal to cartography. In making maps, he argues, "Cartographers manufacture power: they create a spatial panopticon" (Harley, 1989:13). In the map, geographical data is gathered, collated and classified according to set rules for arranging the landscape. Some of these rules are 'representational hierarchies' which privilege certain aspects of the landscape while downplaying or eliding others. In the early cartography of America, for example, European settlements and even their seasonally occupied trading posts are all represented while native villages are often simply omitted for the surface of the map. In this way, the world is disciplined and normalized. Harley argues that this normalization of space makes us all prisoners of the map, our activities channeled by the boundaries determined by its classificatory schemes.

Similarly, Harley writes that "In the articulation of power the symbolic level is often paramount in cartographic communication and it is in this mode that maps are at their most rhetorical and persuasive" (Harley, 1989: 295). All the various emblems, dedications, title pages, vignettes, cartouches and inserted bits of text which accompany and adorn the map helped to strengthen and focus its political meanings. In the case of some early modern maps, these decorations were used to justify imperial activities by representing the activities of the home country as divinely sanctioned and the activities of the various aboriginal peoples in racist ways so as to justify their subjugation or as barriers to European expansion to justify their eradication. In other cases, however, these

decorations could impart a great deal of useful ethnographic, botanical, zoological and other information which could be put to good use by kings, merchants and missionaries.

Though Harley focuses his interest on cartography, I think that his ideas are generalizable to all of those discourses which I have dubbed the “colonial sciences”. Ethnography, for example, is the activity of naming the behaviours of other peoples and classifying them according to various criteria or, in Harley’s terms, representational hierarchies. Like mapping, ethnographic research was often underwritten by powers external to it—kings, missionaries and merchants. The information about social structure, customs and resources gleaned from that research could be used to plot strategies to vanquish potential enemies, assimilate new subjects, convert pagan souls or open up new markets. Secondly, as in cartography, the naming and classification of Amerindian customs was the source of the internal power of ethnography. In the early ethnographic literature on the Amerindians for example, it was assumed that most tribes had no religion because they did not espouse those beliefs or engage in any of the activities which Europeans regarded as properly religious. This classification of Amerindian societies as fundamentally irreligious led some to postulate the further claim that they were, as a consequence, less than human and that Europeans were perfectly justified in enslaving them and slaughtering them as they would cattle.

The inscription of New World space within the homogenizing lines of the map was accompanied by the development of a new vocabulary for identifying and classifying New World phenomena according to their own regularities. As David Quinn points out:

the New World was strange before it was entirely new. Until the second decade of the sixteenth century, and residually after that, it was regarded as an extension of the Old World... Only gradually did consciousness and

language extend to take in the objects and the names of objects in the New World. As they take on names so they took on reality and were convincingly new. The **canoe**, the **petun**...populated the literature of the New World with tangibles, with boats, plants, with holders of office and the like that were new, and which could not by tricks of etymology (which were duly tried with many of them) be drawn into the network of the known vocabularies and their associated Old World contexts. (Quinn, 1976: 635-7).

The historian David Landes argues that this demand for an increasing transparency of the colonizer's text was reinforced by a tendency among Western intellectuals to work towards the disciplining of the scientific eye and its representations through the establishment of boundary lines between fantasy and reality: "The shibboleth has been the communicability of experience: something is real if it can and will be perceived and described, perhaps even measured, by any person with the requisite faculties and instruments in the same terms" (Landes, 1969: 25-6). In terms of writing, this emphasis on the communicability of experience engendered the ideal of the development of an 'objective' style of writing which transcended the need for interpretation.

By the time the French state began to enter the fray of overseas exploration with its patronage of the voyages of Verrazzano and Cartier, however, the disciplining of the explorer's eye had begun. In his preface to his account of his second voyage to North America, Cartier argues that, despite traditional accounts of the geography of the world inherited from philosophers like Ptolemy and Aristotle,

le prince de ces philosophes a laissé, parmi ses écrits, un bref mot de grande conséquence, qui dit que *experientia est rerum magistra*...les simples mariniers d'à présent, n'ayant pas eu autant de crainte que ceux-là de se risquer à ces périls et dangers...ont connu le contraire des opinions desdits philosophes, par une véritable expérience. (Cartier, 1946: 159).

Cartier's empiricism stemmed from his training as a grand navigator. A navigator's life and livelihood depended upon his ability to carefully observe changes in tides, currents, prevailing winds, latitude and longitude, the sea floor, etc. and keep a record of these changes which he and other navigators could consult in the future. In other words, he was taught to organize his perception of his environment according to a basic list of salient criteria determined by prevailing navigational wisdom and with the aid of various instruments. Furthermore, he was taught to express those perceptions in a clear and communicable manner and in accordance with standardized measures such as leagues, degrees of longitude and latitude and knots.

It should come as no surprise then that these men whose perceptions had been so thoroughly disciplined also supplied the accounts of the New World which were most amenable to the extension of long distance control. Their activities of gathering of hydrological and cartographic information about the new world was supplemented by a mandate to catalogue its inland waterways (in hopes of discovering a passage to Cathay), its natural and mineralogical resources, its agricultural potential, the location and military strength of its inhabitants, their customs as well as its fauna and flora.

As a result of their broad mandate, the reports of the explorers were often poorly organized, resembling, above all, the cabinets of curios which were so popular during this period. However, as the geographers interviewing Michel Foucault in one of the pieces in **Power/Knowledge** point out, this activity of intelligence gathering served other, less scientific, ends: "The geographer—and this is perhaps his essential, strategic function—collects information in an inventory which in its raw state does not have much interest and

is not in fact usable except by power. What power needs is not science but a mass of information which its strategic position can enable it to exploit" (in Foucault, 1980:75).

Despite its disorganized character, the fact remained that by the end of the 15th century, a considerable market for printed travel literature had come into being. David Quinn writes that

Many of them (printed accounts) were based on the ship's log, with its column for "Occurrences"; and this was built into the detailed narrative journals of what took place... By the late sixteenth century, a basic problem of communication had been solved: accounts of North American voyages were being written in simple vernacular language, accessible to all who could read, and were not confined to educated men who knew Latin, so that a popular bridge by means of printed words was erected across the Atlantic... The rise of a popular audience for writings related to North America was an essential stage in making its potential as an area of settlement as well as trade known to the literate middle classes of western Europe. (Quinn, 1977: 97)

Philippe Bonnichon argues that this market for information about the New World can be divided into four distinct, though permeable, segments. The first circle of interested parties consists of what he calls the "dirigeants"—kings and their officials whose political and imperial ends are served by exploration. The second circle consists of the actual voyagers—ship's captains, pilots, adventurers and missionaries. The third circle consists of the intellectual and scientific classes such as cartographers, cosmographers as well as painters, engravers, poets, theologians and essayists like Montaigne. Finally, there came the merchants who used this information to guide their overseas investments, to tailor trading cargoes to the Amerindian tastes revealed by ethnographic accounts, to attract investors and to monitor the claims of their overseas agents concerning travel times, trade prices, costs and so on.

In the years before Verrazzano's voyage in 1524, the main accounts of the European Reconnaissance came from the pens of Iberian adventurers. The Spanish output of first hand accounts far outstripped that of the Portuguese because the Portuguese sought to protect information about geographic discoveries for 'reasons of state'. Nevertheless, some of that information leaked out in the early 16th century.

A Latin oration delivered by the Portuguese crown's representative to the Vatican explaining the Portuguese overseas ventures was first published in Rome in 1505. This and subsequent texts, pamphlets and letters detailing early Portuguese successes began to reach a wider European audience. By 1507, the *Paesi novamente ritrovati*, was compiled by an Italian named Fracanzano da Montalboddo and first printed in Venice. Penrose writes that this "collection is largely composed of Americana, but it also includes Cadamosto's accounts of his voyages to Guinea, besides the voyage of de Sintra. Furthermore, it printed two letters of Girolamo Sernigi, an Italian merchant in Lisbon, describing Da Gama's voyage, and it included a very full narrative of Cabral's expedition, written by a participant and translated from Portuguese into Italian" (Penrose, 1963: 277). This book went through six Italian editions, six French, and two German editions.

If the Portuguese sought to hold their cards close to their chests, the Spanish were far more forthcoming with details about their discoveries. Columbus' *Journal* of his first voyage contained a highly detailed account of the sights, sounds and smells of the New World. This work was abridged in the form of the *Columbus Letter* which was rapidly disseminated across Europe. By 1493, printed editions of the letter (written in Latin) came out in Barcelona, Paris, Rome and Basel and a German translation of the letter appeared in Strasbourg in 1497. The success of this work would be followed by other

accounts of Columbus as well as Amerigo Vespucci and Hernan Cortès whose second and third *Letters to Emperor Charles I* went through at least fourteen editions in Spain, Italy, France and Germany. Furthermore, the journal of Antonio Pigafetta, an Italian gentleman who accompanied Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe, was published in 1523 and soon found its way into libraries all across Europe.

The most notable Spanish contributions to this early travel literature, however, came from the pen of the synthesizers who did for the written account what the Atlas makers did for the map. The first great synthesizer was Peter the Martyr who served on the Spanish council of the Indies (this meant that all the communications related to the New World passed through his hand) and was a close personal friend of Columbus. The result of this privileged position was the production of a series of works which appeared between 1504 and 1530 which Penrose describes as "a historical survey of America through the conquest of Mexico, which included the post-Columbian voyages, the story of the Panama colony, and the campaigns of Cortès" (Penrose, 1963: 292).

Subsequent important early synthesizers include Bartolomé de las Casas who combined his accounts of his experiences as a colonist and missionary in the New World with a chronicle and documentary history of American events between 1492 and 1520 as well as Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdes who after spending the early part of his career in the America, was appointed historiographer of the Indies by the Spanish crown. Though most of his writings were historical, the first work he produced, however, was not a history but a geographical summary of Spanish America which was replete with botanical and anthropological observations.

This proliferation of maps and travel literature was not the only factor in the expansion of European knowledge of the New World. As Hildegard Binder Johnson points out, “Information about America reached people not only through the printed manner available to us, but also through sensory experiences: the smell of products from overseas, the sight of Indians and strange animals paraded through the streets, the tales heard from travelers and sailors” (Johnson, 1976: 616). By the mid-16th century, Newfoundland cod was a staple of the European diet, American gold and silver lined the pockets of Europe’s nobles, merchants and soldiers, the acrid smell of tobacco smoke was already wafting over European cities. American plants, soil samples, minerals and animals were shipped across the Atlantic to be collected, categorized and studied in order to determine their potential economic value as well as to simply amaze and amuse. Similarly, it was a common custom for explorers to kidnap natives and bring them back to Europe. Some, like Cartier, did this in hopes of teaching them European languages so that they could provide information on the resources of the country and serve as interpreters in future colonial ventures. Others, like Columbus and the Corte Reals, intended to use them as slaves while others intended to use them as curios to be put on display.

This discussions of maps, books and “specimens” focusses the close relationship between printing and the development of scientific knowledge. According to Elizabeth Eisenstein, three of the most important effects of the huge increase in the production and dissemination of texts following the invention of the printing press was the stimulation of combinatorial intellectual activity, the standardization of texts and the development of new methods of classifying data. Her discussion of 16th century mapmaking reveals how these three effects coalesced to allow for the formation of a more “accurate” world picture:

To found knowledge of the whole world “on first-hand information” is, literally speaking, quite impossible. Access to a wide variety of secondhand information furnished by reports, ship’s logs, and charts over the course of many generations is required. Above all, a uniform grid is needed for assimilating all the assorted information that may be supplied. Before the outlines of a comprehensive and uniform world picture could emerge, incongruous images had to be duplicated in sufficient quantities to be brought into contact, compared and contrasted... The production of an atlas such as Ortelius’s **Theatrum**, with its alphabetical index, list of authors consulted, and orderly progression of maps which expanded in number over time, entailed an enterprise whose novelty needs underscoring. Collaborative ventures in large-scale data collection, which had been intermittent and limited to the facilities provided by one chart house or manuscript library, became continuous and ever expanding. (Eisenstein, 1993: 204).

Using Eisenstein’s ideas, we can see how American space slowly began to take form in the European imagination in the early years we have been discussing. Europeans initially apprehended the New World in terms of classical and medieval understandings of geography which were strongly informed by the vocabulary of myth. The contrasting claims of the maps and journals produced by European travellers to the New World were generally printed and sold throughout Europe (those that were not printed at the behest of royal edicts often circulated in manuscript form through the informal networks of Italian merchants and cartographers located in Atlantic ports). Adding further credence to these more recent written traces were the American products, flora, fauna and, yes, people who circulated from town to town as commodities and/or spectacles. The increased circulation of both pre-Columbian and post-Columbian geographical and scientific texts through the aegis of the printing press allowed, for example, a cartographer in land-locked Strasbourg, to assemble all the local knowledges of both contemporary and classical sources in one place. By organizing that data within a system of Ptolemaic gridlines, our cartographer

was able to compare, contrast and combine those findings in order to elaborate a more global picture of the earth's surface.

This systematic process of information gathering and collation was a necessary condition for the kind of remote control which allowed the French to extend their empire across North America. It is here that the features of the print revolution described by Eisenstein can be seen to reinforce colonial power. If, as writers like Michel Foucault and Anthony Giddens argue, administrative power is highly dependent on an actor's ability to gather files on a subject in a centralized place, collate them with other files and represent them in a manner which permits new combinations and comparisons, then it becomes clear that the print revolution combined with higher levels of literacy to produce an administrative revolution.

As Eisenstein argues, printing allowed a huge increase in the durability and mobility of information. Furthermore, the print revolution also increased the use of images, standardized vernaculars, means of rationalizing, codifying and cataloguing data, all of which greatly increased textual transparency. These changes allowed the keepers of the files to continuously update, correct and reorganize their pool of information in hopes of developing increasingly fine grained accounts of the reality they were monitoring. Bruno Latour makes this link between file gathering and power explicit when he argues that:

A man is never much more powerful than any other—even from a throne; but a man whose eye dominates records through which some sort of connections are established with millions of others may be said to dominate it. This domination, however, is not a given but a slow construction and can be corroded, interrupted, or destroyed if the records, files and figures are immobilized, made more mutable, less readable, less combinable, or unclear when displayed. In other words, the scale of an actor is not an

absolute term but a relative one that varies with the ability to produce, capture, sum up, and interpret information about other places and times... **The “great man” is a little man looking at a good map.** (Latour, 1990: 56)

These maps, ethnographies, traveller's reports, natural histories were often published in order to feed the burgeoning market for Americana as well as to increase the fame and fortune of the explorers. When they were accumulated in what Latour calls “centres of calculation” such as the French royal library, however, they became powerful tools for overseas conquest. First of all, they allowed the various would-be colonial powers to concentrate their energies on exploiting areas thought to provide easy access to a variety of resources. Though the most desired of these resources were the gold and silver necessary to pay the new standing armies which were popping up all over Europe, medicinal plants, furs, spices and jewels (the usual commodities associated with pre-steam engine long distance trade) were also of interest. Furthermore, finding and taking control of a western passage to Asia from which greatly anticipated tariff revenues could be drawn was also a source of competition between the various powers.

These texts were also used by various states to convince potential settlers, missionaries and investors to invest their time, money, resources and, in the case of settlers and missionaries, lives in the goal of exploiting these newly discovered lands. For the first hundred and forty or so years of the French interest in the New World, most of the actual exploration, colonization, defense and administration of the colony was left to private companies given monopolies over colonial exports. Though the settlers were usually citizens of the colonizing state, investment was often drawn from all corners of Europe. The exploratory voyage of Verrazzano under the auspices of the French crown was

financed by a syndicate of Florentine merchants trading in Lyons and while many of the Spanish ventures were financed by the Fuggers, the German merchant princes.

Furthermore, these “immutable mobiles” could be deployed by states to convince other heads of states of their claim to sovereignty over a given area. For example, Verrazzano’s exploration and mapping of the North American eastern seaboard put a powerful weapon in the hands of Francis I in his dispute with Spain over who owned North America. In 1493, a papal bull had granted Spain sovereignty over all the lands west of the Azores but this was hotly disputed by all the northern European states. Francis I’s possession of a detailed map of an area previously ignored by the Spaniards which was dotted with French names strengthened his claim over the territory. The strength of his position increased further as Verrazzano’s map and written account of his voyage was copied, disseminated along the communication networks of the mapmaking fraternity and quickly incorporated into world maps and collections of travel literature. Suddenly, in the Maggiolo map of 1527, what had once been an empty space in previous world atlases was given form and meaning as “Francesca” and adorned with a flag showing the *fleur-de-lis*.

Verrazzano and France

Though the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and the gulf of St. Lawrence had been frequented by Breton, Norman and Basque fishing and whaling fleets since the early 16th century, the French state did not get actively involved in the exploration of the western Atlantic until 1523. For most of this early years of what Parry calls the European Reconnaissance, French foreign policy was almost entirely focused on the struggle with

Spain for hegemony over Italy and the Mediterranean. With the accession of Francis I to the French throne in 1515, this focus began to shift to the north and the west.

The reign of Francis I was characterized by a series of wars and diplomatic imbroglios fought between Francis and his main rival, Charles V of Spain, for control over Catholic Europe. When he came to the throne, Francis rightly perceived that the resources provided by Spain's colonial possessions were one of the main sources of its power. He reasoned that if he could somehow cut off that source of power or find an even stronger power source, then the scales of European power might tip in his favour.

To that end, Francis I endeavoured to strengthen the French maritime infrastructure. He sponsored the construction of ocean going ships and the creation of new ports on the Atlantic littoral such as Havre-de-Grâce which were capable of accommodating ships of large tonnage. He hired the best pilots and hydrographers in Europe to train French sailors and the best cartographers to draw his maps. Under his patronage, the royal library became a centre for the accumulation of all the latest New World information. Bonnichon writes that "il est un des souverains français dont le mécénat est le plus efficace pour collecter les documents cosmographiques, géographiques, cartographiques" (Bonnichon, 1994: 43).

The final impetus for the French state's irruption into North America, however, was provided by a book. In the early months of 1523, Pigafetta, the Italian who accompanied Magellan, visited the Queen Mother of France, Louise of Savoy, and told her the story of his travels. He also left behind a copy of his journal of the voyage which Louise had translated into French. Pigafetta's tale must have had a stimulating effect in French governmental and mercantile circles because on March 23, 1523, a contract was

drawn up between a syndicate of French and Italian bankers and silk merchants residing in Lyons to pool their resources to fund an exploratory voyage led by Giovanni da Verrazzano for the discovery of a western passage to Asia.

In 1523, most of the eastern seaboard of North America was as yet unexplored. Spanish explorers had charted most of the Gulf of Mexico but their reconnaissance of the eastern seaboard had not progressed much farther north than Florida. Conversely, by 1523, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and the eastern and southern coasts of Newfoundland were fairly well known to the fishing fleets of the major maritime powers but little was known of the areas to the south. As a result, the vast expanse of coastline in between Nova Scotia and South Carolina remained *terra incognita* to European eyes and it was in this area that the French hoped to find a western passage to Asia.

Though the contract signed to undertake this venture seems to suggest that it was an entirely private affair (neither king nor state is ever mentioned), other evidence points to heavy state involvement. First of all, as Marcel Trudel points out, there was nothing unusual about the cash-poor state “contracting out” its activities to private interests in this period. Secondly, in his report to Francis, Verrazzano writes, for example, that “I have not written to tell Your Majesty of what happened to the four ships which you sent over the Ocean to explore new lands, as I thought that you had already been informed of everything” (in Quinn, 1979: 281). Finally, as Trudel points out “The map prepared in 1529 by the navigator’s brother bears the inscription: “perordine et Comandamto del Christianissime Re di Francescia” (“by order and command of His Most Christian Majesty of France”))” (Trudel, 1973:3). As his contribution to the expedition, the king provided

Verrazzano with four well armed, manned and supplied ships including the *Dauphine*, a ship built to celebrate the birth of Francis' heir.

At first glance, it seems odd that this expedition was organized in landlocked Lyons. This strangeness disappears, however, once we situate Lyons vis-à-vis the commercial communication networks of the 16th century. As we saw in the case of chartmakers, Italian capital was highly mobile in the early modern period. The political turbulence which rocked Italy in this period and the shift in commercial focus from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic induced many Italian merchants and bankers to set up shop in the ports and along the main trade routes of the Atlantic nations. However, like the chartmakers, they maintained their connections with Italian commercial networks while extending them across Europe by linking them with the networks which existed in their new base of operations. Operating out of Lyons, the planners of this expedition could access the pools of capital and information of Italy, Spain, Upper Germany and France because, as Bonnichon points out, “Les grandes places de commerce sont des centres de renseignement, qui va de pair avec la circulation des hommes, des capitaux des marchandises” (Bonnichon, 1994: 44).

Verrazzano was also linked by kinship ties to one of the main merchant families of Rouen, the Rousselay. Like Lyons, Rouen attracted merchants from all over Europe including Spanish and Portuguese merchants and it was also the home base of Jean Ango, a powerful Norman shipowner who had a great deal of experience equipping ships for transatlantic voyages. Finally, Rouen had the added bonus of being within easy reach of Paris and all the informational resources which were being actively accumulated in the

royal library. In other words, Verrazzano had access to all the information available to the European elite on the subject of North America.

Verrazzano was particularly well equipped to take advantage of all these sources of information. His eye was doubly disciplined to survey and assess new surroundings by his training as both a merchant and a grand navigator. After landing near Cape Fear, he cruised north along the eastern seaboard all the way to present day New Brunswick.

Recording his discoveries on a portolan style map, some sketches he made of the American countryside, a letter to Francis I and in a rutter which contained his observations of the longitudes and latitudes of various sites on the American coastline and the tidal activity in those areas, Verrazzano made plain his ability to assess the resource base and the character of the people in these new lands.

If a navigator's eye is trained to interpret his surroundings according to a list of salient criteria, so too is the eye of the colonizer. As he surveyed the lands of the American seaboard, his eye was constantly on the lookout for 1) signs of the Orient; 2) signs of mineral resources, especially gold; 3) new types of drug-producing flora; 4) large trees which could be used for masts and spars; 5) the hunting and agricultural potential of the land; 6) safe harbours, navigable rivers, plains and permeable forests (at one point, for example, he writes that "we entered the forests, which could be penetrated even by a large army") which would allow for easy surveillance and communication with France.

Similarly, in his fairly brief description of the Amerindians he encountered, Verrazzano provides commercial information on what commodities can be obtained from these people and what would be the best items to trade with them, military information about their armaments and logistical capabilities, information about their social structure,

agricultural activities and settlement patterns which would be useful to the administrator and the missionary seeking to convert them to Christianity and assimilate them into French society. In other words, it is a blueprint for conquest.

Verrazzano returned to Dieppe sometime in July and composed his letter to Francis I on July 8, 1524. For almost a decade, however, it remained a *lettre morte* in terms of French imperial ambitions because in the summer of 1524, Francis was once again embroiled in a war with Spain's Charles V over control over Italy. This war would eventually lead to Francis' disastrous defeat at Pavia on February 26, 1525 and his subsequent imprisonment in Madrid for a year. Without the support of his powerful patron, Verrazzano's plans to pursue further explorations fell through.

Within a month, however, his letter had been copied and was making its way around the mercantile communications networks linking France to Italy. The covering letter attached to one copied version sent from a Lyons silk merchant to his father in Florence mentions that Verrazzano was expected to bring to Lyons a native child which he had kidnapped in order to use him as a future interpreter along with "a sample of gold which they do not value in those parts, of drugs and other aromatic liquors for the purpose of conferring here with several merchants after he shall have been in the presence of the Most Serene Majesty" (quoted in Wroth, 1969: 158).

This new information was quickly disseminated along diplomatic circles as well. In **America on Paper**, Lynn Glaser suggests that the Spanish crown must have gotten wind of Verrazzano's discoveries because it dispatched Estevan Gomez to make much the same journey (except in reverse direction) on September 24, 1524. Similarly, Wroth has uncovered evidence to suggest that once Verrazzano realized in 1525 that French support

for a second voyage would not be forthcoming, he began to shop his services around to some of France's rivals. He first visited England where he made contact with Henry VIII and either he or his brother provided Henry with a map of his discoveries (Wroth suspects that Henry's possession of this map stimulated the English exploration of North America). Similarly, he seems to have been written a letter of introduction to the King of Portugal by a Portuguese spy operating in Rouen in that same year. Nothing, however, came of these negotiations and Verrazzano would disappear from historical record in 1527.

Verrazzano's exploits would not be published in print form until 1556 when they would be included in the third volume of Gian Battista Ramusio's *Delle Navigazioni e Viaggi*, a compilation of almost all the extant travel literature produced across Europe over the previous fifty or sixty years. In cartographic circles, however, they had an almost immediate impact. Within a year, Girolamo Verrazzano had produced at least the one map of the eastern North American coastline which was given to Henry VIII and by 1527, the Genoese chartmaker Maggiolo was producing maps based on Verrazzano's discoveries. Though subsequent voyages would disprove the theory that Pamlico Sound was a sea link to Asia, this belief was being reproduced in maps up until 1585. Despite this error in judgement, Verrazzano's most enduring contribution to the articulation of American space remains his role in giving shape to the previously empty space separating Florida from Nova Scotia.

Chapter 3: Language and the Rituals of Possession

Due to its continued embroilment in the Valois-Hapsburg struggle over control of Europe, The French state stayed out of the exploration business for nearly ten years. In 1532, Francis began to show a renewed interest in western exploration and by 1533, he had successfully contested the papal bull which divided the world into Spanish and Portuguese spheres of influence. In 1534, Francis commissioned a Malouin pilot, Jacques Cartier, to search for a western passage in the waters west of Newfoundland.

On his first voyage, Cartier sailed out of St. Malo on April 20, 1534 and, following the routes of the fishing fleets, reached Newfoundland's Cape Bona Vista on May 10. Sailing northwards, he circumnavigated the island and once he reached the strait of Belle-Isle, he set a southwesterly course along the coast of what is now Labrador (which he described as 'the land God gave to Cain'). Just prior to reaching Cape Whittle where the Labrador coast swings almost directly westward, he beat back eastward to Newfoundland's western coast. This was his first near miss at finding the mouth of the St. Lawrence. Sailing southward, he reached the Cabot Strait and turned west again. In crossing the strait and entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence, he passed by the Îles de la Madeleine, circumnavigated the northern coast of Prince Edward Island and touched land on the American continent just south of the Miramichi Bay.

He sailed northwards up the coast of New Brunswick, closely reconnoitering the Miramichi Bay, la Baie de Chaleur and la Baie de Gaspé in hopes of finding a passage to Asia. On July 25, he left the Baie de Gaspé and could have easily discovered the St. Lawrence by sailing westward but a mirage caused him to believe that "the coast ran back forming a bay, in the shape of a semicircle, of which we could see the whole coastline

from our ships” (Cartier, 1993:27). This was his second near miss. Given this erroneous belief, he sailed northward and took Anticosti island to be a peninsula. As he began to circumnavigate the island, a fierce storm whipped up and he and the other captains decided that the season was getting late and that they should return to France, missing the opening to the St. Lawrence for a third time.

Though I have retold the story of Cartier’s first voyage in its most bare bones form, Cartier himself recounted this voyage in a richly detailed narrative. Ramsay Cook argues that the details in this narrative “are commented upon and organized into a story that was designed to make North America, and Cartier’s actions there, understandable and even commendable to sixteenth-century French readers. That meant filtering the story through the cultural lenses that he and his countrymen wore.” (Cook, 1993: xv). Like Verrazzano, Cartier’s eye was trained upon those aspects of the natural landscape and the people he encountered which could be fit into the European political economy. Also like Verrazzano who seemingly named every island, river, inlet and region which he discovered after an actual or potential patron, Cartier made the unknown American space comprehensible to his readers by drawing it into the circle of the familiar by giving it form on the map and meaning with French names. In that manner, they could grasp this newly charted space. For example, on one day, June 12, 1534, Cartier and his men left in their wake a Labrador coastline absolutely littered with French names. A quick glance at Cartier’s journal entry for that day shows the extent of his mania for naming:

we continued our way through these islands, and at the end of the thickest portion of them, we found a good harbour, which was named St. Anthony’s Harbour. And further on...we came to a small, very deep passage with the land running southwest and with very high shores. It is a

good harbour; and a cross was set up there, and it was named St. Servan's Harbour. (Cartier, 1993: 9)

On that same day, Cartier also gave names to the St. James River, port Jacques Cartier and named the region the Terre de Cain.

Similarly, Cartier drew the flora and fauna of the new land into the circle of the familiar by classifying them according to their similarities to cognate European species. He described the now-extinct auk as being "as large as geese, being black and white with a beak like a crow's" (Cartier, 1993: 4). Walruses were described as "great beasts, like large oxen, which have two tusks in their jaw like elephant's tusks and swim about in the water" (Cartier, 1993: 14). Similarly, Brion Island (one of the Madeleine Islands) was found to be "covered with fine trees and meadows, fields of wild oats, and of pease in flower, as thick and as fine as ever I saw in Brittany, which might have been sown by husbandmen. There are numerous gooseberry bushes, strawberry vines, Provins rose, as well as parsley and other useful, strong-smelling herbs" (Cartier, 1993: 14). For many of the entities which he encountered, however, no French equivalent could be found and these intransigent beings would end up being classified as "unknown" or "other". Taking a page from previous explorers, Cartier came up with a devilishly clever solution to this problem of giving names to this new world.

On this, his first expedition, Cartier encountered members of three distinct native nations. On his first cruise along the Labrador, he encountered a group of Amerindians engaged in seal hunting whom he rather summarily dismissed as "wild and savage folk" (Cartier, 1993: 10). Though his crew sighted a single native on Prince Edward who fled at their approach, the next encounter occurred in Chaleur Bay. Using his longboats,

Cartier and his men had been scouting the north shore of the bay in hopes that it would turned to be a strait leading to the west when they saw forty or fifty canoes approaching them from the other side of the bay. He writes that as these people landed, they “set up a great clamour and made frequent signs to us to come on shore, holding up to us some skins on sticks” (Cartier, 1993: 20). Alarmed that his small craft would be overwhelmed by their superior numbers and not trusting in their gestures of friendship, he retreated to where his ships were anchored, using cannon and gunfire to scare them off.

These natives were more than likely Micmac and their behaviour makes it quite clear that they were no strangers to the fur trade. Breton and Norman fishing fleets and French and Spanish Basque whaling fleets had been straying into the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence for many years prior to “official” discovery by Cartier. James Axtell points out that these fishing crews “were notorious for practically selling their ships from under their captains, filling their sea chests with native furs exchanged for ‘biscuits, lead, quite new lines, sails, and many other things at the expense of the owners’” (Axtell, 1988: 154). Axtell estimates that by the time Cartier had “discovered” the Micmac, they had been trafficking with the fishermen of the Gulf for at least thirty years.

Trade, in the societies of the eastern woodlands, was conceived primarily as a system of communication—gifts were exchanged in order to overcome social and spatial distances and establish kinship-like relations of trust. Writing of the Huron, Denys Delâge argues that within the confines of the communal village, “there were no commercial transactions, properly speaking. Goods acquired were spontaneously shared within lineages (or segments of clans)... Giving was far more than a social rule; giving and, consequently, exchanging constituted a basic rule of Huron social relations” (Delâge,

1993: 52-3). According to native beliefs, the gift was invested with the spirit of the donor which placed the receiver under his magical power. In order to restore the social equilibrium, the receiver had to reciprocate with another gift to the original donor which in turn placed the latter under the former's magical hold. In this manner, a mandatory circulation of wealth was ensured.

These beliefs also accounted for the courtesy and generosity with which new potential trading allies were treated. For these tribes, external commerce was intrinsically linked to the formation of political alliances and they would not trade until the appropriate ceremonies which cemented such alliances were performed. Axtell argues that though the documentary evidence for this claim is scanty, it is clear from the way that they approached Cartier's boat and their subsequent actions that their behaviour was in accordance with a pre-arranged trading protocol. To begin with, each partner sought to allay the other's fear and mistrust. A representative of one of the groups would advance to where the others were stationed and offer gifts and then withdraw. Elaborate ceremonies would then be enacted from a distance in hopes that they communicated one prospective partner's joy at entering with the other into a peaceful exchange relationship. As the two groups drew together, festivities and music were often used to break the ice and French traders quickly adapted to native customs by being especially deferent and generous in their gift giving to the native headmen, women and children.

It was usually the Europeans who had to placate native fears (especially in light of the fact that, as Axtell puts it, "the first extractive industry in colonial North America was kidnapping" (Axtell, 1988: 152)), but as we see from Cartier's first encounter, both sides were often apprehensive about entering into these relationships when they felt themselves

to be in a position of weakness. The next day, a smaller contingent of nine canoes returned to the cove where his ships were anchored (presumably they deduced that their superior numbers had panicked Cartier on the previous day) and Cartier dispatched two longboats to parley with them. Historians are not quite sure whether Cartier had had previous experience dealing with Amerindians, but it becomes quite clear from his journal's description of this event that he had some familiarity with the items of trade most coveted by the natives and that if he did not have prior knowledge of trading protocols, he was quick to intuit them. Cartier reports that when the natives first saw his boats approaching, they fled. At the same time, he writes that they were

making signs to us that they had come to barter with us; and held up some skins of small value; with which they clothe themselves. We likewise made signs to them that we wished them 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 skins, and the two parties traded together. They showed marvelously great pleasure in possessing and obtaining these iron wares and other commodities, dancing and going through many ceremonies. (Cartier, 1993: 21).

After the Micmac traded all their furs including those off of their backs, they signalled that they would return to trade on the next day. Though Verrazzano and Cartier interpreted this generosity as evidence of the guileless nature of the Amerindian, their actions make much more sense when we place them in the context of their system of beliefs. If, as I have suggested, external commerce was a means of cementing political alliances, this over-generosity can be seen as a way of securing the good intentions of one's prospective partner. Denys Delâge reveals the logic of this system when he writes that trading

took place in an atmosphere of generosity. *A* made a show of prodigality, therefore placing *B* in his debt. *B* returned the gift a hundred-fold, thus putting *A* in the position of debtor. *A* in turn was again obliged to show great generosity to *B*, and so on. To give more was to prove one's friendship and one's willingness to maintain good relations. (Delâge, 1993: 57).

In other words, by giving Cartier the shirts right off their backs, the Micmac believed that they were extending their spiritual control over him.

James Axtell argues that the eastern Amerindians were quick to embrace the European presence on their soil because they initially looked upon the hairy white strangers from the floating islands as *manitous*, spiritually powerful men (this belief would not last long). Some tribes believed that the Europeans had the ability to cause or cure disease (we know in retrospect that they were at the very least tragically proficient at causing disease) but it was their technological superiority which most impressed the Amerindians. European technology allowed its possessors to predict the future, preserve the past, level the forests, subdue the earth, harness the winds and defeat their enemies in a manner which only the most powerful shaman could rival.

In the historical period immediately before and enduring into the period after European contact, the eastern woodlands were rocked by feuds and warfare between and among Algonquian and Iroquoian tribes over control of its major trade routes and resource areas. Like all the tribes who so 'joyously' welcomed the Europeans, the Micmac knew that possession of even a handful of iron weapons could give their tribe a huge military advantage over its rivals in the struggle for control over their area of the eastern woodlands while possession of other European commodities could be traded to cement otherwise shaky alliances. Furthermore, they must have reasoned that political and

economic alliance with these strangers would almost certainly secure their hegemony over important territories and other peoples. Viewed in the light of the intertribal politics of the eastern woodlands and Amerindian beliefs about commerce and politics, the apparent inequality of the early French-native exchange does not seem so egregious. For the sake of a few old greasy beaver robes, the natives must have believed that they were securing an alliance with the French and, with that, military supremacy over their rivals.

On the third day, Cartier reports that more than 300 natives came to trade and, once again, “nothing was left to them but their naked bodies...”. He observed that his interpretation of the protocols of native exchange and diplomacy was so successful that they greeted his presence as they would a king’s, raising their arms to heaven in thanks and feeling completely at ease with the hairy white strangers from the floating island. As Patricia Seed points out, Cartier’s interpretation of the joyousness of the native reaction to the arrival of his fleet is strongly informed by the imagery taken from the ceremonial city entries of French kings. Seed writes that these ceremonies combined special costumes, speeches by local officials celebrating the king’s magnificence and rituals which “visually demonstrated the legitimacy, stability and order of French political power” (Seed, 1995: 55). Equally significant were the sounds and gestures of the public because the joyous popular response to the king’s arrival was interpreted as consent to the monarch’s rule. This is why it was important for Cartier to stress the joyousness of his reception in the Gaspé. In describing the singing, gestures and shouts of the natives as joyous, Cartier was implicitly claiming that they were consenting to the French presence in their territory.

Throughout his narrative, Cartier seems to assume that the gestures of the Amerindians were completely transparent and that they could only be interpreted as

communicating the Amerindian desire to be ruled by the French. As a consequence, Cartier came away from this encounter with such a strong sense of self-satisfaction about his communicative abilities that he concluded that “these people would be easy to convert to our holy faith” (Cartier, 1993: 25). Indeed, as Axtell points out, when Cartier’s *Révit* of his voyages were published in 1545, it was the textbook for future traders, missionaries and diplomats on how to negotiate with and manipulate the native peoples.

Cartier’s next encounter with a group of Stadaconan Iroquois encountered in the Bay of Gaspé revealed that Cartier’s early evaluation of his ability to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to communication with the inhabitants of the land was a little overly sanguine. On the first day of this encounter, after a similar ceremony to the one described above, the French had once again obtained all the furs in their trading partners’ possession in exchange for a few trinkets. The next day, however, this amicable nature of this interaction was shattered when Cartier and his crewmen staged an elaborate ritual for the benefit of the Stadaconans.

Cartier writes that he and his crewmen built a cross thirty four feet tall to which they fixed a shield embossed with the *fleurs-de-lys* and a wooden board with the message ‘LONG LIVE THE KING OF FRANCE’ engraved on it in large Gothic characters. In French colonial history, the planting of a cross was one of the main rituals by which Frenchmen claimed the region for the crown. As Patricia Seed points out, they were always very careful to secure by means of a physical gesture that the natives consented to this possession. In his initial report of the cross raising, Cartier seems to have believed that he had secured such a consent. He recounts that once they raised this cross in front of their native partners at the entrance to the Bay of Gaspé, he and his crew

all knelt down with our hands joined, worshipping it before them; and made signs to them, looking up and pointing towards heaven, that by means of this we had redemption, at which they showed many marks of admiration, at the same time turning and looking at the cross. (Cartier, 1993: 26).

Though Cartier interpreted these marks of admiration as the consensus securing effects of the revelation of divine truth, his own account seems to suggest that the wonderment evinced by these natives had more to do with their surprise at his *chutzpah*. Very soon after the cross planting ceremony ended, he was visited by an angry headman who began to 'harangue' him. Cartier interpreted his gestures as a protest that the land belonged to him and that Cartier had no right to plant a cross without his permission. In order to secure the headman's consent, Cartier lured him on board his ship and plied him with food and drink. He tried to ease the latter's fears about the French infringement upon his sovereignty by gesturing that "the cross had been set up to serve as a landmark and a guidepost on coming into the harbour" (Cartier, 1993: 27). He then showered the headman and his retinue with gifts and promised him that they would return the next year with more gifts. Cartier insisted, however, on keeping the headman's two sons with him (in a passage which anticipates the future colonial attempts at francisizing the natives, Cartier reports that "we dressed up his two sons in shirts and ribbons and in red caps, and put a little brass chain around the neck of each" (Cartier, 1993: 27)). Perhaps it was the possibility of securing a new trading partner, the recognition that his two sons were being held hostage or even the fact that the headman's faculties were muddled by the alcohol which he was more than likely served but, in the end, Cartier believed that he had secured the native headman's consent to leave the cross standing.

More importantly, Cartier had secured for himself two young men who would go on to play vital roles in his future explorations. He seems to have firmly believed that in detaining them, he had kidnapped the magic words which would open this new world to his grasping hands. These young men were brought back to France where they were taught to speak elementary French. Cartier hoped that he could turn these young men, Taignoagny and Domagaya, into communication interfaces linking Europe to America and sources of information about the geography of the new land, its resources and peoples.

Though they did indeed apparently help Cartier to compile a list of individual Iroquois terms and their French translations which Cartier appended this list to the published journal of his first voyage (a greatly expanded list which included some phrases accompanied the récit of his second voyage) and they also revealed to him the existence of the St. Lawrence river, they were not entirely straightforward in their dealings with Cartier. In fact, Taignoagny and Domagaya pulled off one of the most successful disinformation campaigns which I have ever come across.

In order to secure their safe passage home, Taignoagny and Domagaya began spinning a tale about a kingdom which lived up to even the wildest conquistadorial dreams. Presumably, their experience living among the French and the frequent interrogations which they must have endured had made them all too familiar with the European obsession with gold, jewels, spices, a western passage to Asia and the tractability of native peoples to the plow of the missionary and the arm of the state. They began telling Cartier and anyone else who would listen about the Kingdom of the Saguenay. They recounted that this land lay only a moon's journey away from their homelands. Cartier writes that

they gave us to understand that in that country the people go clothed and dressed in woolens like ourselves; that there are many towns and peoples composed of honest folk who possess great stores of gold and copper...beyond the [the kingdom of the] Saguenay, this tributary (the Ottawa) flows through two or three large, very broad lakes, until one reaches a fresh-water sea, of which there is no mention of anyone having seen the bounds. (Cartier, 1993: 75-6)

By 1539, this story of the kingdom of the Saguenay had become even more fanciful and was circulating all around Europe through diplomatic and mercantile circles. A letter written in that year to John III of Portugal by a Portuguese spy reports that Francis I had confided to him that “there is a large city called Sagana, where there are many mines of gold and silver in abundance, and men who dress and wear shoes like we do; and that there is abundance of cloves, nutmeg and pepper...and that there are men who fly, having wings on their arms like bats” (quoted in Cartier, 1993: 131).

Taignoagny and Domagaya’s story must have been very convincing because in the following spring, on May 16, 1535, they and Cartier set sail again for Canada with two ships supplied by the king. Sailing north around Newfoundland, he skirted the Labrador coast until he arrived at the western tip of Anticosti Island on August 13, 1635. On his first voyage, Cartier had believed this island to be a peninsula but this time he was told “by the two savages whom we had captured on our first voyage, that this cape formed part of the land on the south which was an island; and that to the south of it lay the route from Honguedo, where we had seized them on our first voyage, to Canada; and that two days’ journey from this cape and island began the kingdom of the Saguenay” (Cartier, 1993: 43). After spending a month zigzagging across the mouth of the St. Lawrence to ensure that no strait would go unobserved and reconnoitering the Saguenay River, Cartier and his fleet arrived in Canada, the homeland of his interpreters, on September 7, 1635.

Dropping anchor in the north channel of the river, Cartier and his crew landed on the Ile d'Orléans with his native interpreters in tow. The narrator (the second *récit* is written in the third person) reports that the locals were initially apprehensive about the French presence but once they recognized Taïnoagny and Domagaya, "they began to welcome them, dancing and going through many ceremonies" (Cartier, 1993: 49). The next morning, the headman of the tribe, named Donnacona, arrived and he and Cartier exchanged some diplomatic pleasantries which Cartier interpreted as an invitation to set up a base camp near the native settlement of Stadacona. After spending several days searching for a proper harbour, on September 14, he settled on the mouth of the present day St. Charles river which he had named the Ste Croix.

It was around this time that Cartier began to notice that noise was being introduced into what he had so smugly believed to be a transparent communications network of gestures and native interpreters linking him to the inhabitants of the country. On September 14, while he was making his way towards his Ste Croix anchorage, Cartier noted with alarm though twenty five canoes had come to meet his fleet, Taïnoagny and Domagaya "who were altogether changed in their attitude and goodwill...refused to come on board our ships, although many times begged to do so" (Cartier, 1993: 52). The next day, as the Stadaconans gathered around to watch Cartier and his crew set out buoys and landmarks in and around their new harbour, it was noticed that Taïnoagny, Domagaya, Donnacona and other headmen were disdainfully standing apart from the crowd on a point of land on the bank of the S. Lawrence. By this point, Cartier had come to expect that his mere presence would cause all the locals to drop whatever they were doing in order to

gaze upon his majesty. The sudden aloofness evinced by the headmen of the village was therefore profoundly unsettling to Cartier.

In a reversal of roles, he gathered several members of his crew and walked over to where Donnacona and his advisers were standing. Upon his arrival, he was informed by Taignoagny that Donnacona objected to the fact that the French were armed to the teeth with “bâtons de guerre” while his people had none. In other words, he was expressing his disappointment that Cartier had failed to follow the redistributive logic of native gift giving by sharing his firearms in order to restore the military equilibrium between their tribes. Cartier instead tried to placate him by asking the interpreters to tell the chief that the carrying of weapons was merely a French custom.

Apparently this explanation did not satisfy Donnacona because in the next sentence of his account of this encounter, Cartier began to cast around for explanations as to why his attempts to influence Donnacona into accepting the presence of a fairly large potential occupying force equipped with technologically superior weaponry was in danger of failing. Deploying a strategy which would experience geometric gains in popularity as modernity progressed, Cartier blamed the recalcitrance of his instruments of communication for Donnacona’s inability to see the light: “But for all this the Captain and Donnacona were most friendly towards each other. Then we understood that what Taignoagny had been saying came solely from himself and his companion” (Cartier, 1993: 53).

Over the next few days, the tension would increase as Cartier made plain his desire to visit the settlement of Hochelaga (on Montreal island). This proposed voyage was fervently opposed by Donnacona who presumably wanted to secure a monopoly over French military aid and trading goods in order to cast off the yoke of Hochelaga to whom,

we are told, “the Canadians (*the Stadaconans*) and some eight or nine other peoples along this river are subjects” (Cartier, 1993: 63). Cartier was infuriated when Taïnoagny refused to accompany him and when he was informed of Donnacona’s opposition to this voyage, he began to abandon his strategy of consensual negotiation with the Stadaconans. He initially responded to Donnacona’s objections by asserting that “he had orders from the king his master to push on as far as possible” (Cartier, 1993: 53). Donnacona then tried to persuade not to make the trip by offering Cartier three small children including his own niece as hostages to cement their alliance. Cartier initially refused his offer because it meant the abrogation of his future exploration of the river but after Cartier’s ships fired off their cannons in order to satisfy Donnacona’s alleged curiosity, Donnacona relented and offered Cartier the children free of conditions. The next day, however, Donnacona and the two interpreters dressed up as “devils” and performed a ceremony which incorporated Christian and Amerindian elements which aimed at discouraging Cartier’s upriver journey.

This ceremony met with no success and, after a two week voyage up the St. Lawrence during which Cartier listed and named everything and anything which caught his eye, he reached Hochelaga, a walled Iroquois settlement of more than a thousand souls, on October 2. On the first day of Cartier’s visit, the usual ceremonies and ritual exchanges were performed on the outskirts of the town and on the second day, he resolved to visit the town.

As I have argued above, the more time that Cartier spent among the Iroquois, the more his attitude towards them changed from guileless children to, in his words, “traitors and rogues”. This change in attitude was accompanied by a corresponding change in behaviour as Cartier became increasingly willing to abjure the tools of the diplomat-

merchant-network builder for those of the soldier-conqueror. As he prepared for his visit to Hochelaga, we are told that “the captain, having put on his armour, had his men marshalled for the purpose of paying a visit to the village and the home of these people” (Cartier, 1993: 60). Just outside the town, he and his force of “twenty-five well-armed and marshalled sailors” encountered a Hochelagan headman whom Cartier gave a cross and a crucifix “which he made him kiss and then hung it about his neck” (Cartier, 1993: 61). Once inside the compound, Cartier catalogued its defenses, its provisions, the commodities contained therein and the activities of its inhabitants with the eye of a besieging general.

It was not long, however, until the French came to realize that the town was not an outport of the Kingdom of the Saguenay and so they sought to keep their visit as short as possible. They stopped only to observe what is described as a ‘miracle play’ performed by the men of the tribe and then watch as Cartier attempted to cure the sick, blind and paralyzed villagers by laying hands upon them (the narrator interjects “that one would have thought Christ had come down to earth to heal them” (Cartier, 1993: 64)) and introduce them to knowledge of the true God by reading aloud the Gospel of St. John (according to the narrator, the villagers were suitably awed by Cartier’s performance).

Once these rites were performed, Cartier and his men issued forth from the town and began to climb the hill (which they named ‘Mount Royal’) which lay behind the village in order to get a god’s—or perhaps a cartographer’s—eye-view on the surrounding countryside. Once they reached its summit, they were able to see that they would not be able to continue to explore the St. Lawrence as it turned towards the southwest because their longboats would not be able to pass the rapids at Lachine. However, their native

guides signalled to them that once one successfully portaged those rapids, one could navigate along the river for more than three months. Their guides also showed them the location of the Ottawa river to the northwest and gestured to them that silver and copper came to Hochelaga via its course. However, like the Stadaconans, the Hochelagans sought to deter any French effort to penetrate beyond their settlements with tales of the *Agojuda*, a heavily armed and warlike nation which lived along the Ottawa.

Once this vital bit of reconnaissance was accomplished, Cartier and his men returned to their ships and headed back east, stopping only to investigate the St. Maurice and to plant a cross on an island near present-day Trois Rivières. Upon his return to Stadacona, they found that the sailors who had been left behind to guard the ships had built a fort which was “in a good state to defend us against the whole countryside” (Cartier, 1993: 67). The next day, Donnacona invited Cartier to a parley during which he and the interpreters showed him five scalps taken from their enemies, the Toudamans.

Though it is unclear whether Donnacona was showing Cartier these scalps in order to enlist Cartier’s help in future ventures against the Toudamans or as a warning to Cartier that any continued infringement on Stadaconan sovereignty would result in him suffering a similar treatment, Cartier, already suspicious, took it to mean the latter. At this point, the tone of the journal slips into paranoia as the narrator reports that a “certain coldness” had been introduced into French-Stadaconan relations by the malicious intrigues of the interpreters who were allegedly (it is not clear how the narrator came to interpret the Stadaconan language to deduce these meanings) subverting the French efforts at impressing those who came to trade by “giving them to understand that what we bartered to them was of no value, and that for what they had brought us, they could as easily get

hatchets as knives” (Cartier, 1993: 70). In response to this perceived coldness, Cartier ordered the beefing up of the fort’s defenses and an increased vigilance on the part of the night watch “lest they should attempt some treasonable design” (Cartier, 1993: 71).

By the time all these defenses were in place, it was November and the St. Lawrence had begun to ice up. Cartier and his men were forced to spend a hard winter in their fort. Until Domagaya showed them how to make a vitamin C rich tea from the *Ammedda* tree, twenty five of his sixty five crewmen perished of scurvy. When spring rolled around, Cartier and his crew planted yet another cross in their fort and made plans to set off for France. He could not resist, however, kidnapping Donnacona, Taignoagny, Domagaya and several other prominent members of the ruling clan ostensibly so that they could tell Francis I about the glories of the Saguenay but quite possibly in hopes that they would be replaced by rulers who would look more favourably upon an increased French presence in the Laurentian valley.

Cartier’s second *Récit* of this adventure is an odd text. As opposed to the *Récit* of the first journal, it is told in the third person. What makes it really odd, however, is the structure of its ‘chapters’. Most of the book is a fairly straightforward narrative of a sequence of events arranged in a linear manner. However, at certain points, this linear structure is interrupted without any warning by excursions which deal with topics which belong to what I call the colonial sciences. For example, the episode concerning the showing of the scalps is immediately followed by a chapter titled “*Of the Manner of Life of the People of the Region; and Some of Their Customs, Beliefs and Habits*” which catalogues 1) the religious beliefs of the Stadaconans; 2) their family structure; 3) their agricultural and hunting activities; 4) their apparel (or lack thereof); and 5) their diet.

Similarly, the episode discussing Cartier's decision to shore up his defenses is immediately followed, again without any sort of transition, by chapters titled "*Of the Size and Depth of this River in General; and of the Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Trees and Other Things We Saw along It; and of the Situation of the Villages*" (this chapter is fairly self-explanatory) and "*A Chapter of Some Information Which the Native People Gave Us after Our Return from Hochelaga*". The latter chapter discusses valuable hydrographic information (for example, the northern route from the Pays d'en Haut to Tadoussac which makes no use of the St. Lawrence is revealed) about the St. Lawrence river system.

Despite these structural vagaries, these chapters, written in a simple style and a sharp eye for detail, combined with the narrative and the appended lexicon of Iroquois terms to provide a fairly vivid picture of the natural and social ecology which, as Axtell argues, would act as a textbook for future colonizers. Once published, however, Cartier's *Récits* did not meet with much commercial success. It was not published in France until 1545 and went through only one edition. First of all, the mid-16th century French reading public was much more interested in the Turks with whom Francis had recently entered into alliance than in the Amerindians. Secondly, as Charles-André Julien points out, those qualities which make the journals valuable tools for future colonizers make for dull leisure reading. Julien writes that

L'auteur ne cherche pas à faire oeuvre d'artiste. Il varie peu les formules, narre les situations les plus tragiques sans émotion et tient fidèlement son journal de bord, plus soucieux de précisions maritimes ou de possibilités minières que de particularités ethniques. C'est la simplicité du style et l'exactitude des détails qui font les mérites du livre. Elles ne suffisent pas, en son temps, à lui assurer un réel succès. (Julien, 1981: 26)

Though the French public was not very interested in Cartier's findings, they found a market in other European countries. In 1544, a year before the journals were published, a map attributed to Sebastian Cabot was published in Antwerp on which the St. Lawrence appears along with inscriptions showing the location of Stadacona. Justin Winsor asserts that the fact that only one edition of the journal was produced combined with the fact that only one copy of this map has survived suggests that the French state sought to suppress the publication of this information. As we have seen, however, the mapmakers and merchants of this period could draw upon all sorts of informal communication networks to obtain information which was not publicly available. By 1546, Dieppois chartmakers, notably Pierre Desceliers, were producing portolans representing the St. Lawrence for both domestic use and export. In 1556, Cartier's account of his explorations would be published, along with Verrazzano's letter, in the third volume of Ramusio's *Delle Navigazioni e Viaggi*. In 1580, under the patronage of Richard Hakluyt, Ramusio's Italian translation of Cartier was retranslated into English by John Florio.

In spite of the French public's apathetic response, Cartier's findings from his first two voyages continued to be of great interest to Francis I. When Cartier returned to France in June, 1536 with the kidnapped Donnacona and his retinue, Francis was too preoccupied by the renewal of hostilities with Charles V to act upon Cartier's discoveries. The hostilities ended on June 18, 1538 with the signing of the Truce at Nice and by the end of that summer, American exploration was apparently once again on the mind of Francis. A document dated September 1538 is titled "List of Men and Effects for Canada" declares that "notwithstanding that wars had exhausted his finances and even involved His Majesty in enormous debts, nevertheless, finding himself in a state of peace,

he is not afraid to engage in a new expense, to establish the Christian Religion in a country of savages at the other end of the world from France” (in Cartier, 1993:126).

It would be two more years, however, until someone received a commission to undertake this projected colonization of Canada. Not surprisingly, the responsibility for achieving Francis’ proselytizing aims fell on Cartier’s shoulders. In the commission for this venture dated October 17, 1540, Francis grants Cartier the title of ‘captain general and master pilot’ of the venture, offers him the use of some ships and some of the king’s officers as well as fifty prisoners to be used as crewmen and colonists. In a statement of mission in which the links between information gathering, communication and colonization are made explicit, the document states that:

desiring to learn of and be informed about several countries that are said to be uninhabited, and others to be possessed by savage peoples living without knowledge of God and without the use of reason, We had some time ago sent at great expense and outlay of money for discovery to be made in the said countries by several good pilots and others of our subjects of good judgment, knowledge, and experience, who brought to Us from those good countries various Men whom we have kept for a long time in our kingdom, have instructed them in the love and fear of God and of His holy law and Christian doctrine in the intention of having them taken back to the said countries in the company of a number of our willing subjects, in order more easily to lead the other peoples of those countries to believe in our holy faith. (in Cartier 1993: 135)

In other words, Donnacona and his kidnapped retinue were to be the communicational Trojan Horses by which the agents of the French state could enter into the caves of unreason in which the ‘savage peoples’ discovered by Cartier lived in order to lead them out into the light of the True Knowledge.

As Marcel Trudel argues, Francis’ sudden burst of religious enthusiasm was an attempt to garner the Papacy’s sanction for his colonial ventures. Minimally, he must have

hoped that the proselytizing discourse would have led to the Pope to turn a blind eye to his actions and work towards placating Portuguese and Spanish fears that the French were impinging on lands which they believed to be in their spheres of influence. A letter from Charles V to the Cardinal of Toledo dated November 11-13 1540 reveals the depth of the Spanish fury at Francis' presumptuousness. In that letter, Charles demands that the Cardinal's agents keep tabs on whether Cartier was preparing another fleet so that he and the King of Portugal could put together a fleet which would "engage and destroy them, since the intention of these Frenchmen is known; and let all men taken from their ships be thrown into the sea...for this is necessary as a warning against the undertaking of similar expeditions" (in Cartier, 1993: 142).

In his debates with the Spanish and Portuguese ambassadors, Francis justified his actions on the basis of the argument that permanent settlement and not discovery was the basis of a nation's claim to sovereignty over a territory. This had the immediate consequence of forcing France to relinquish its claims to the lands discovered by Verrazzano. Consistent with this new tenet, Francis also sought to assuage Spanish fears by declaring that French merchants and colonizers would limit their activities to areas "uninhabited or not possessed and ruled by any Christian princes". This new emphasis on settlement radically changed the way the French state communicated with the new continent.

On the basis of this new policy, Cartier's third mission was drastically reorganized. The most change was Francis' decision to supplant Cartier as head of the venture in favour of a high ranking Protestant nobleman, courtier and veteran of the Italian wars who went by the name of Jean-François de La Roque but has come to be known in Canadian

historiography as the sieur de Roberval. In his commission dated January 15, 1541, the official explanation for this change in leadership was that the implantation of a French settlement in North America required a loyal “excellent personage” with proven leadership abilities so that the crown could trust that he would manage the colony “as We might do if We were there in person”.

This delegation of power reveals that even in this early attempt at colonization the French crown was very aware of the inherent problems of maintaining long distance control over its colonial agents. One of the hardest lessons the French state had learned from Cartier’s early adventures was that, as New France’s “window on the world”, the St. Lawrence was not without its problems. The fact that it was frozen six months of the year combined with the two or three months it took to make the trip from Europe to severely limit the frequency of communications between the colony and the home country. In order to avoid icebergs in the North Atlantic and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the ships from France did not arrive each summer until July at the earliest with goods, people and mail from Europe and then, in order to avoid being caught by the river’s annual freeze-up, they had to be sure to leave by late October. This meant that a message sent to France from Canada generally had to wait between eight and ten months for a response.

As a consequence of these peculiar rhythms of the St. Lawrence which so hindered regular communication, the French state was left with no choice but to reformulate its national system of governance to fit colonial realities. By European standards, France is a large country which is even now composed of a myriad of culturally diverse regions. With the rise of the absolutist state, one of the main strategies by which the crown sought to extend its power over the various regions was to use its powers of patronage to try to

persuade local notables to act in service of the central state in return for financial perquisites and the possibility of further social advancement.

This strategy of long distance control through patronage explains Cartier's replacement by Roberval. Like the proprietors of early modern long distance trading companies who sought to ensure the loyalty of their clerks in various far flung ports by hiring only those with whom they had kinship or religious ties, the French state hoped that the ties of nobility, the possibility of future advancement and that his past loyalty was predictive of future loyalty would keep Roberval from slipping beyond their grasp. Colonial realities, however, forced Francis to decentralize a great more deal power to his lieutenant general than would have been conceivable on French soil. In his commission, Roberval was given near-regal powers involving, among other things, the ability to make laws and political appointments, build strongholds, command complete obedience from both colonists and natives, make wars and establish churches.

Marcel Trudel argues that Roberval's personal wealth and connections were also important factors in the decision to make him leader of the expedition. As Francis himself avers in Cartier's commission, the French state's coffers were denuded as a result of his various wars with Charles V. As a consequence, certain aspects of the venture were privatized in order to ensure that it got off the ground. When outfitting costs ran over the budget allotted by the state, Roberval secured the necessary funding from private sources to pay off his debts. Furthermore, Trudel argues that only a noble of Roberval's stature could attract investment from the high merchant class and settlers from the noble class who would act as the civilizing elite of the new colony. As a reward for his colonization

efforts, Roberval and his associates were granted extensive tracts of land in the colony and a five year monopoly over trade in the area.

Another major change in plans between the two expeditions was the increased scope of the new venture. Whereas Cartier argued that 276 men would suffice to achieve his goals of setting up near Stadacona a multipurpose settlement which would simultaneously act as a port, trading post, fort, staging post for future explorations and a Christian mission, Roberval's mandate was much more ambitious in both scope and intensity. Gentlemen, soldiers and commoners were to be sent to the lands of Canada and Hochelaga in order that they can

penetrate farther into the said countries and as far as the land of the Saguenay...to live in them with the said foreign peoples, if that is possible, and to dwell in the said lands and countries, build and create towns and forts, temples and churches for the communication of our holy Catholic faith and Christian doctrine; to constitute and establish laws in Our name, along with officers of justice, to make them live in law and order and in the fear and love of God. (in Cartier, 1993: 144)

As one might guess, this considerable task assigned to Roberval required a great deal more manpower than Cartier had initially projected. Though many of the prospective colonists must have been attracted by the hopes of adventure, riches or a better life, many more had no choice: they were herded out of French jails and pressed into service as Canadian colonists. In a secret report on Cartier's preparation, a Spanish spy estimated that by the time the fleet of ten ships was outfitted and ready to sail with an occupying force in which "the total number, soldiers, mariners, workmen, and others, will be from eight to nine hundred persons" (in Cartier, 1993: 154).

The entirely justifiable preoccupation of most historians with these changes in the mission's command structure, scope and mandate have caused them to ignore a more

subtle but equally important change in French colonial policy. In Roberval's commission, no mention is made of the kidnapped Donnacona and his retinue. It will be recalled that in Cartier's commission, these men were to act as the communicational Trojan Horse who would mediate between the French and the Amerindians. In an early theorization of the two-step flow, it was hoped that their apparent acceptance of French customs and the Christian religion would enable them to act as opinion leaders who would persuade their fellows into accepting the French presence in their lands.

In Roberval's commission, however, the communicational strategies of mediation, negotiation and persuasion are seemingly abandoned. Instead, God's word and the king's law (these are often difficult to distinguish in early modern France) are to be communicated by the implantation of a number of official communicators (priests and 'officers of justice') and a massive restructuring of Canadian space in a manner that will channel the activities of both colonists and natives "pour les faire vivre par raison et police et en la crainte et amour de Dieu". Though no mention is made of altering the landscape or the use of military force to communicate French intentions in Cartier's commission, Roberval is given the mandate of building forts, towns, churches and establishing seigneuries in Canadian space. As for those who might already occupy that space, Roberval is charged with bringing them under French hegemony "through friendly means and amicable arrangements, if possible, and through force of arms, violence, and all other hostile means" (Cartier, 1993: 146) if the method of persuasion should falter. As I will argue, this vacillation between the methods of mediation/negotiation and coercion would remain a constant in the French state-system's project of establishing the 'Word of God and the Law of the King' in the Laurentian valley.

There seems to be a fair deal of consensus amongst the historians of the period that this change of communicational strategy was the result of larger changes in French colonial policy. Charles-André Julien (1981), for example, attributes the change to the fact that in accordance with Francis I's argument that settlement = possession, the French were less interested in communicating with the Amerindians than with communicating their sovereignty over the lands to other European powers. Suggested explanations of the absence of the interpreters are that they either died in the interim or that a suspicious Cartier sought to limit their opportunities for subverting his efforts by insisting upon their exclusion from the expedition (Trudel, 1973).

None of these arguments, however, can explain the change in tone from the conciliatory commission of Cartier to the bellicose Roberval document. It is possible that the untimely deaths of the interpreters and consequent loss of their mediators forced the French to adopt a strategy in which they could use fear as a means of persuasion rather than amity. Perhaps Cartier had convinced Francis both of the treachery of the interpreters and, based on his earlier experiences in Canada, of the value of using force when negotiation failed. Owing to a lack of documentary evidence, however, these hypotheses must remain mere speculations. What we can do, however, is to make more sense of this change by placing it within the context of the French governing elite's beliefs about why the construction of cities and churches was necessary in order to induce its subject into living lives following the dictates of "raison et police".

As will be recalled from Chapter One, to 'live in police' meant to live a sedentary life in a city and always within reach of the churchbells. As French thoughts turned from trading associations to empire, it would seem that the French authorities had decided that

if they were going to convincingly convert the Amerindians into orderly and productive French citizens, stronger medicine was required than the intercession of a handful of interpreters of dubious loyalty. When Francis I decided to undertake the more ambitious project of establishing a full-scale French colony in Canada, he set out to remedy what was taken to be the fundamental obstacle to his plans.

As Cornelius Jaenen points out, the French authorities tended to interpret the ethnographic descriptions of Amerindian mores in terms of the characteristics of the *bêtes noires* of the French bureaucratic imagination: the wanderer/vagabond. To French eyes, Amerindian society was anything but policed. The lack of settled towns, the hunting and gathering subsistence patterns of many of the eastern tribes, what the French believed was the natives' complete lack of religious beliefs, the unashamed manner in which both sexes walked around partially or unclad, their comparatively relaxed sexual mores and their stunning lack of a hierarchical governmental structure seemed to fly into the face of all those characteristics which the French associated with civility.

In order to save the souls of these poor brutes, Francis advocated the Spanish method of forcing Amerindians to abandon their traditional hunting and gathering activities and settle in villages where they would be subject to uni-directional surveillance by the colonial authorities, where they could engage in orderly and morally edifying artisanal and agricultural activities and hear the daily sermons in the central church. Though I have no doubt that he believed that he was helping to save their souls, I suspect that Francis also agreed with Botero that the Christianization and francisization of Amerindian culture were the most potent weapons in the struggle to enroll them within his imperial network.

If this colonizing project was magnificent in its ambition, it was equally dismal in its execution. On May 23, 1541, Roberval had still not yet received the munitions and other supplies necessary to supply his half of the fleet. He ordered Cartier to go ahead and promised that he would not be far behind. As it happened, he did not leave France until July and even then he was not destined for Canada but for the coast of Spain in order to engage in some of privateering in hopes of recouping some of his expenses.

Cartier, on the other hand, endured a stormy three month crossing and arrived at Stadacona on August 23, 1541. During the rest of the summer and the autumn, Cartier and his officers further reconnoitered the St. Lawrence and believed that they had found a huge cache of gold and diamonds at a site quite close to Stadacona (they would turn out to be pyrite and quartz). However, by June of the next summer, Cartier had broken camp and decided to return to France. Apparently, through his interactions with the Stadaconans over the winter and the previous seven years, he had been so successful in alienating them that they had declared war upon the French. One Franco-Basque sailor reported to a Spanish fact finding commission on the venture that members of Cartier's crew told him that the Iroquois had killed all the carpenters which Cartier had sent out to build the towns, fortresses, temples and churches while another sailor reported that a group of Stadaconans bragged to the crew of a Spanish fishing vessel that they had killed more than thirty five of Cartier's men.

On Cartier's way back to France, he encountered Roberval and his three ships who were on their way to what they had hoped would be a colony off the coast of Newfoundland. Upon hearing of Cartier's problems with the Iroquois, Roberval ordered him to turn around and accompany him to Stadacona. Cartier refused and, in the middle

of the night, he and his fleet slipped away and headed back for France confident that his treason would be overlooked in the light of the ample treasure he was bringing back to the King. Roberval pressed on but his reconstructed colony fared little better. He does seem to have managed to extend Cartier's explorations of the waters west of Lachine: the Ottawa river and the St. Lawrence south of Montreal appear on the Desceliers map of 1550 but he found nothing of the Kingdom of the Saguenay. In the winter, Cartier's absence and/or unwillingness to share the secret of the *Ammeda* with his superior took its toll as the settlement was struck by scurvy which took the lives of about fifty colonists.

Though relations with the natives were apparently more placid than under Cartier's regime, Roberval ruled the *Fort France-Roy* with a heavy hand. The narrator of the journal of his voyage recounts that "Monsieur Roberval used very good justice, and punished each according to his offence. One whose name was Michael Gaillon was hanged for his theft. John of Nantes was layde in yrons, and kept prisoner for his offence, and others also were put in yrons, and divers were whipped, as well men as women: by which means they lived in quiet" (in Cartier, 1993: 111) (M. Gaillon was hung because theft was considered to be the crime which was most subversive of French society). Despite this placid, regimented life in the new world, the colony was abandoned in the next summer and repatriated to France leaving behind a Laurentian valley which Iroquois enmity closed to French traders for the next fifty years.

Chapter 4: Competing Models of Colonial Communication

The 16th century would witness several other ill-fated attempts by the French to set up colonies in Brazil, in Florida and on Sable Island. By the turn of the 17th century, the French presence in continental North America was limited to the cod and whaling fleets plying the Grand Banks and the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the occasional merchant ship landing at the ocean port of Tadoussac to trade for furs. For most of the mid-to-late 16th century, the monarchs of France were far too preoccupied by the Wars of Religion to pay much heed to colonization. After Henry IV's accession to the throne and his successful pacification of both the Huguenots and the Holy League, the time was ripe for a more sustained effort at establishing a French presence in the New World. On November 8, 1603, Henry IV chose a Protestant nobleman named Pierre Du Gua de Monts as his Lieutenant General, gave him authority over all the American territory between the 40th and 46th parallel and granted him a ten year monopoly over trade in the area.

Unlike Cartier, de Monts initially wanted to settle in the area which Verrazzano had named Arcadia which we now know as Acadia. His choice of Acadia was influenced by the advice of a geographer and navigator named Samuel de Champlain who had visited Acadia and the Laurentian valley in 1603. In his book detailing that journey, Champlain proved himself to be an able observer of native mores, the agricultural and mineralogical potential of the land and fleshed out some of Cartier's observations about the geography of the Laurentian valley. He discovered that the Laurentian valley lay virtually unpopulated. Champlain also reports that he learned from interviews with the Amerindians gathered at Tadoussac that the water system drained by the river of Canada eventually leads to "une mer, dont ils n'ont veu la fin, ne ouy dire qu'aucun l'aye veu:

Mais que là où ils ont esté, l'eau n'est point mauvaise" (Champlain, 1951: 85) which he took to be the Pacific Ocean.

Despite these findings, Champlain argued in favour of an Acadian settlement on account of the fertility of its soils, the friendliness of the natives, the many mines they reported existing in the area, its direct access to the ocean and the possibility of finding a shorter and safer water route to the Orient. When de Monts' expedition left in the spring of 1604, Champlain accompanied it as an observer. After the first settlement which was established on Ste. Croix island was abandoned the next year, the colony was reestablished on the other side of the bay of Fundy at Port Royal. In 1607, however, the French crown rescinded de Mont's monopoly without which he could not raise the capital necessary to sustain a new colony and he was forced to order all the colonists to return to France.

This was the first of many radical depopulations which the colony was to suffer in its short history. In 1608, a sieur de Potrin court acquired the territory from de Monts and by 1613, Acadia was developing into a flourishing colony. In that year, however, disaster struck. In the spring, a Captain Samuel Argall from Virginia plundered the colony, destroyed most of its buildings, and carried its population off to Jamestown. He justified this action by arguing that the French colony was settled on lands which had been granted to Virginia by the English crown. Though Acadia would later be returned to the French, this was the first of many such raids which the colony was to endure until the Treaty of Utrecht finally ceded it to the British in 1713.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the trading around Tadoussac had become fiercely competitive. The Amerindian traders developed into cagey negotiators in their own right, playing European competitors of one another in search of the highest

price. The increased competition cut into the profit margins of the traders operating in the area and spurred on the French penetration and settlement of the interior. It was hoped by the commercial syndicate led by the Sieur de Monts and Samuel Champlain that the creation of a settlement at Quebec in 1608 would allow them to “make contact with other Amerindians who were less familiar with trade, and to exclude European rivals by effectively establishing a monopoly.” (Délâge, 1991: 94).

The site chosen by Champlain as his capital was blessed by numerous natural advantages. Sailing upriver from the Gulf, one encounters islands, sandbars and rocky shoals. This dangerous passage from the Atlantic provided Quebec with a natural defence against invading forces unfamiliar with the St. Lawrence. In 1710, for example, a fleet carrying a British-American invasion force under General Walker was forced to turn back after blinding fog, magnetic deviations and the unmarked shoals and island coasts around Sept-Iles smashed open hulls, sending hundreds to their deaths. All told, the British lost 35 ships, 940 soldiers and an untold number of sailors and civilians.

As I mentioned in my introduction, between Quebec and Tadoussac, the Island of Orleans divides the river into two channels and only the southern channel could accommodate ocean going vessels. Once this island is skirted, the channel narrows considerably until it is less than 2 km wide at Quebec. A letter addressed to Louis XIII reveals that Champlain was quick to perceive Quebec’s military and commercial advantages. Believing that the St. Lawrence eventually led to China, he theorized about the huge customs revenues which would be generated by the French control of Quebec. Champlain argued that a minimal investment in fortifications would secure those revenues because the town was so admirably sited:

Il sera faict vn fort composé de cinq bastions, à costé de ladicte ville, sur vn certain lieu relevé des deux costés, lequel commandera sur ladicte ville et sur le detroit de ladicte riviere; de l'autre cousté de laquelle et vis-à-vis se fera vn fort de mesme grandeur pour barrer entièrement le passage de ladicte riviere, comme estans l'entree et la porte dudict pais, sans laquelle on n'y peut aucunement entrer. (Champlain, 1951: 212)

When Champlain and his band arrived at Quebec, they constructed a *habitation* in order to secure their control over the St. Lawrence. The *habitation* consisted of three two-story buildings and a large storehouse linked together by a gallery which ran outside the upper story and encircled by a palisade. Champlain built a sawmill, planted a garden outside the walls for food the settlement and to experiment with which plants worked best in the Laurentian soils and climate and constructed a landing stage on the river.

For the first seven years of the colony's existence, the *habitation* was the only building of European construction in the colony, serving as its fortress, residence and trading post. By the end of the first summer of its occupation, the neighbouring Montagnais people had set up camp around in hopes that its fortifications and artillery would allow them to fish for eels in the river without risk of Iroquois attack. In 1615, the *habitation* was supplemented by the construction of Récollet chapel and mission close by. It was not until 1617 when Louis Hébert established a farm on the cape overlooking the fort that the complete domination of the built environment by religious and state constructions would ease.

It might sound strange that I am referring to the *habitation* whose main function in the colony was to act, in Marcel Trudel's words, as a 'comptoir' as a state construction but the peculiar nature of the colonial administration of New France made it difficult if not impossible to distinguish between commerce and politics. In the history of New France,

the cash-strapped French state often pursued a policy of granting private individuals perquisites such as monopolies over trade in a certain area in return for those individuals accomplishing its ends of settling and administering the colony. When Champlain originally established Quebec in 1608, he was working for de Monts who was granted a monopoly on all the trade in return for the establishment and maintenance of a settlement at Quebec. Between the years 1612 and 1627, this monopoly on trade and settlement in the New World passed from de Monts' hands to a string of private companies.

None of these companies shared Champlain's ardor for colonization. Their reluctance to underwrite the costs of settling the colony often brought them into conflict with the French state. For the merchants, the cost of transporting colonists across the Atlantic and supplying them with agricultural tools and the provisions necessary to survive the first few lean years of clearing the land were an excessive drag on profits. Furthermore, the potential presence of other Europeans in the Laurentian valley was viewed by the merchants as a threat to their monopoly over trade in the area. Finally, the State's desire to establish an agricultural colony flew in the face of the logic which propelled the activities of what Edward Whiting Fox called the commercial society.

In History in Geographic Perspective: the Other France, Fox argues that within the historical development of France, two distinct type of societies developed. The most easily recognizable type of society is what he calls the territorial-administrative state which was organized around manor-based agricultural production which was tightly bound together by the circulation of messages and men in the practice of military protection. The other type of society which Fox found to exist in France was what he called the commercial society. This society, based on the North Atlantic littoral, enjoyed one

possibility denied to the land based society: the possibility of maintaining a regular exchange of messages and goods between commercial communities via the relatively inexpensive medium of water transport. Unlike the land based society in which the high transportation costs of goods constrained the scope of movement, the only constraints upon movement in a water based society came from the inability to secure supplies. This apparently unlimited scope for expansion and trade freed the commercial towns of this society from the need to be agriculturally self-sufficient (since necessities could always be imported) and allowed for increases in specialization of agriculture and handicraft manufacture. This increased specialization brought towns into intimate contact with one another to create a commercial society which has no territorial extension but is rather a series of points through which goods and messages were exchanged.

We have already seen the clash between these two societies and their communicational styles in the vacillations between mediation and negotiation versus conquest and assimilation in the two commissions for Cartier's third voyage. In this later period, the contrast between these two societies was brought into sharp focus when it became quite clear that the representatives of the commercial society, used to obtaining goods through trade, had little interest in creating a self-reliant territorial state based on agriculture. Quebec, for them, was little more than a seasonally occupied trading post. As a result, twenty years after its foundation, less than twenty acres of and around Quebec had been cleared for cultivation and the wintering population was only 55 souls compared to the two thousand in the English colony of Jamestown (Hare et al, 1987; Roy, 1930).

This conflict also flared up over questions of "Indian policy". The merchants had no interest in influencing the behaviour of the Amerindians as long as they continued to

bring their furs to Quebec and Trois-Rivieres, the other major trading site. Champlain and the various religious orders, on the other hand, envisioned New France as the basis of a French and Christian empire ranging all the way to China. They realized almost immediately that if they wanted to bring this leviathan into being, they would have to enlist the Amerindian tribes of the area as allies, guides and, if everything went according to plan, fellow subjects of God and the king.

After the mysterious disappearance of the St. Lawrence Iroquois encountered by Cartier some time in the 16th century, the Laurentian valley had become a virtual no-man's land. The 'northern alliance' of Algonquian speaking Montagnais of the Saguenay and the St. Maurice, Algonquins of the Ottawa River, Nipissings of the lake of the same name and the Iroquoian speaking Huron-Petun of Georgian Bay were engaged in a struggle with the Iroquois tribes of New York's Finger Lakes region for control over the waterways of the valley and access to European goods.

Unlike the nomadic hunter gathering Algonquian tribes, the Iroquoian tribes were corn farmers who lived in settled villages and hunted, fished and grew vegetables only as secondary activities. This social and economic structure based on corn farming was the key to their power. Like wheat, corn is a cereal plant that can be ground into a flour and stored for long periods of time. Furthermore, the prolonged occupation of one site allowed these tribes to store surplus corn in storage pits and pottery whereas hunter-gatherers could only store what could be carried on their persons. This storage ability gave the corn growing tribes a great deal more autonomy from the vagaries of their environment than their Algonquian counterparts could enjoy. As a consequence of this

reliable and durable source of calories, the Iroquoian settlements were able to support much greater population densities than the hunting grounds of the Algonquians.

A corn-based economy had other advantages. The Huron traded their surplus corn to the tribes of the western Great Lakes and James Bay regions for furs which they would trade in Quebec and Tadoussac for manufactured goods. Corn also gave these tribes a great deal more time to engage in warfare and trading than their Algonquian counterparts. Since it is not a very labour intensive crop to grow, the women, children and elderly of the tribe could be left to work in the fields while the men ranged in search of quarry, deals or battle. If corn allowed Iroquoian villages to comfortably support dense populations, it also extended the striking range of warriors, traders and messengers. Though it came to be looked upon by French explorers and missionaries with dread, *sagamité*, a broth of corn mash, water and whatever fish or animal could be caught along the way, was the fuel which propelled Huron and Iroquois traders and warriors further and in greater number than those of other tribes. At the height of their power, Iroquois raids reached as far north as Lac St. Jean, as far west as Green Bay and as far south as Kentucky.

The northern alliance held an advantage over the Iroquois. The lack of settled agriculture in the Laurentian valley and Great Lakes region meant that most of the land was covered by dense and impenetrable boreal forests. These forests, however, were well watered by an extensive network of lakes and waterways which drained into the St. Lawrence. Though the St. Lawrence was navigable by ocean going ships as far west as Quebec, its shallow, reef-filled waters west of Quebec precluded their further use. Instead, goods were transferred to pinnaces and barques which could safely ply the river as far west as Montreal as well as the headwaters of major tributaries such as the

Saguenay and the Richelieu. West of Montreal, the river's flow was interrupted by a series of rapids which European vessels could not safely pass. It was quickly recognized by explorers such as Champlain that their only hope of penetrating the lands west of Montreal lay in their mastery of a vessel perfectly suited to its environment: the canoe.

The canoes of the northern alliance were made out of the bark of the birch tree which was plentiful in the Laurentian valley and the Canadian Shield to the north. G.P. de T. Glazebrook writes that "Of paper-like thinness, the birch canoe...combined speed and carrying capacity with extreme lightness so that it could be carried—"portaged"—past unnavigable sections with comparative ease; and yet it was strong enough to stand the rapids down which it was steered" (Glazebrook, 1964: 2). In Iroquois country, however, birches were rare and those that existed did not have a sufficiently thick bark for use in canoe construction. As a result, the Iroquois canoes were slow and poorly constructed vessels made of elm bark or even slower pine dugouts and had a difficult time catching the Canadian canoe on the water.

Since the fur trade had been re-established at Tadoussac some time in the 1570s-1580s, the French had entered into trading partnerships with the Montagnais, Algonquins and Hurons. Unlike the Iroquois who traded with the nations of the Ohio, Susquehanna and Hudson valleys, these nations had access to the most highly valued furs, the thick and lustrous pelts of the Canadian Shield. Furthermore, their tales of the endless sea to the west and their control of the routes to the west via the Ottawa river or the river network north of Laurentian valley made alliance with them seem even more enticing to the French.

In order to secure this alliance as well as to expand his knowledge of the area, Champlain agreed to accompany the alliance on a raid into Iroquois territory in 1609.

Following the Richelieu south to Lake Champlain (which he named after himself), he and his allies encountered a band of Mohawk warriors at present day Crown Point, NY. The latter were defeated as a result of the panic sowed amongst them by the French use of firearms. After another victorious battle against the Iroquois at Chambly the next year, Champlain took a seemingly innocuous action which would end up creating some of the most divisive controversies in 17th century New France.

Champlain had been petitioned by a youth from the habitation (later presumed to be Étienne Brulé) to convince the Algonquins to take him with them to their winter settlements so that he could learn their language. Like Cartier, Champlain understood the value of an interpreter who could act as communications interface between the two cultures for the establishment and maintenance of military and commercial alliances. Unlike Cartier, however, Champlain had the luxury of spending fairly long periods of time in Canada and amongst the members of the northern alliance. As a result, his five published works on his adventures are packed with ethnographic detail on his new allies and, in one writer's words, "composed of long and highly detailed descriptions of the discovered country, a veritable inventory of plants, animals, the possibilities of the soil and the subsoil, information on the rivers, the contours of the land and its fertility, all accompanied by admirable maps and illustrations" (Deschamps, 1953: 24). Given this mania for naming and ordering, it should come as no surprise, therefore, that the inquisitive Champlain jumped at the opportunity of sending Brulé to spend the winter in the Pays d'en Haut because it would give him a chance to

learn what the country was like, see the great lake, observe the rivers and what tribes lived in that region, while at the same time he might explore the mines and the rarest things amongst the tribes in those parts, so that on

his return we might be informed of the truth thereof. (Champlain, 1971, vol. II: 138-9)

The young man spent a year in the company of the Algonquins and when Champlain saw him next at a meeting arranged for the next June at Montreal, the *truchement* (the name given to interpreters) had been Amerindianized. Dressed in the garb of his hosts, Champlain reports that he had learned to speak the Algonquin tongue “very well” . This young man was the first recorded ‘indien blanc’ or ‘coureur de bois’, a species which would prove to be most troubling to the secular and religious authorities of the colony. While their knowledge of Amerindian languages and mores as well as the personal relationships they established in the native villages made them indispensable to French commercial, diplomatic and missionary efforts, their tendency to adopt the “unpoliced” customs of the native villages as their own constituted a dire threat to the social order which these authorities were seeking to establish in the colony.

One specific episode is particularly illustrative of this ambivalent relationship. Between 1629 and 1632, Quebec was occupied by a Scottish-English trading syndicate. Though most of the French colonists chose to return to France in 1628, the *truchements* Étienne Brulé and Nicolas Marsolet elected to remain in Canada and work for the English. When the French resumed control of the colony in July, 1632, Champlain had the opportunity to remonstrate the two men. He accused them of treason and of living “without religion, eating meat on Friday and Saturday, and indulging yourselves in unrestrained debauchery and libertinism” (Champlain, 1971, vol. VI: 99). Well aware of their value to the fur trade and of the limits of the crown’s abilities to punish them, they gave the following rather flippant reply to Champlain’s charges: “We know quite well that

if they had us *in France* they would hang us; we are very sorry for that, but the thing is done; we have mixed the cup and we must drink it, and make up our minds never to return to France; *we shall manage to live notwithstanding*" (Champlain, 1971, vol. VI: 101, my italics) and continued to live in the colony and work as interpreters.

Champlain was accompanied to the meeting discussed above by thirteen pinnaces carrying French traders. The Hurons elders were immediately suspicious of the traders. They told Champlain that "they saw clearly, that it was only love of gain and avarice which brought these people thither, and that when the Indians needed their help they would give none" (Champlain, 1971, vol. II: 188). Champlain's participation in the raids against the Iroquois and his kind treatment of them in the past, however, had proven that he could be trusted to respect the reciprocal military and political obligations demanded of trading partners. Champlain tried to placate their fears by arguing that all the traders were the subjects of the French king and would respect his laws. Business, however, was a private affair and he could not interfere with their right to truck and barter.

The Hurons, however, did not buy this argument. After a few days of trading with the French, their disgust with French trading practices caused them to withdraw to a point above the Lachine rapids (which was inaccessible to the French) and hold a council. Two days later, they summoned Champlain. Upon his arrival, the elders assured him of their amity towards him and their desire for continuing alliance. However, they suggested that this amity was strained by the unscrupulous traders. Champlain tried to defend himself by arguing that the traders had followed him upriver without his asking and that he would ensure that only a select few would be allowed to accompany him to their future parleys.

Champlain reports that the natives were highly pleased with this assurance and pledged to bring him on a tour of their lands in the near future.

Unlike the other traders who reported huge losses that summer, Champlain was very successful in the trading in that summer. All told, he exchanged various trinkets for 220 beaver belts and 4 wampum belts. The other traders, however, reported disastrous losses. In the 1611 edition of his *Voyages*, Champlain argued that this was the result of their unwillingness to take the risks and make the financial and personal investments necessary for the successful establishment of trading alliances. Unlike them, however, his reading of Cartier and other explorers as well as his own personal experience had convinced him of the need to respect Amerindian trading protocols. He knew his participation in gift-giving ceremonies, speeches, raids and hostage exchanges would create bonds of trust and quasi-kinship ties which New France could call upon not just for trade but also for mutual defense. Champlain was so successful in establishing these ties that, in the episode recounted above, the Huron were asking him to head a monopoly on future trade. For his part, Champlain was well aware that the future of his nascent colony lay in his alliance with the Huron and the other tribes along the St. Lawrence-Ottawa-Great Lakes route. In recognition of these reasons of state, he was the first agent of the state to argue for the regulation of trading activities in New France.

In the fall of 1613, he engineered the creation of the Company of Canada. This was a commercial association composed mainly of merchants of Rouen and Saint-Malo who would receive an eleven-year monopoly over trade in St. Lawrence in return for their promise to underwrite the settlement of six families per year and to pay Champlain's annual salary as Lieutenant to the Viceroy. In that position, Champlain was given similar

powers to Roberval—the power to construct fortresses, to form alliances or wage wars on the Amerindians, to appoint the officials he deemed necessary for the maintenance of police as well as the mandate to continue his search for a western passage to Asia.

In these years, Champlain was also busy negotiating for the establishment of a Récollet mission in New France. Though Champlain felt a certain level of respect and admiration for his Amerindian allies, he continued to believe that they lived ‘ni foi, ni loi, ni roi’ and that they could not be successfully drawn into the fold of the French empire until they were taught how to live ‘policed’ lives. In order to do so, Champlain hoped that the Récollets, a Franciscan order, would be able to master the ideological weapons necessary to win over the hearts and minds of his new allies.

In the spring of 1615, Champlain was successful in obtaining the funds necessary to equip and transport three Récollet priests and one lay brother to New France. When they arrived, they immediately split off into three groups: one was to establish a mission at Tadoussac, two were to attend to the construction of a chapel and convent in Quebec while the fourth headed straight for Huronia.

The Récollets came to Canada with a preconceived plan for the natives’ conversion which had language at its heart. Priests were sent to native settlements in order to learn the local language so that they could translate the word of God to their projected converts. In those villages, they would also attempt to teach the native children to read and write in French in the hope that “with the French speech they may also acquire a French heart and spirit, which, next to the fear of God, shall breathe nothing but the desire to serve you (*the King of France*)” (Champlain, 1951, vol.III: 6).

Unlike many of their Jesuit counterparts, however, they were not trained in foreign languages. They also encountered many problems in their attempts to teach French to the young. According to the Récollet Gabriel Sagard, the Amerindian children were “libertines who wanted nothing more than to play and to have a good time” (Sagard, 1990: 212, my translation) who would forget in three days what it had taken him four days to teach. Furthermore, they evinced no obedience to the demands of the calendar and the clock, often missing lessons and the lenient Amerindian parenting styles limited him to the use of affable admonishment in his attempt to discipline them. Furthermore, the Récollets refused to live among unconverted Amerindians, preferring instead to build their chapels on the outskirts of native settlements. This refusal to immerse themselves completely in the local environment further impaired their chances of learning the local languages.

By 1616, they began to believe that their efforts at proselytizing would come to nothing without making some radical changes in the Amerindian ways of living. As we have already seen, nomadism or, in the terminology of 17th century pastoral power, vagabondage was associated with anomie, with a lack of police. In order to inculcate the souls of the nomadic tribes with the love of God, they had to be first fixed in place. It was decided, therefore, that the Montagnais and Algonquins should be encouraged to settle the lands around Quebec where they could both observe how the French go about living in police and they in turn could be observed by the religious and their French neighbours who would “keep them to their duty and by gentle treatment to constrain them to do better and by good example to incite them to do better” (Champlain, 1951, vol.III: 145). Since the Huron were already settled, they suggested the transportation of a contingent of French

settlers who would succor the missionaries in Huronia in their battle to win over the 'savage souls' of the Hurons.

The Récollet also hoped that they could convince the Amerindians to entrust them with the education of their children. Their goal was to take the children out of the morally deleterious environment of their native settlements and place them in a 'disciplinary' locale where they would be unable to backslide into their vicious ways. Though they hoped at first to be able to send the children to France, this plan was never realized. They settled instead for the construction of a seminary school in Quebec which would provide the children with a basic level of instruction. As of 1626, however, only a handful of natives had received a Christian education and, of those, even fewer had been baptized. Many Récollet missionaries quickly decided that the relatively comfortable life of their convent in Quebec was infinitely preferable to tramping around the Canadian Shield and they began to spend less and less time among the Amerindians and more time ministering to the handful of 'wintering' French in the settlement. As a result, it appeared to many that by 1626, the Récollet mission was a dismal failure.

The missionary policy of 'reducing' the natives in villages and encouraging settlement brought Champlain and the Récollets into frequent conflict with the various companies which held the monopoly over trade in New France in these years. They charged that the slow pace of settlement and clearance of the land was the result of the company's negligence of its responsibilities. Furthermore, they charged that the licentious behaviour of *truchements* employed by the company, notably Brulé, were subverting their efforts at civilizing by example. For their part, the commercial syndicate countered that

the costs of settlement came out of its profits; settlers were potential competitors in the fur trade; and settled and policed natives were not fur hunting natives.

This conflict was exacerbated by the fact that many of the traders who came to New France were Huguenots. Though Huguenots like Roberval, Pierre de Chauvin and the Sieur de Monts had always played leading roles in the colony, Champlain and the priests had begun to petition the crown to bar Protestants from entering the colony. Not only did they want to prevent the sort of religious strife which plagued France from flaring up in the colony but they also feared that the Huguenot presence hindered their missionary efforts and that the Huguenots would betray the colony to their English and Dutch co-religionists who had established themselves on the American seaboard and in the Hudson valley by this time. When the Laurentian trade monopoly passed from the hands of the Company of Canada to the Company of Caën in 1620, these tensions boiled over.

The Company of Caën was headed by a Catholic merchant named Ezéchiél de Caën and his Catholic son Emery. Its fleet, however, was commanded by his Protestant nephew, Guillaume de Caën. Almost immediately, the Récollets began lobbying for Guillaume's exclusion from the colony. In late 1621 or early 1622, the Récollet Father le Baillif published in Paris an anonymous pamphlet titled *Plainte de la Nouvelle France dicte Canada, À la France sa Germaine* which accused the de Caëns of many and sundry crimes. In this pamphlet, Le Baillif's support for these claims were based on letters which were putatively written by Champlain and other colonial notables. It was discovered, however, that this supporting evidence consisted entirely of forgeries written in le Baillif's hand. Despite this setback, the Récollets continued their lobbying efforts, relying on a combination of pampleteering and personal influence to sway royal policy.

Though the de Caëns fended off these assaults on their monopoly for several years, two incidents in 1625 sealed their fate. First of all, in 1624, the Récollets invited the Jesuits to come to New France to aid in their missionary efforts. When the Jesuits arrived in Quebec in June of 1625, they had no formal letters ordering anyone to give them lodging. Though the Catholic Emery de Caën had been left in charge of the colony in Champlain's absence, the Protestant Guillaume de Caën refused to give them shelter in the habitation for the winter. Fortunately for the Jesuits, they were able to take refuge with the Recollets. Secondly, the Jesuits found that the denizens of the colony had been turned against their order by an anti-Jesuit pamphlet written by a Protestant. Upon Champlain's return, P.G. Roy tells us, he collected all the copies of the pamphlet and burned them publicly in an attempt to make reparations to the Jesuits.

By 1626, the resolve of the king's minister, Cardinal Richelieu had been steeled by these complaints. First he ordained that all ships entering the St. Lawrence should be under Catholic command, effectively barring Guillaume de Caën from entering the colony. The next year, he went one step further. On May 6, 1627, while attending the royal assault on the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle, Louis XIII signed the documents which sanctioned Richelieu's reorganization of the commercial structure of the colony. The de Caëns were out, their monopoly was rescinded. In their place, a joint-stock company known as the Company of the Hundred Associates was organized.

The formation of this company was instigated by Richelieu. He diverted state funds into the company and offered positive inducements such as the possibility of ennoblement and negative inducements such as the loss of profitable tax farming privileges to secure additional investors from the ranks of the nobility and the merchant class. It was

granted, as fief and seigneurie, all the lands stretching from Florida to the Arctic Circle as well as a permanent monopoly over the fur trade in those lands. In return for these privileges, the monopoly was to undertake the settlement, administration and defense of the colony in the name of the king of France. Desirous of preventing future religious conflict in the colony, Richelieu was careful to exclude any Huguenots from participating in this new venture.

During this period of commercial and apostolic reorganization, Champlain was hard at work in creating the communication network which he believed would allow French settlers, native souls and animal furs to flow into the colony and French civility and the Christian revelation to flow out. As the commission he received in 1625 affirming his role as the King's Lieutenant-General in New France sets out, the elaboration of this network involved Champlain in many activities. First of all, he was commanded to construct forts and habitations in whatever locales which he deemed fit in order both to protect the king's subject and to "*establish, extend and make known the name, power, and authority of his Majesty*" (Champlain, 1971, vol. V: 144). It was hoped that these symbols of French power would also draw the inhabitants of those regions into French overlordship and to "*invite, instruct, incite, and move them, [with a view] to [furthering] the knowledge and service of God*" (ibid.). Secondly, he was to endeavour to maintain the King's authority by commissioning officers for the administration of justice and the 'maintenance of police' within those French settlements. Thirdly, he was to enter into negotiation with the local inhabitants in order to establish "*treaties of peace, alliances, confederations, good understanding, correspondence, and communications*" (Champlain, 1971, vol.V: 145). If they defaulted on these agreements, he was directed to make war

upon them in a manner which did more than secure their future compliance—the devastation wrought on their enemies should also communicate the power and authority of the King. This show of strength was necessary, it was argued, if the French were to be able to “*reside, to visit intimately, and to go to and fro in the country in full security, liberty, and facility of frequentation and communication, there to do business and traffic in a friendly and peaceable manner*” (Champlain, 1971, vol.V: 146).

The security of this communications network of rivers, villages, missions and forts was also necessary for Champlain’s fourth task: the discovery of a water route to Asia. Failing that, he was to keep his eyes peeled for the mineral resources of the lands explored and to test any samples discovered for their purity. Finally, Champlain was given the task of regulating the movement of French and other Europeans “*trading, negotiating, and communicating with the savages and peoples*” (Champlain, 1971, vol.V: 147). Those trading in the St. Lawrence river without permission of the King were to be arrested and delivered to the hands of justice.

In his thirty or so years in the colony, Champlain pursued these goals with vigor. In the first decade (1608-1616) of the settlement of Quebec, he invested a great deal of time, money and effort in the search for a North American water route which would link the Atlantic to Asia. In so doing, he was the first European to set down in maps and writing the courses of many of the main waterways of the Laurentian drainage basin. In 1609, he reconnoitered the Richelieu and Lake Champlain. In 1613, he explored the Ottawa as far west of Allumette island. His greatest explorations, however, came in the years 1615-6 when he accompanied a failed Huron raid into Iroquois territory. During the course of this raid and the subsequent winter spent in Huron territory, Champlain was able

to observe at first hand the Ottawa-Lake Nipissing-French River route to Lake Huron as well as the Lake Simcoe-Kawartha Lakes route to lake Ontario as well as the placement of the tribes inhabiting these areas. From his interviews with the natives from this area, he was also able to deduce the existence of Lake Superior.

After 1616, his responsibilities as colonial administrator and lobbyist for the colony's advancement forced him to spend increasing amount of time shuttling between France and Quebec, preventing him from personally participating in any more explorations. He continued, however, to use his influence to encourage his Amerindian trading partners to accept into their villages those Frenchmen who sought to learn the arts of the *truchement*. In his later years up until his death in 1635, he was the colony's main patron to adventurers like Jean Nicollet who sought to explore the lands and waterways west of Huronia.

However, Champlain was not solely interested in mapping out the space which he felt separated him from China, he was one of the first to realize that alliance with those tribes who lived in the intervening spaces would be highly beneficial to colony's commercial, demographic and military future. Experience and observation had given Champlain a certain mastery of the rules of Amerindian diplomacy. During his thirty or so years in the colony, Champlain had managed to keep the northern alliance intact using a judicious mix of the military aid, gift-giving and mediation in intertribal disputes. Of equal importance to the colony's future were his written works which provided successive administrators, traders and missionaries with a detailed description of the ethnology of the different tribes and explanations of their political behaviour.

In his later years, Champlain concentrated his efforts on the internal development of the colony. He began to alter the spatial environment of the colony in accordance with the mandate expressed in the 1625 commission. In the years before the Récollets arrived, the colony consisted of one building: the original *habitation*. In the spring of 1615, workmen began to lay the foundations for a second building: a house and chapel of the Récollets. It was not until around the year 1620, however, that Quebec would begin to expand. According to Marcel Trudel, the Quebec of 1620 consisted of

The Habitation and storehouse of 1608, which were falling into ruins; close by, the house and the chapel of the Récollets, built in 1615; on Cape Diamond, a little wooden fort in process of construction, and one house, Louis Hébert's. In the valley, on the right bank of the St. Charles River, the Récollets had established their convent, and there, in June 1620, they laid the first stone of their church. (Trudel, 1973: 129)

Though it is not included in Trudel's catalogue, Champlain reports that a sixth building meant to house a baker and a locksmith were also under construction in that year.

By 1623, the habitation had once again fallen into such a dilapidated state that Champlain had it razed the ground and undertook the construction of a new settlement. In the next few years, roads were built to link the new habitation with the Récollet convent and the fort (named Fort St. Louis) on Cape Diamond. By 1626, the fort built on Cape Diamond in 1623 in order to defend the channel had been expanded in size and a stable and lodge had been built on the meadows of Cape Tourmente. At the behest of his Amerindian allies who were fearful Iroquois raiding parties on the St. Lawrence, he built two forts on the river west of Quebec, one at Grondines and one at Trois-Rivieres.

The expansion of the fort, the construction of the stable and the fortification of the St. Lawrence were of central importance to Champlain's strategy for the protecting of the

colony. As Cole Harris and John Warentkin argue, the French commitment to the St. Lawrence as the colony's main axis of communication committed them to a linear pattern of development which extended from the French channel ports to Quebec and westward up the river to the Pays d'en Haut. This linear structure, however, was very fragile and susceptible to disruption. As Harris and Warentkin point out: "Because of the linear structure a single, well-planned move could have a devastating effect" (Harris & Warentkin, 1991: 11). Unlike the shareholders of the various monopolies, Champlain was well aware of this fact. He knew all too well that if the ships carrying supplies of food and other necessities each year were prevented from reaching the colony, its inhabitants would be forced to choose between starvation and abandoning the colony to live with their Amerindian allies. Similarly, he knew that as long as Quebec was not fortified, it would be easy pickings for any invading force. Arguing that "distrust is the mother of safety", he inveighed in favour of the fortification and garrisoning of the colony, the need for its agricultural self-subsistence and the need to settle the local Montagnais around the town as a 'homeguard' tribe which would provide New France with soldiers, traders, interpreters and explorers.

These beliefs brought him into frequent conflict with the merchants. In his *Voyages of 1632*, he repeatedly castigated them for their lack of interest in developing the defenses of the colony and placed the blame for the slow pace of agricultural development in the colony on their shoulders. He pointed out that in the first twenty two years of the colony's existence, the various companies had only managed to clear an acre and a half of land. Furthermore, the Laurentian soil was not broken by an ox-drawn plow until April 27, 1628. The companies, for their part, complained that Champlain's building projects

diverted much needed resources and labour from the one enterprise that allowed New France to remain a viable entity: the fur trade.

As it turned out, Champlain's predictions of doom would be borne out. In 1628, the supply ships of the newly formed Company of Hundred Associates was intercepted by David Kirke, an English privateer. In that summer, Kirke's men also captured the fur stores at Tadoussac, burned the stables and slaughtered the cattle at Cape Tourmente and threatened the stronghold of Quebec. Though Champlain refused to capitulate, the sixty or so 'winterers' were left to survive a winter on the food grown in Champlain's garden and whatever they could obtain from the natives. The colony's supply of legumes had ran out by the month of May and the seeds planted in April would bear no fruit for several months. As a consequence, from the time of Christmas 1628, the colonists had to set out every week on foraging missions in quest of edible roots. Sagard remarks that by the month of May: "il en fallut retrancher plus de cinq ou six lieues loin, pour trouver des racines de bon manger, car celles des environs de Québec avaient été toutes consommées" (quoted in Roy, 1930: 99). By mid-July of 1629, the colony had no strength left to resist when the Kirke brothers returned. After Quebec was repatriated to the French in 1632, colonial defensive policy became increasingly oriented towards attempting to foster conditions of military and productive self reliance in the colony.

Champlain's increasing recognition of the fragility of this communication network caused him to redouble his efforts at settling the member tribes of the northern alliance in the Laurentian valley. In 1621, he convinced a band of 30 Montagnais to settle near Quebec in order to clear the land and raise corn. This band was lead by a man named Miristou who asked Champlain to support his bid for election as the leader of the Quebec

Montagnais. Champlain immediately recognized this request as an opportunity to extend French authority over Montagnais affairs: “we should thus be giving a hint for the future to the other savages, that, when they wished to elect a chief, it would have to be with the consent of the French, which would mean that we should assume a certain control over them, and be able the better to instruct them in our faith” (Champlain, 1971, vol.V: 62).

When the colony was restored to the French in 1632, Iroquois power was on an upswing and they began to gain a military advantage on the Laurentian tribes. In these first years of the colony, it was a policy not to sell firearms to the Amerindians out of fear that they might someday be turned on French colonists. Furthermore, it was around this time that the prolonged presence of missionaries and *truchements* in the native settlements began to exact their epidemiological toll. The main trading allies of the Iroquois, the Dutch at Albany, on the other hand, felt no qualms about selling the Iroquois firearms nor did they have any particular interest in converting the Iroquois which protected the Iroquois from prolonged exposure to European diseases. As a result, fear of Iroquois ambushes began to divert traffic away from the St. Lawrence. Champlain began to petition the crown for an army to wipe out the Iroquois but his requests would be denied.

Champlain’s writings attest to his tireless efforts to attract French settlers and patrons to help secure the Laurentian valley. The four books published on New France are full of praise for the fertility of the land, the majesty of its lakes and rivers, its abundance of fish and game, its plentiful natural resources and the intelligence and tractability to the word of God of its inhabitants. In the private letters of Champlain, he is no less ebullient about the colony’s prospects. In a letter dated 1618 which accompanied a personal presentation, for example, he successfully convinced the French Chamber of

Commerce that, with a little investment, the colony's annual output of goods could easily equal 5.4 million livres. What is even more impressive about his propagandistic abilities is that the annual fur trade was only valued at 400000 livres per year.

Champlain was aided in his efforts to attract interest in the colony in these early years by the publication of several other books on New France. In its time, the most famous work was Marc Lescarbot's *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*. This book which chronicled the failed efforts of Cartier, Roberval and other French explorers and colonizers as well as the successful implantation of French colonies in Acadia and Canada. It was first published along with several maps in French in 1609 and was updated in 1611-2 and 1617-8. It was also later published in German and English translation. The presence of the Récollets also increased the colony's presence in the French imagination. Récollets in France were the authors of several pamphlets which argued against the Huguenot presence in the new colony and in favour of increased missionary efforts in New France. The publication of Gabriel Sagard's *le Grand Voyage du pays des Hurons* in 1632 followed by the four part *L'histoire du Canada* in 1636 highlighted the toils and hardships of the missionary efforts of the Récollets in Huronia while containing a treasure trove of ethnographic material on the Huron and their neighbours as well as a dictionary of the Huron language. The richest source of information on the history of the colony after 1632, however, comes from the pens of the Récollets' allies turned rivals, the Jesuits and their annual publication, the *Jesuit Relations*.

As I mentioned earlier, the Récollets had not proved to be very successful missionaries. For every Sagard, there was a Father Irénée who, Champlain reports, set out three times in one winter to live among the Montagnais only to return to the comfort

of the convent each time after less than two weeks. In 1625, the new viceroy of New France, the Duke of Ventadour decided that the efforts of the Récollets had to be supplemented by the 'more capable' Jesuits. Though the Récollets initially welcomed the Jesuit presence and even gave them shelter in the latter order's first year in the colony, this alliance turned to rivalry when Quebec was restored to the French in 1632. When the Canada-bound ships left France that spring, the Jesuits were allowed to board but the Récollets were held back and would not reappear in the colony until 1670.

If the Jesuits shared lodging with the Récollets in their early years, they also shared conversion strategies. Like the Récollets, they believed that the settlement of a contingent of pious French farmers and artisans would go a long way towards inducing the natives to abandon their vagabondage. Like Champlain, they believed that the security of the communication network which the French colonial authorities which trying to set up required the military subjugation of the Iroquois in order to demonstrate French superiority. Like the Récollets, they stressed the importance of learning the Amerindian languages for their conversion efforts. As Paul Lejeune, the editor of the *Jesuit Relations* between 1632 and 1639, argued: "In truth, any one who knew their language could manage them as he pleased" (Jesuits, 1959, vol. 5: 35).

This link between knowledge and power to 'manage' was at the heart of the Jesuit conversion strategy. Like a veteran advertising firm, they began their conversion efforts by thoroughly researching the customs, tastes and beliefs of their target market through a combination of observation, a reading of the existing ethnographic literature on the Amerindians, and interviews with those Frenchmen who had experience in dealing with the Amerindians. They then learned to package their ideas in a manner which appealed to the

latter. This involved 1) learning the Amerindian languages; 2) adapting European ideas to their vocabularies and belief systems; 3) deploying an image-heavy multimedia presentation; 4) attempting to discredit established and competing authorities ('Brand X'); 5) emphasizing the new and improved magical powers which the consumer of the new belief system will receive; 6) specifically targeting children and 'opinion leaders' in the belief that they will help to over win the whole tribe.

The Jesuits drew on four main sources of information for their language learning. The best source was the Amerindians themselves. Jesuit missionaries sought language lessons from the Montagnais who camped around Quebec and the tribes in whose villages they settled. A more problematic source were the *truchements*, some of whom helped while others like Marsolet refused on the grounds that giving away their knowledge would violate the company's charter. Fortunately for the Jesuits, there were a handful of francisized Amerindians who had been educated in France by the Récollets who could both serve as language teachers and explain Amerindian beliefs to them. Finally, the priests could learn some of the basics of the Amerindian languages through the use of the dictionaries compiled by successive explorers and missionaries.

There was a problem, however, with these attempts at translation. Many European concepts simply had no cognate terms in the Amerindian languages. For the Récollets, the only long term solution for this problem was to teach all Canadians to speak French. The Jesuits, were quite willing to translate French ideas into the closest approximating Amerindian terms. This flexibility was largely the result of the rigorous education and apprenticeship of the Jesuit missionaries. After his childhood years were spent honing the main tools of an oral culture and an apostolic missionary—logic and

rhetoric—in a Jesuit seminary, the Jesuit novice would be required to complete a three-year course of philosophy leading to a bachelor's degree followed by a four to six year advanced study of theology. During this period, the passive knowledge of philosophy and theology would be activated by the requirement that each novice teach humanities and philosophy courses in the seminary and undergraduate schools.

Once their formal education ended, they endured a three year spiritual education based on of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* which aimed at completing the submission of their wills to God's. The third year of their education was crucial for their later efforts in Canada. In that year, they were expected to minister to society's least fortunate while living solely on the charity of others. According to Axtell, this final year completed their preparation for their Canadian missions because "In this ungenteel "school of the heart" the Jesuits learned to take Christ's message to France's own *sauvages* by mastering the local vernacular (of which France still had many), "adapting themselves to the capacities of children [and] simple persons," and appealing to all five senses in their preaching and catechizing" (Axtell, 1985: 77).

The strong emphasis on rhetoric in the Jesuit's education dovetailed with the oral nature of Amerindian political organization. In 1616, Champlain observed that unlike the hierarchized French, Amerindian political organization was consensual in character. He reported that their internal government consisted in the assembly of the elders and headmen in council where they "decide and propose everything necessary for the affairs of the village; and this is done by a plurality of votes or by advice of some among them whom they consider to possess good judgement, and superior to the ordinary" (Champlain, 1971, vol.III: 157). As a result this stress on debate and argumentation, the

Amerindians of the eastern woodlands placed a high value on an individual's ability to make speeches and formulate arguments. The Jesuits were quick to try to capitalize on this predilection for argument. In 1632, Le Jeune wrote that

There is no place in the world where Rhetoric is more powerful than in Canada...it controls all these tribes, as the Captain is elected for his eloquence alone, and is obeyed in proportion to his use of it, for they have no other law than his word...If the voice of men has so much power, will the voice of the Spirit of God be powerless? (Jesuits, 1959, vol. 5: 195)

Le Jeune further reports that in their missionary efforts, the Jesuits were able to successfully adapt European speaking styles to fit in with Amerindian models of oratory.

The rhetorical skills of the Jesuits were supplemented by their use of books, images and scientific experiments to impress the Amerindians. As early as 1624, the Récollet Sagard had observed how the Huron "greatly admired writing, by which, although absent, one can make oneself heard wherever one wanted" (Sagard, 1990: 257, my translation). Sagard also reported that they would pick up his books and "after having long contemplated and admired the images and letters, they would amuse themselves by counting the pages" (ibid.). James Axtell explains the Huron fascination with writing as the response of the members of an oral culture to what they believe to be artifacts which are endowed with a great deal of magical power. In the oral universe of the Amerindian:

a word was a real happening, an event of power and personal force. Because sound is evanescent and irretrievable, words while they are being spoken are precious, mysterious, and physically efficacious...In oral cultures like the Indians', sound is more real or existential than other sense objects. It registers an immanent personal *presence*... The ability to read and write was awe-inspiring to the Indians largely because it duplicated a spiritual feat that only the greatest shamans could perform, namely that of reading the mind of a person at a distance and thereby, in an oral context, foretelling the future. (Axtell, 1988: 93)

The Jesuits were quick to exploit this advantage. They would always attempt to subvert the authority of local religious leaders and traditions and attempt to convince the natives that they were the most powerful *manitous*. Against the shaman's insistence that he was the repository of tribal lore, the Jesuits argued that the codification of God's word in the Bible gave it a truth and an enduring power against which the former's orally transmitted myths could not compare. These arguments seemed to have had some effect on Amerindian consciousness because Le Jeune reports an Huron chief saying to Champlain that "I am only a child; I have no recollection... You, you have your Massinahigan; (that is to say, you have a knowledge of writing), which makes you remember everything" (Jesuits, 1959, vol. 5: 207).

The literacy of the Jesuits also increased their ability to predict (and, in the eyes of the natives, control) future events. As the Axtell quote suggested above, the Jesuits were initially able to impress their Amerindian hosts by predicting the imminent arrival of visitors or assailants on the basis of information received in a letter. After a few years of prolonged intercultural contact, this ability became quite prosaic. In order to continue their assaults against shamanic authority, the Jesuits upped the ante. They began to use their knowledge of astronomy and celestial charts to predict phenomena such as eclipses. They would also perform simple scientific experiments such as the use of a lodestone to pick up nails in order to impress their hosts with their magical powers.

Of equal importance to these sleights of hand was the Jesuit use of images to accompany their proselytizing. One of Loyola's apostolic tenets was that the missionary should always seek to provide the objects of his oratory with images which will allow his audience to form 'mental representations' of the events being narrated. The Jesuit were

quick to adapt these multimedia presentations to Amerindian tastes. Since the Amerindians considered beards to be hideously ugly, Jesus was to be represented as beardless. The figures in the pictures of the various saints and mysteries were all to be painted with their eyes open because the natives believed that painted figures were living and scrutinizing their every move in order to ensure that they did not backslide.

Though they ideally sought to convert whole tribes, the Jesuits came to believe that the most effective means of doing so would be to concentrate their efforts on converting the ‘opinion leaders’—elders, heads of clans—who would act within the tribe as a revolutionary cadre, swaying the beliefs of the rest. The Jesuits also picked up the Récollet strategy of separating young children from their families and placing them in the carceral space of seminaries where they could be disciplined, catechized and francisized. The sick and dying were also sectioned off from their communities and enclosed in the hospitals run by the Ursuline and Hospitalière nuns who arrived in the colony in 1639. These ‘sisters of mercy’ sought minister to the physical and spiritual needs of the dying, working constantly to induce them to accept baptism before their deaths. These orders were also asked by the Jesuits to set up seminary schools for the Amerindian girls because they feared that their male pupils would backslide into ‘barbarism’ if they returned to their tribes and married ‘unpoliced heathens’.

The Jesuits also believed that different strategies were required to convert the nomadic or vagabond tribes and the settled Huron. With the latter tribe, the Jesuits concentrated on settling among them. Though they were reluctant at first to accept the Jesuits into their community, the Huron relented in 1634 as a result of pressure from the company. In that year, only three Jesuits accompanied the canoe fleets to Huronia but by

1648, there would be as many as fourteen missionaries in Huronia and three in the villages of the neighbouring Petun. For the first five years of the mission, the priests were dispersed throughout the region. In 1639, they decided to concentrate their efforts in one spot, the fortified mission of Ste. Marie which would act as a retreat for missionaries, a prayer centre for Christian Hurons, a supply depot, a hospital and even a farm where oxen, cows, pigs and chickens were raised.

Life in these missions was difficult. The beards of the Jesuits, the effeminacy of their robes, their physical weakness, their lack of woodcraft, their refusal to engage in war, their poor grasp of the vocabularies and their even worse pronunciation of the native tongues left them open to constant derision. Furthermore, their presence and especially the act of baptism were often (and rightly) blamed for the epidemics which began to decimate the Huron population.

This isolation from their new community was compounded by their isolation from their French counterparts in New France. They would only receive news and supplies from the colony once a year and it was not unusual for their supply canoes to be intercepted by Iroquois ambushes. Despite these and other frustrations, their missions seemed to have met with a great deal of success. By 1649-50, they claimed that the number of baptisms had reached three thousand in Huronia alone.

However, many of these so-called conversions were of a dubious nature. Often, the 'converts' simply incorporated Christian rituals into their established system of beliefs while others accepted the Jesuit presence in order to preserve trading alliances. Many of the converts were natives who were dying of European diseases like smallpox. Among the Amerindians, it was widely suspected that these plagues were the result of European

black magic and some must have hoped that the most powerful European *manitous*, the Black robes, had to power to rescind these curses. Finally, though it does seem that a certain contingent of natives seemed to be quite sincere in their desire to convert, the Jesuits observed that these potential Christians were often shamed out of accepting Christian beliefs by their jeering neighbours the moment that they eluded their watchful eye and penetrated into the woods. Nonetheless, it is certain that there were some legitimate conversions in the 17th century. For example, the Iroquois mission at Caughnawaga had as many as a thousand inhabitants in the 1670s while Dollier de Casson successfully converted an entire Cayuga village on the Bay of Quinte.

In the 1620 and 30's, the combination of the rapid depletion of the beaver stocks in their hunting territory and the increased demand for furs from the Dutch led the Iroquois to search for alternative sources of furs. At first they limited their aggression to the looting of Huron and Algonquian fur fleets but in around 1640, their ambition grew. Beginning in 1642, the Iroquois launched a series of military campaigns against the Algonquins, Hurons, Ottawa and Montagnais nations aimed at wresting control of the middleman trade in the furs descending from the Great Lakes region. After a series of raids which began in 1642, the well-armed Iroquois finally managed to disperse the Hurons and destroy the Jesuit missions in 1647-9. Once they defeated the Huron, the northern alliance fell like a house of cards: in 1649, the Ottawa Valley Algonquins were dispersed followed by the defeat of the Petun were dispersed in 1649-50, the Nipissing in 1649-51, the Neutrals of the Niagara region in 1652 and the Attikameks of Mauricie in that same year. By 1653, the lands south of and including the Ottawa valley were virtually depopulated. While most of the refugees of this holocaust took refuge in the lands west of

Lake Huron, some of the Huron, Petun and Neutral were assimilated by the Iroquois. Others took refuge with the French, settling on the Isle of Orleans near Quebec while some of the Nipissings and Algonquins took refuge at a Jesuit mission near Trois-Rivieres.

In relocating to the Laurentian valley, these refugees joined a group of Montagnais who had been settled at Sillery near Quebec. Though this area had always been the site of Montagnais eel fishing activities, it was established in 1638 to house the Montagnais and teach them 'civility'. An orderly village was laid out consisting of a main habitation which would house the initial twenty settlers linked by a road to a chapel. The fields were cleared and sowed with corn and Le Jeune was making plans to build the hospital which would be built in 1640 and run by the Hospitalières.

Settlement was stimulated through a variety of measures. The main means of attracting settlers were the Jesuit promise to feed the converts over the winter, the promised care for the sick and the elderly by the Hospitalières and the Company's decision to buy furs from settled natives at an higher price than furs from 'vagabonds'. Le Jeune reports that demand to live in this model village quickly outstripped the supply of labour and materials at the Jesuits' disposal. Nonetheless, by 1641, the reserve or 'reduction' contained thirty families and by 1645, the Jesuits could boast of 167 Christians residing within its borders. As Alain Beaulieu makes clear, the settlement at Sillery is best viewed as what Michel Foucault calls a 'carceral space'. Beaulieu writes that:

il ne suffit pas d'amener les *infidèles* dans la giron de l'Église, il faut encore les y maintenir. Établir la foi, c'est aussi *surveiller et punir*, deux volets qui doivent trouver leur principal lieu d'exercice dans la *réduction*. La concentration des nomades sur un espace réduit vise à faciliter la surveillance des convertis et la répression des manifestations religieuses autochtones. Elle doit aussi permettre à l'autorité française d'intervenir et d'assurer que les baptisés ne contreviendront pas aux préceptes

chrétiens... À l'imposition d'une structure de contrôle extérieure, celle des autorités françaises, les jésuites espèrent enfin ajouter des instances d'autorités autochtones qui veilleront à l'auto-répression parmi les baptisés. (Beaulieu, 1994: 152)

By 1641, the Jesuits had been so successful at setting up this system of 'auto-repression' by the inhabitants of the *reduction* that it was hindering their missionary efforts. In that year, le Jeune reported that in their zeal to maintain themselves in a state of police, the 'most zealous Christians' in the settlement had resolved that "he who should fall into any error must be put into prison, and made to fast four days without eating or drinking" (Jesuits, 1959, vol. 20: 145). According to le Jeune, this resolution 'frightened the weak, and the report spread among the unbelievers that the Christian Savages had chains and bonds all ready to bind them to the refractory" (Jesuits, 1959, vol.20: 147).

The settlement faced other threats as well. On several occasions, The Algonquins tried to lure the settlers away from the St. Lawrence to join them in the Ottawa Valley in order to replenish their numbers which had been depleted by disease and Iroquois raids. Though the settlement's proximity to Quebec kept the converts under the watchful eye of the priests and the governor, it also meant that they could easily obtain the one commodity which would prove the most ruinous to their social structure: brandy.

Most importantly, however, the Jesuit plan for conversion failed to take the economic realities of the colony into account. In the Jesuit blueprint for creating a godly community, settlement meant remaining at all times under the stern gaze of the priest. As one missionary expressed it: "As soon as you no longer see the Father, you will no longer think of God" (Jesuits, 1959, vol. 21: 93). Hunting was, therefore, forbidden to the recent convert. However, without the hunt, the convert's only means of obtaining European

goods would be to produce enough surplus corn to exchange with the French or to rely upon Jesuit charity. The low crop yields of the lands around Quebec combined with the small colonial market to make the former option unworkable. As a result, they were entirely dependent on the Jesuits to supply them with tools, guns, kettles and so on in the first years of the colony. The ability of the Jesuits to provide these goods took a hit in 1641 with the death of de Sillery, the benefactor of the mission. By the end of that decade, the initial ardor of both the converts and the missionaries began to fade. Marcel Trudel writes that the Montagnais gradually “took to roaming the woods again, until in the winters Sillery was all but deserted. Drunkenness, so severely punished in the early years, gradually became common.” (Trudel, 1973: 233).

By the mid-1650's, the physical signs of the death of the 'communication by construction' empire-building project littered the Laurentian drainage basin. Huronia, which was to be the jewel in the French North American empire, had been irrevocably destroyed, its missions burned and its missionaries horribly martyred. Its people were either carried off by the Iroquois, left huddling on the rocky shores of Lake Superior or cowering on the Isle of Orleans. The settlements of the 'vagabond' tribes fared no better. Continually harassed by the Iroquois and deserted half a year, Sillery would be ravaged by a fire in 1657 which gutted the chapel, the fort and the residences of the Jesuits. The proximity of the French which the priests had hoped would provide the natives with a moral tonic provided them instead with brandy. Following the abandoned paths of the northern alliance, hundreds of Frenchmen were leaving their farms to pour into the Pays d'en Haut in search of furs and an unpoliced lifestyle. It soon became quite clear to all

concerned authorities that a new communication system was emerging which would require new strategies of regulation if they were to maintain the colony in a state of police.

Chapter 5: Subordinating New France—Experiments in Social Architecture

If the destruction of Huronia and the setbacks of the seminary and Sillery had taken the lustre off the Jesuit dream of francisizing the Amerindians, considerable progress had been made in Europeanizing the Laurentian landscape in the years following Champlain's death in 1635. Champlain's successor, Charles Huault de Montmagny, proved to be a similarly energetic administrator, sharing Champlain's piety, ardor for engineering and recognition of the need to protect the St. Lawrence from Iroquois and other depredations. As Gustave Lanctôt reports:

Scarcely had he entered upon the duties of his office before he strengthened the battery guarding the Lower Town and transformed Château St. Louis into a proper fortress of brick and stone with a guard-house, where sentries were kept on duty constantly. In addition, anxious that all new buildings should fit into a proper urban plan, he had Jean Bourdon trace the first alignments for the future blocks of the town, and gave names to the streets. In Three Rivers, the Governor found a mere palisade defending the fort; he added two main buildings to the residence of the commander, and a magazine and platform mounted with cannon to the post. (Lanctôt, 1959: 158)

While Montmagny was busy ordering and securing the nodal points of the Laurentian communications network, others were at work clearing the land. By the mid-17th century, European diseases had already made the land toxic to the Amerindians but now the French were transforming their land into something quite alien. Like the explorers who gave names to North American space in order to make it knowable, the subsequent administrators and settlers were now trying to give that space French form in order to make it manageable.

During most of Champlain's rule, the only areas in which the French had radically altered the landscape were the habitations at Quebec and Trois Rivières, the stables at

Cape Tourmente and a few seasonally occupied trading and fishing stations in the gulf of St. Lawrence. After 1627, however, this began to change. In the charter of the Hundred Associates, the company was given the power to grant parcels of land as fiefdoms known as 'seigneuries' to landholders who would receive certain benefits in return for clearing these lands and attracting settlers. Before 1633, there were only two seigneuries granted in New France: that of St. Joseph granted to Louis Hébert and Notre-Dame-des-Anges which was granted to the Jesuits. In 1633-4, the seigneurie of Beauport was granted to Robert Giffard. In the four years that followed, the pace of concessions increased so that between 1635-7, there were fourteen fiefdoms granted.

Many of the seigneurial benefits were feudal in character. For example, the seigneur was obliged to annually swear *foi et hommage* to the king. After the intendency of Talon, he was also obliged to submit a general plan of the seigneurie, a census of its inhabitants and its annual product and a list of dues received from settlers. When he granted lands and hunting and fishing rights to settlers (called *censitaires*), the latter owed the seigneur various tithes and dues and a week per year of corvée labour. The seigneur was also given the front pew in the local church (an important distinction at the time) as well as the right to dispense *haute justice* on his seigneurie. *Haute justice* presumably covered the judgement and punishment of all crimes including those resulting in capital punishment. Unlike their medieval counterparts, however, the seigneurs were prevented from interfering with the free passage of ships on the rivers and their activities were constantly monitored to ensure that they could not develop into countervailing military power. Similarly, they were deprived of any right to bind their *censitaires* to the land. The latter were free to move from one seigneurie to another if they so pleased.

According to Dale Miquelon, this system of land tenure was not so much the product of economic calculation as an attempt to impose a specific social architecture upon Laurentian space. The seigneurie, he argues, was neither a unit of production nor was it a community. It reflected instead the European notion of a 'policed' and hierarchical society in which the landlord owed fealty to the king upon whom the system depended and the peasants owed fealty to both. Much like Roberval's forts and churches, the "purpose of the seigneurie was to provide social subordination" (Miquelon, 1994: 38) as well as an income for the landed gentry. Like the priests in the missions, the governors in the towns and the seneschals who began patrolling the river in this period, the seigneurs were to be the eyes, ears, mouth and sword of the king, keeping the inhabitants in check and exhorting them to do their duty of taming the land.

Most of these landholders earnestly applied themselves to fulfilling their seignorial obligations of clearing the land and attracting settlers. They imported French artisans and labourers to help them clear the land and build manors, mills and stables. The Company aided them in their efforts by granting free passage to any contract labourers and settlers they might attract in the first three years of the existence of their seigneurie. This could be an expensive proposition in the case of a seigneurs like Robert Giffard who managed to recruit ten families plus several single adults in his first two years as a seigneur.

Gustave Lanctôt attributes some of the colony's success in attracting colonists to the *Jesuit Relations*. True to their beliefs that the presence of French settlers would facilitate their missionary efforts, the Jesuits became tireless propagandists for the colonization of New France. Along with providing valuable information on surviving and thriving in the Laurentian valley, they argued that the colony would offer the prospective

colonists ample opportunity for fulfilling his/her duty as a Christian, for living a healthier and more prosperous life than could be achieved in France. Unfortunately, however, the power of these appeals was often muted as a result of their juxtaposition in the *Relations* against graphic accounts of the sufferings of Jesuit martyrs at the hands of the Iroquois.

There was no ambiguity, however, in the success of the *Relations* in attracting the patronage of zealous and powerful interests. In 1639, the Jesuit call for help in saving the souls of the Amerindians was answered by the two religious sisterhoods—the Ursulines and the Hospitalieres—who emigrated to Quebec in order to set up a girls' school and a hospital for both Amerindians and settlers. In that year, in response to the pleas of the Jesuits, a society dubbed the *Les Messieurs et Dames de la Société de Notre-Dame de Montréal pour la conversion des Sauvages de la Nouvelle-France* was formed under the auspices of the Compagnie de St. Sacrament, a clandestine organization composed of wealthy and powerful members who were dedicated to increasing the authority of the Church. By 1640, this organization had convinced the Hundred Associates to annul its concession of the island of Montreal to Jean de Lauzon on the grounds that he had not done anything to develop his seigneurie and to grant it to them instead.

If the ideals of its founders were realized, the affairs of Ville-Marie (later called Montreal) would have been formally free from the secular and commercial concerns of the Hundred Associates and its representatives at Quebec to pursue its missionary goals. However, in its conditions of concession, the company sought to impose strict limitations on Montreal's ability to compete for control over the St. Lawrence:

Les concessionnaires devront foi et hommage à la Compagnie, et lui fourniront leurs aveux et dénombrements (recensements des concessions, des étendues cultivées, des têtes de bétail, etc.) La Société de Montréal

pourra nommer des juges, mais les plaideurs pourront en appeler à la Cour Souveraine que les Cents-Associés comptent établir à Québec. Montréal étant une oeuvre pieuse, pour la conversion des Sauvages, et non pas une entreprise commerciale ou militaire, la société montréalaise devra livrer ses fourrures aux agents de la Compagnie de Nouvelle-France, à pris fixé, sous peine de confiscation. Les Montréalais pourront se retrancher, se fortifier pour leur défense, mais sans construire de citadelle, car les Cent-Associés se réservent ce privilège. (Rumilly, 1970: 28-9)

In return for these limitations on its sovereignty, this charter granted Montreal freedom to choose its own governor as well as freedom of navigation on the St. Lawrence and freedom from taxes or tariffs on goods shipped to and from Montreal. Nonetheless, these measures ensured that Quebec would retain judicial, military and commercial superiority over Montreal as well as, interestingly enough, the rights to information concerning the development of its population and its economy.

In the early years of the colony, the sovereignty of Montreal was under nearly continuous assault by the governors of Quebec who feared that the upriver colony would be wiped out by the Iroquois and siphon off furs into its storehouses. When its first governor, de Maisonneuve, arrived in Quebec in 1640, Montmagny tried to convince him to settle the Island of Orleans instead. In 1653, de Maisonneuve had to obtain a *lettre de cachet* from Louis XIII to ensure that Quebec's governor, de Lauzon (the man who once held Montreal as his seigneurie), did not attempt to commandeer reinforcements and supplies headed to Montreal. Rumilly writes that, in spite the king's warnings, de Lauzon

s'applique à rogner l'autonomie de Montréal. Il prétend reprendre le magasin de la Société de Montréal à Québec... Il veut obliger les Montréalais à faire tous leurs achats à Québec, au lieu de recevoir les marchandises directement de France. Les commerçants québécois prélèveraient ainsi une bnfefice—une véritable taxe—sur toutes les marchandises consommées à Montréal. Jean de Lauzon conteste, en somme le droit de libre navigation. (Rumilly, 1970: 97)

Along with these obvious attempts to erode Montreal's sovereignty came more subtle attempts by the Quebec government to weaken the settlement such as its consistent lack of military support for Montreal in this period in which Montreal was the chief bastion of colonial control over the St. Lawrence.

Between 1634 and 1665, the French control over the Laurentian communication network was tenuous at best. In these years, travel along the St. Lawrence and its tributaries was made very dangerous by Iroquois blockades. In 1648, this passage was made a little safer by the creation of a *camp volant* of 40 soldiers who were given the mandate to cruise the St. Lawrence in search of Iroquois ambushes. It was not until the end of the seventeenth century, however, that shoals, sandbars and erratic winds were the only things which travellers had to worry about.

During this period, the French settlements of Trois-Rivières and Ville-Marie were constantly subject to Iroquois depredations. Within three months of its establishment, the governor of Ville-Marie was forced to build a fort at the mouth of the Richelieu whose purpose was to "safeguard communications between Trois-Rivières and Ville-Marie (which was, for a long time, the most dangerous outpost of New France) by closing this route to the Iroquois" (Trudel, 1968: 52). By 1647, inhabitants of the two towns were afraid to leave the settlements to till their fields out of fear of the raiding Iroquois. Added to this fear was a sense of isolation as their trading partners were cut off from the colony by the Iroquois control of the Ottawa river. The very existence of these towns was precarious until 1665 when Louis XIV dispatched the 1200 man Carignan-Salières regiment to defend the town and increase its population.

The Iroquois devastation of the Huron-Algonquin-Montagnais alliance in the years between 1642-51 marked a seachange in the French pattern of spatial extension in North America. Previously, Montreal's advantageous position as a junction between the northern passage to the lands around Lake Superior via the Ottawa River or the southern route to the Ohio and Mississippi valleys via Lake Ontario had sufficed to ensure that it received the lion's share of furs shipped from the west by native canoemen. As Dollier de Casson argued in 1672, "there is no doubt that the spot is one of the best in the country for inhabitants because of the trade they can do there with the savages who come down the river in canoes thereto, from all the nations higher up the river" (Casson, 1928: 101). After the Iroquois Wars, however, Amerindian canoemen could no longer be relied upon to bring in the steady stream of furs necessary for propping up the colonial economy.

After several years in which Iroquois blockades prevented any furs from reaching Montreal, the company took drastic measures in order to reopen the fur trade. It began to send young men into the interior in order to provide military protection for Amerindian canoe fleets and to try to induce peripheral tribes to descend to Montreal and Trois-Rivières. By 1653, the French decided that they could no longer rely on the Amerindians to transport their furs to the colony. The Jesuit Relation of that year reported that "all our young Frenchmen intend to go trading, to find the Nations scattered here & there, & they hope to come back laden with the Beaver of several years" (quoted in Trudel, 1973: 225).

Montreal became the main staging post for these inland trading ventures because, first of all, the beaver population in the eastern portion of the continent had been drastically reduced by over-hunting. This forced traders to move continuously westward in search of new furs. Secondly, in order to ensure the safety of habitants from Iroquois

raids as well as to prevent them from illegally engaging in the fur trade, settlement west of the island of Montreal was prohibited by colonial authorities. Thirdly, between the Quai aux Barques and Lac St.Louis on the southwestern edge of the island, the water level abruptly rose thirteen meters creating the rapids at Sault St.Louis. This interruption of the river made Montreal a break of bulk point in which the cargoes from the bateaux were landed, brought into the town and those goods bound for the west were carted thirteen kilometers to Lachine, the terminus above the rapids.

These changes in the fur trade exacerbated political tensions which had been simmering in the colony since the death of Champlain. During Champlain's tenure, the colony was little more than a seasonally occupied trading post. The fifty or so winterers were made up mostly of soldiers, priests and artisans who were dedicated to the quest for furs and souls. Only a handful of winterers were engaged in agricultural activities. Even though the Hundred Associates had promised to settle fifteen thousand people by 1645, only three or four hundred lived in the colony by that date. The company's chronic indebtedness limited its ability to recruit and support potential immigrants. Furthermore, the difficult Atlantic crossing, the Iroquois menace and the prospect of eking out a precarious existence for the first few years of land clearing also hampered the colonization effort. Most of the settlers in the colony were recruited either by individual seigneurs like Giffard or contract labourers who had been brought over from France by the various religious orders and had elected to stay.

When the colonial population was fairly small, the activity of maintaining police required little more than the personal supervision of the governor and the vigilance of the Jesuits. In the 1630s, the Jesuit le Jeune claimed to have known all the families in the

colony and would inspect each ship landing at Quebec in order to ensure that 'undesirables' could not enter into the colony. The Jesuit Relation of 1634 boasted of the extraordinary devotion of the settlers to their duty, likening the settlement at Quebec to "a well-ordered Academy" in which "Monsieur de Champlain has someone read at his table, in the morning from some good historian, and in the evening from the lives of the Saints" (JR, vol.6: 103). After these readings, each withdrew to their own room to examine their consciences and then all would reconvene in order to pray.

Though Champlain's zeal would be equaled by his replacement Montmagny, by the 1640s, an increasingly spatially dispersed population meant that police could no longer be maintained through personal supervision by the governor. In order to overcome these spatial barriers separating him from the rest of the population, Montmagny began to pioneer the use of techniques of 'mass communication' in New France. Like Champlain, Montmagny had very little in the way of administrative resources to draw upon. His entire staff consisted of a lieutenant, a secretary, a clerk and an attorney as well as a handful of soldiers. If he hoped to convince settlers and Christianized Indians to respect his authority as well as the rights of the Hundred Associates, he would have to find alternative means.

When he first arrived at Quebec in 1636, Montmagny took part in a ceremony which emphasized the power and authority of the king. In the colony the governor was a prosthetic king. As the embodied symbol of the king's presence in the colony, he was to be treated with the utmost deference. As one of the future governors of New France, de Frontenac makes quite clear, this voluntary submission to royal power was to be reflected in and elicited by these entry ceremonies: "il falloit y apporter toute la pompe et l'éclat

que le païs pouvoit comporter affin d'imprimer d'avantage dans l'esprit des peuples le respect et la vénération qu'ils doivent avoir pour sa Majesté" (Roy, 1924: 225).

Befitting this belief, Montmagny's first action upon his arrival was to head straight for the church where a *Te Deum*—a hymn celebrating the Father and the Son which was appropriated by the Gallican church as a paean to royal power to be sung in times of triumph—was sung. Once he received this divine sanction of his presence, he proceeded to participate in a ritual which symbolized the submission of the secular power to the king's authority—the acceptance of the keys to the city from a local dignitary. Finally, in his last recorded action of that day, he participated in a rite which both reiterated the primacy of the three pillars of French society—God, King and father—as well as the French claims to sovereignty over their Amerindian allies by consenting to be the godfather of a Montagnais child who was christened that afternoon.

During Montmagny's stewardship, this bit of theatre was supplemented by what we would recognize as more 'official' theatre. In order to celebrate the birth of the Dauphin (Louis XIV) in 1639, Montmagny supplemented the usual *Te Deums* with a fireworks display and two theatrical performances. Theatre has always been a ritual in which conflicts between social values and individual desires are played out in a symbolic manner. Through the performance of the play, these potentially disruptive tensions are given expression and defused in hopes of restoring the social equilibrium. In this context, it should come as no surprise that Montmagny was particularly fond of presenting the works of Corneille, a dramatist whose heroes triumphed in their struggles to subordinate their passions and emotions to their duty.

In this celebration, however, the first performance was a tragicomedy performed for the benefit of the French settlers. This genre was certainly apt for the struggling colony because it combined the higher and lower classes in a series of events in which death and destruction are ever looming yet averted in the end. The second piece was performed entirely for the natives. Lanctôt describes it as “a spectacle in which two devils chased the soul of an infidel, to the accompaniment of howling in the Algonquin tongue and smoke” (Lanctôt, 1963: 170).

These celebrations and theatrical performances commemorated the divine aspect of the royal presence in the colony and the glory of the subject’s voluntary submission to his/her duty of working to help accomplish the king’s will of building an empire. The dark side to the ceremonies celebrating the king’s glorious presence were those which celebrated the wrath of his retribution. As early as 1633, Champlain had a pillar, stocks and an iron collar placed in the centre of Quebec. As their societies developed, the town squares of Montreal and Trois-Rivieres would also sport these instruments of injury and shame and all three would acquire gallows and hangmen by the end of the 17th century. In these public settings, individuals convicted of crimes would be subject to punishments ranging from the public humiliation of being tied to a post with a placard explaining their crime on their chest to whipping, branding, mutilation and hanging.

The emplacement of these instruments in public places was no coincidence but of central importance to the political ritual of the public punishment in this period. As Peter Moogk points out, it was believed in early modern France (and, by extension, New France), that “there was a sacred hierarchy of orders, occupations, and persons that the law must uphold” (Moogk, 1996: 57). God and King stood at the apex of this hierarchy

and any challenges to the law would be tantamount to a direct attack on them since the law is the expression of their combined will. As a result, the public punishment of transgressors of this divine order became a ritual which demonstrated to the public both the power of the King and the possible outcome of any future transgressions on their part of the state-imposed norms. This ritual was not, however, aimed at restoring a balance between accused and injured parties but rather it sought to restore a dissymetry of power between the seditious subject and the all-powerful sovereign and the all-seeing God.

Along with being the sites of these rituals of power, the public squares were also spaces in which the state communicated its directives to the population. Since the metropolitan authorities banned the importation of a printing press to the colony, colonial authorities had to develop other means of mass dissemination of information. First of all, they posted their edicts and ordinances on the walls of the town square, the parish church and the seigneurial manor. In order to reach the many illiterates in the colony, they commissioned a hawker to circulate amongst the townspeople and read out the laws to them to the accompaniment of a pounding drum.

For those who could not be reached by either of the above methods, the state began to use alternative communication conduits. Each Sunday, after the local *curés* in each town and (later) parish spent the first two or three hours of their sermons exhorting all the colonists to perform their Christian duty of helping to bring the City of God into being on the banks of the St. Lawrence, they would then read out any new laws or edicts promulgated by the secular authorities. By as early as 1633, colonial authorities took measures to ensure that the colonists were inextricably connected to this conduit by

making swearing, drunkenness and the failure to attend mass on Sundays and holy-days subject to various penalties.

Until the colony's population began to grow and the occupational structure began to diversify in mid-century, personal appeals made directly to the governor or through the intermediary of one of the priests were the main mechanisms by which the population could respond to these directives. After a series of administrative reforms begun in 1645 and ending in 1665, the habitants gained new channels of influence by which they could affect the formation of government policies.

These reforms began as the result of the collapse of the Company of the Hundred Associates in 1645. Crippled by debt, it was forced to subfarm its Canadian fur trading monopoly to the Communauté des Habitants in 1645, a company made up of fifteen Canadian business men. Though the Hundred Associates maintained seigneurial powers over the colony, the Communauté acquired the power to appoint governor and judicial personnel and one of the first acts of this new company was to order the Governor to ban all habitants who were not in the Communauté from trading with the natives.

This action came as a shock to the colony's economic system. Ever since the days of Champlain, the fur trade was the economic lifeblood of the colony. When new colonists arrived to take up their land in the 1630s, most came with the full intention of carving a homestead out of the Laurentian wilderness. The economic realities of the colony, however, quickly forced many to alter their plans. Through hard work, the new farmer could hope to clear and cultivate enough land to feed his family and even produce a surplus within a few short years. The problem was, however, that for most of the 17th century, potential markets for that surplus were limited by the low urban populations

within the colony and the distance of potential foreign markets. As a result, if the farmer wanted to acquire the beaverskins necessary for him to be able to buy clothes, tools and other supplies, he had to engage in the fur trade. To the annoyance of the authorities, many farmers began setting up illegal 'cabarets' on their farms and many others began penetrating the lands west of Montreal in quest of furs. The company's prohibitions on trade, in other words, denied them the possibility of raising their standards of living above subsistence levels.

The company's actions revealed the limitations and contradictions of the colony's administrative structure. The governor's mandate was to be both the King's and the company's representative in the colony. While his decision to ban free trade within the colony certainly fulfilled half of his mission—to secure the Laurentian communication network in the interests of the company, it endangered the other half—the maintenance of police within the colony. By depriving most habitants of the means of participating in the market economy, he was risking social unrest, an increase in illicit interactions, smuggling and interchange between the habitants and the Anglo-Dutch heretics to the south and the widespread abandonment of the farming life in favour of begging in the towns or living '*ni loi, ni foi et ni Roi*' in the lands west of Montreal.

Through the intermediary of the byzantine patronage networks which linked the colony to Paris as well as the hand written and oral testimony of the settlers, their complaints eventually reached the king's ears. Between 1647 and 1665, he undertook a series of reforms which replaced the exclusive rule of the Governor with the Council of Quebec. This legislative and judicial council consisted of the Governor General, the Governors of Trois-Rivières and Montreal, the Superior of the Jesuits, three prominent

citizens chosen by the Council and elected syndics from each town. Though the latter could only voice the needs of their electors and could not cast votes in the council's deliberations, it gave the habitants some measure of control over the fur trade.

Furthermore, the right of colonists to trade with the natives was restored on conditions that they sold their furs to the Communauté's warehouse.

Though these reforms had a democratic ring to them, their net effect was to foster the creation of a colonial oligarchy. The councilors used their positions to dominate trade in the colony, to filch from the public purse and to grab as much of the prime land in the Laurentian valley as possible. Furthermore, the presence of the Jesuits on the council caused many to worry that they were becoming pre-eminent in the temporal as well as the spiritual affairs of the colony. In 1654, Father Lalemant was given the responsibility of supervising the Communauté's affairs in France while one of his counterparts in New France, Father Superior Ragueneau so dominated the council that even one of his colleagues complained that "Father Ragueneau plays too great a role in government matters, about which he has not the slightest notion" (quoted in Lanctôt, 1963: 223).

This control over Canadian civil institutions by commercial and ecclesiastical interests did not sit very well with the bulk of the colony's inhabitants. In 1657, their repeated complaints once again forced the king into action. He revised the composition of the council for the third time: it would now be composed of the governor, a Director appointed by the company and four councillors who were to be elected for two year terms by a majority of votes cast in free suffrage and was given a broad range of legislative, executive and judicial powers over issues of trade and public finances.

Notably absent from this new council were the Jesuits who had voluntarily withdrawn as a result of the embarrassment caused them by Ragueneau's behavior. Their exclusion did not, however, put an end to jurisdictional strife between civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Before the governor d'Argenson arrived in Quebec in 1658 to take power, he had been warned by one of the King's Councillors to be on his guard against attempts by the Jesuits to encroach upon the secular authority of the Council. Heeding this warning, d'Argenson made it a point to never consult the Jesuits about diplomatic, commercial or police matters.

These snubs angered the Jesuits and their defenders. Within the colony, the most powerful defender of the Jesuits was the bishop of New France, François Laval. Named bishop in 1659, Laval used every trick at his disposal to annoy, humiliate and ultimately exhaust d'Argenson. The main weapons in Laval's arsenal were his control over public religious ceremonies. These ceremonies were vital in a society which was hyper-conscious of rank, precedence and protocol because the symbolism of every aspect of these ceremonies was designed to represent and reproduce the hierarchical society of orders. As the king's representative and thus the nearest to God, the governor was to be treated with utmost deference. He led the ceremonial entry into the chapel, his pew was nearest to the altar and so on. Laval, however, sought to subvert his authority by breaking with custom and moving his pew beyond the balustrade, by ordering that a lay person and not the subdeacon swung the incense before him and other such public humiliations. All the while that Laval was engaged in such sniping within the colony, he and the Jesuits were unsuccessfully using their contacts in France to lobby for d'Argenson's dismissal. When d'Argenson finally did leave in 1661, it was on account of his flagging health.

These tensions between political and religious authorities crested over the issue of the sale of alcohol to the natives. Next to disease, alcohol was one of the European imports which proved most destructive to the Amerindian social ecology. Under its influence, the Amerindians seemed to lose all inhibitions and follow any and all impulses. For the religious authorities of the colony, this was an unexpected blow to their project of civilizing the Amerindians by settling them among the French since increased interchange with the French tended to mean increased access to alcohol. The governors Champlain and Montmagny both agreed with the Jesuits that traders should be banned and passed edicts in 1633 and 1642 to that effect. Though this ban was reiterated by a royal decree in 1657, the illicit trade continued unabated. Throughout most of the French regime, the ability of the colonial authorities to police the Laurentian communication network were very limited. Huge distances, the easy escape hatches provided by the network of waterways which rent the thick forests, the slow communications and lack of reliable personnel hindered their policing efforts. Furthermore, the fact that many if not most habitants might have been engaged in this illicit trade at one time or another mitigated the possibility of self-regulation on the part of the settlers.

Frustrated by the state's lack of success in squelching this trade which was so grievously hindering missionary efforts, Laval made a unilateral decision to deploy the ultimate sanction to put an end to the trade. In May, 1660, he decreed that persons caught trading brandy or wine with the natives would henceforth be excommunicated. Though d'Argenson agreed with Laval about the need to regulate the sale of alcohol, he suspected that the bishop was overstepping his bounds and appealed to Paris to rule on whether Laval had any right to threaten sanctions in cases involving "the police, the

welfare of the state and government". The Crown ruled that the bishop had to cede precedence to the governor in matters of 'civil administration' and could not excommunicate persons for engaging in activities which were sanctioned by the governor. This conflict escalated into what Gustave Lanctôt called "cold war between the Church and the government on a permanent basis" (Lanctôt, 1963: 260) when d'Argenson's replacement as governor, the baron d'Avaugour, reversed earlier policy by permitting free trade in alcohol and placed limits on the Church's ability to plot their resistance by banning meetings from taking place in the Convent of Jesuits without his foreknowledge.

If the colony was in political disarray, it was faring no better on the economic and military fronts. As a commercial enterprise, the *Communauté* fared little better than the *Compagnie des Cents-Associés*. Established in 1645, it came into being during the height of Iroquois power. Incessant Iroquois depredations and the loss of several of their ships at sea forced the *Communauté* to rely increasingly on borrowed money to keep afloat. By 1658, the Hundred Associates were forced by the *Communauté*'s debtors to reassume control of the fur trade. By 1663, King Louis XIV and his chief minister, Colbert, finally put the *Compagnie* out of its misery, forcing it give up its seigneurie over New France (they would regrant New France to another syndicate, the West India Company in 1663).

This action was taken after a royal fact-finding missions led by the *Sieur de Mons* in 1661 and the *sieur Gaudais* in 1663 had surveyed the political, economic and military landscape of the colony in the previous summer. These surveys were, to say the least, comprehensive in scope. In the King's instructions to *Gaudais*, the latter was commanded to travel to Canada and, in the four to six weeks between his arrival and his re-embarkation, he was to "particularly and constantly apply himself to collect in that space

of time information” (quoted in O’Callaghan, 1855, vol. IX: 9) about matters set out in his instructions. This must have left Gaudais with little or no time for rest because like the earlier explorers, he was instructed to gather exact geographical information on the location and extent of the colony, the length of its days, nights and seasons, the quality of its air, crop yields, the valley’s potential for agriculture, forestry and mining and so on. He was also charged with examining the human geography of the colony—what is the state of the towns and seigneuries? Exactly how many live in each? What commerce do they engage in? How do they support and bring up children? How much land has been cleared and which grants have been neglected? Are women and girls needed in the colony to boost reproduction rates? These questions were to be answered through the compilation of a memoir, a ‘roll’ of all the inhabitants and a map which represented, with as much exactitude as possible, “the extent of the country occupied by the French; by each of settlement in particular, the number of families and of persons composing them, and their situation.” (quoted in O’Callaghan, 1855, vol. IX: 10)

Gaudais was also deputed to inquire into the military situation of the colony. He was to inquire as to whether the forests which shielded Iroquois raiders could be burned off and whether the colonists could be convinced to live in closer proximity to facilitate mutual defense. In preparation for an assault on Iroquoia, he was to determine the amount of soldiers which the colony could provide as well the forces and munitions needed to be brought over from France in order to successfully vanquish the Iroquois. Finally, he was to inquire into the financial state of the colony and the administration of colonial justice. What were its expenses, revenues and debts? Could the fur trade be brought under state control in order to defray the costs of defending and governing the

colony? Could the Sovereign Council and governor be trusted? In the 'official' instructions, Gaudais was told to leave the activities of the bishop out of his investigations but secret instructions appended to the 'official' document charge him with surveying all the activities of the governor, bishop and Jesuits with an end to determining whether they are pursuing their own self-interest in opposition to the maintenance of 'justice' and whether the colonists are complaining about their alleged abuses.

This delegation of information-gathering activities to 'special commissioners' was consistent with a series of governmental innovations which occurred during Colbert's ministry which Peter Miller describes as 'government by inquiry'. Miller writes that

The Colbert period exhibits an early attempt to govern a nation by exerting a kind of intellectual mastery over it... The extensions to the reporting systems of the realm under Colbert took place within a programme of government that sought to identify the characteristics, processes and regularities of key aspects of economic and social life. These were to be transformed into writing, given stability and mobility and relayed back to a centre. (Miller, 1990: 322)

Miller argues that there were two main innovations in this 'government by inquiry' which served to increase the amount, quality, detail and frequency of knowledge flows between the centre and the provinces. The first innovation was the extension and elaboration of the role of the intendants. Officially titled *Intendants de Justice, Police et Finances*, these officials were named by the king and placed in the provinces to act as his direct agent. Along with the administration of justice, police and finances, these officials were given the task of gathering, inscribing and regularly relaying back to Paris information about population levels, tax collection, the state of the roads, crop yields, the behaviour of local officials, the presence of Huguenots and so on. In Paris, each administrative province would have a certain number of *commis* or clerks who were

charged with collecting and presenting that information in summarized form to Colbert and maintaining an archive which allowed them to assess the present state of the province and/or performance of the officials in terms of the past .

Miller argues that, unlike his predecessors, Colbert demanded increasingly precise information from his agents. As the following excerpt from one of his letters reveals, Colbert believed that this was the only way that they could adequately serve as the king's eyes in the provinces:

I have submitted a report to the King about the memoir you have sent me, describing your inspection of your generality; but as you have not given an account of your tour election by election, and have produced a general survey instead, His majesty is not satisfied with it, because it was his intention that you should visit each election in your generality, allowing yourself plenty of time to do so, and should inform him in detail of your findings concerning the points which are contained in my dispatches; this is an order which each intendant must obey, and it is the only way to please the King. His Majesty is not content with your general statement that livestock has greatly increased throughout your generality, *as it is important that His Majesty should be able to see, from the reports which are sent to him, the exact number of animals in each election.* (quoted in Mettam, 1977: 21, *my italics*)

Miller argues that the second innovation in this period was not just the quantity of information but the means by which it was gathered and inscribed. Colbert sent to all his intendants massive questionnaires and specific inquiries about almost every aspect of the areas under their jurisdiction. The intendants, for their part, answered these inquiries by visitations, surveys and consultations with the local inhabitants which would produce maps, statistics, memoirs, standardized tables, registers and, in the case of New France, the first modern census in 1666. This proliferation of inscriptions and their transportation to and aggregation in Paris allowed the royal offices to become 'centres of calculation' from which governmental authorities could know, calculate and intervene in distant

events, processes and lives. Miller concludes that in Colbert's drive to turn France into a administrable entity, this "system of inquiries and the office of the intendancy made possible the operationalization of [Colbert's] ideal aspirations to know the workings of the kingdom in detail" (Miller, 1990: 328).

Apparently de Mons and Gaudais reported that the colony was in a deplorable state because the King and Colbert responded by turning New France into a royal province in hopes of preserving the Laurentian network. They sought to maintain as much of the local systems of control intact as possible while supplementing them with the procedures and routines for the production and transfer of information described above as well as safeguards against the unilateral arrogation of power by a governor or bishop. True to their centralizing tendency, the Governor of Quebec was named the king's representative in the entire colony (thus curtailing Montreal's political autonomy) and charged with the responsibilities of leading its armed forces and conducting diplomacy with the Amerindians and the other European colonies.

The administration of the colony was to be entrusted to a revamped council known as the Sovereign Council. In his instructions to Gaudais, Louis XIV argued that the creation of this body was necessitated by the fact that "there has not been, up to the present time, any regular course of Justice in that Colony so that its authority was not universally recognized; and through lack of character in those appointed to administer it, Judgment pronounced remained most frequently unexecuted" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855, vol.IX: 10). Headed by the governor, this council was also composed of the bishop and four councillors whose selection would be agreed upon by the other two and not, as in the past, by popular consent. The functions of the Council were to register and

promulgate the laws of the kingdom, to hear criminal and civil cases appeals from lower courts as well as to establish lower courts in the three main towns. In addition to this judicial role, it was given limited legislative powers but the king reserved the right to amend or annul any laws passed by the council. W. J. Eccles argues that the net effect of these changes was that “the government of Canada now resided, not at Quebec, but wherever Louis XIV and Colbert happened to be” (Eccles, 1964: 10).

The documentary evidence suggests, however, that Eccles might be overstating his case. The edict for the creation of the council reveals that Louis and Colbert were well aware that the communication difficulties obtaining between the colony and the metropole would check the centralizing ambitions of the latter:

in order to promote the interests of the said countries and to cause, at the same time, those who inhabit them to experience the same repose and happiness Our other subjects enjoy... We have deemed it necessary to provide for the establishment of Justice, as being the commencement and a preamble absolutely necessary for the due administration of affairs, and for the security of government, the stability of which depends as much upon the maintenance of the laws and of Our ordinances as on the strength of Our arms; and being well informed that the distance of places is too great to admit of a remedy from hence in all matters with the requisite diligence, the circumstances of the said affairs being ordinarily changed when Our orders arrive upon the spot, and that the conjuncture and evils require prompter remedies than those We can apply to them from so great a distance; We have considered that we could not adopt a better resolution than to establish a regulated Justice and a Sovereign Council in said Country for the encouragement of law, the maintenance and the support of the good, the chastisement of the wicked, and the keeping of each within his duty, causing the observance as much as possible there, of the same form of justice as obtains in Our kingdom, and the said Sovereign Council to be composed of a number of officers suitable for its functions.
(O’Callaghan, 1855, vol. IX: 7)

This document is interesting for many reasons. First of all, it contains an explicit recognition that the long distances and poor communications separating the crown from

the colony necessitated innovative institutional arrangements. As a result, decision-making powers over the more prosaic aspects of administration were decentralized to the council. Secondly, by placing judicial and legislative power in the hands of a group rather than an individual, the crown was counting on creating a system in which each official feared transgressing royal dictates out of fear of denunciation by the others.

Thirdly, unlike the Roberval document, this document acknowledges the limits of the coercive powers of the state—in the reorganized New France, long distance control and colonial prosperity is to be achieved and maintained through the intermediary of law which, when applied by the trustworthy officers of the Sovereign Council, created the sort of common vocabulary of thought and conduct which maintains alliances and positions within the Laurentian communication network. In this regard, this document codifies the secularization of the network. Where fifty years earlier, Christianity was to be the glue that held the network intact, law was now expected to play that role.

Colbert was not interested, however, in dispensing with religion entirely. Once the religious authorities were put in their place, they continued to play an important role in his governmental scheme. As the institution in charge of colonial education, the Jesuits were expected to train the settler's children to venerate God, the King and their fathers and to inculcate a love of hard work in their souls. Colbert also suggested a resurrection of the old Jesuit strategy of populating the country by inducing their Amerindian allies to embrace Christianity and settle in the colony in hopes that one day, "having only but one law and one master, they might likewise constitute only one people and one race." (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1885, vol. IX: 59).

In the edict creating the Sovereign Council, mention is made of an intendant named Robert being one of its members. At the last moment, however, Louis withdrew his appointment, believing that the intrigues which disrupted his rule in the provinces would not reproduce themselves in the new colony. He was wrong. Within months of its creation, the council was split into two factions: one which sided with the governor, de Mézy, and the other with the bishop and the Jesuits. Four of the five councillors, described by Louis XIV as 'creatures of the Jesuits', began to openly challenge the governor's authority both in council and in public. This subversion of the social order forced the governor to send them to Paris for to justify their conduct. This action was opposed by the Jesuits and Laval. While the Jesuits refused to hear the governor's confession and grant him absolution, the latter filed a formal declaration of opposition in the council and used his control over the Canadian Church to have the reasons for his opposition voiced in every parish church in the colony. The governor, for his part, appealed to what was then called 'the public voice' by having the town criers circulate a 'poster' explaining his actions.

Though this imbroglio would end with the governor's death in 1665, it was enough to convince the metropolitan authorities of the need to appoint an intendant to watch over colonial affairs. The man chosen for the job was Jean Talon, an experienced administrator who previously served as intendant of the army and of the province of Hainaut. Along with information gathering activities similar to those deputed to Gaudais, Talon was charged with the job of securing the tenuous French hold on the St. Lawrence.

In the mind of Colbert, nothing was more important to the colony's development than the maintenance of its internal order. In the few years prior to Talon's appointment,

the colony was wracked with political intrigues, influence-peddling, desertions, Iroquois aggression and a rising illicit trade. In 1666, he wrote to Talon that

the true means of strengthening that 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 foundations 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. (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855, vol.IX: 39)

Louis XIV's specific instructions to Talon reflected this belief. In order to minimize intrigue and influence-peddling, Talon was told to be on his guard against attempts by the Jesuits to overstep the boundaries of their power and try to interfere in temporal affairs. Furthermore, he was to keep a close eye on the judicial activities of the Sovereign Council and constantly bear in mind that "this same Justice constituting the happiness of the people and, fulfilling the first intention of the King, his first object ought to be to establish it without any distinction whatsoever, by taking care that the Sovereign Council administer it always with integrity, without any cabal or expense" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855: 26). In cases in which he deemed the Council or seigneurial courts did not act with integrity, he was given the power to overrule its decisions. Finally, he was given the mandate to consult with the Council and some of the local notables about the creation of fixed police regulations concerning justice, the use of public funds and ways of stimulating and diversifying colonial agriculture, commerce and industry.

These instructions highlight the centrality of law to Colbertian doctrine of long distance governance. The Word of God, once considered to be the cement which held the Laurentian network together, was now subjugated to the Law of the King and relegated to the governance of 'spiritual affairs' only. The state of police would henceforth be created

by the creation of a body of law by which the King's intention of expanding his empire would be reconciled to 'public interest' of living in a state of 'happiness'. Though 'happiness' has lately come to denote a state of joy, in 17th century Europe, this word still carried some of its Aristotelean connotations as a state in which the individual's environment was disposed in a manner which was conducive for virtuous behaviour.

In the Colbert-Talon period, it came to be believed that law and police regulations were the best means of producing this 'happiness' by establishing order and regularity over the irregular Laurentian space. First of all, the codified nature of the law made its application more 'impersonal' and less amenable to corruption than a system of governance based on the psychological vagaries of the unregulated power holder. Secondly, they came to see law as a powerful way of enrolling people into the French imperial network because the state's mediation of disputes could reduce the human and financial costs of 'traditional' methods of dispute resolution such as the blood feud or the notoriously corrupt seigneurial courts. By backing up its dispute resolution activities with the coercive power to enforce 'justice', the state-system turned itself into a necessary medium ('third way') for the preservation of 'peace' and 'happiness' between and among citizens. Thirdly, its control over the institutions and the terms in which the law is coded gives it a powerful tool for reconfigure the activities of its subjects by declaring that some are 'legal' while others are 'illegal'. 'Fixed' regulations governing conduct, commerce, communication and so on also allow for the creation of a common ground of activity and shared vocabulary in which each actor working within that common ground is able to more or less predict the behaviour of the other. In these regards, law is obviously an excellent tool of social control which draws disparate actors into the imperial network but,

perhaps more importantly, it is also an intellectual technology which allows many spatially and socially disparate individuals to communicate with one another and create the bonds of trust which form the basis of long distance networks.

Louis XIV's belief that the law should extend to each and all his subjects comes clear in a letter in which he argues that the Sovereign Council "has not been formed except with a view solely to prevent the oppression of the Poor by the more Powerful and the more Wealthy" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855, vol.IX: 86). Unlike France where the rich and powerful could tie up cases in the courts for years, habitants could take their grievances directly to the intendant, the Sovereign Council or the appointed local judicial bodies without the mediation of lawyers (who were banned from the colony) and have their cases tried with little or no expense. As a result, all strata of Canadian society could and often did make use of the institutions created by the central state to mediate their grievances. The equitable form of these judicial institutions had three main effects on the colony's social life: 1) it reduced the power of the seigneurs over the censitaires; 2) it reinforced the centrality of the central state as an arbitrator and regulator of colonial life and 3) it provided additional legitimacy to the state's claims of the 'justice' of its rule.

Under Colbert and Talon, the notion of 'police' began to undergo secularization. The purpose of government was no longer equated with the 'pastoral' task of securing a place in heaven for the Amerindians but rather that of securing the peace, order and good government of the colonists. As a result of this change of discourse, attention was shifted to the relation between the causes of 'police' and a commercial economy. The widespread popular participation in the fur trade meant that the dream of creating a society on the St. Lawrence in which each settler remained fixed to one spot had to be abandoned in favour

of strategy involving the production of the networks necessary for the orderly movement of trade and supervising administrators. As Pasquale Pasquino notes, this desire to secure orderly communications in the Laurentian valley was the essence of what he calls 'police government'. This form of governance perceived the space of the territory as an

open space traversed by men and things. Squares, markets, roads, bridges, rivers: these are the critical points in the territory which police will mark out and control. The prescriptions or regulations of police are instruments of this work in formation, but at the same time they are also products of a sort of spontaneous creation of law, or rather of a demand for order which outreaches law and encroaches on domains never previously occupied, where hitherto neither power, order nor authority had thought to hold sway. (Pasquino, 1991: 111)

In this regard, the plan to francisize the Amerindians was not the only strategy which Colbert borrowed from the Jesuits. For most of the 17th century, the spatial patterns in the Laurentian valley reflected the fact that the St. Lawrence and its tributaries were the only means of intracolonial communication. So that each farmer might have access to its waters, lots were conceded in long narrow strips beginning at the waterfront and extending back. As the population increased, the St. Lawrence began to take on the aspect of a long road with a two single rows of houses lining each edge. In the mind of Colbert and Louis XIV, this settlement structure was both a defensive liability and a breeding grounds for many of the disorders which they believed to plague Amerindian society because the distances which separated each farmhouse from its neighbours reduced the possibilities of mutual aid and surveillance and seigneurial surveillance.

In order to counter this flaw in the system, Colbert borrowed a second trick from the Jesuit arsenal: the reduction. It will be recalled that one of the main conversions tactics of the Jesuit was to settle Amerindian populations in nucleated villages in the belief

that by reducing their ‘vagabondage’ and ‘fixing’ them in place, they could become civilized. Colbert and Louis XIV felt that the spatial structure of the colony necessitated similar measures and began to advocate the ‘reduction’ of the habitants into villagers.

According to Michel Foucault, one of the prevailing political beliefs of the period was that “in the art of government the task is to establish continuity, in both an upwards and a downwards direction.” (Foucault, 1991: 91). Upward continuity is established when she who wishes to govern a state proves that she is able first to govern her own affairs while downward continuity means that if a state is well run, the heads of families will know how to properly govern their affairs. In Talon’s writings, this belief is manifested in his consistent belief that in order to encourage subjects to change their behaviour, he must first provide them with example of how to properly do so.

One of the ways in which he sought to lead by example was through the construction of model villages. After expropriating lands from the Jesuits, Talon built three settlements northeast of Quebec in which all the lots radiated out from a central nucleus where the settlers homes would be built. Talon justified the expropriation of these lands for reason which were purely *raisons d’état*. First of all, he argued that the newly designed villages would permit the creation of a net of mutual surveillance in which “les habitants du Canada s’entrevoient souvent, s’entreconnoissent, s’entre’aident et s’entre’secourent plus aisement” (quoted in Roy, 1924: 56). He further argued that their proximity to Quebec would supply the town with defenders as well as a steady source of wheat, fruit, vegetables, wood, meat and dairy products which allow it to better endure sieges or the severing of its supply lines and, conversely, increase the villager’s access to manufactured goods as well as the shelter offered by Fort St. Louis. Finally, he argued

that it was especially important to settle new immigrants near Quebec because the concentration of administrative and religious institutions in the town meant that “les familles qui seront envoyées de France en tireront de grands avantages pour leur instruction en la manière de vivre en Canada pour le spirituel et pour le temporel.” (quoted in Roy, 1924: 58).

Talon had hoped to settle the members of the Carignan Salières regiment in these new villages. This 1200-man regiment had been sent to Canada in 1665 and engaged in a series of indecisive military battles with the Iroquois in 1666 which cowed the Iroquois into what would be fifteen years of peace. Once this campaign was over, Colbert and Talon hoped to be able to convince the soldiers to settle in Canada with gifts of cash, tools, lands and titles of nobility as well as access to the manpower and expertise of the older settlers. The settlement of these veteran soldiers was a key element in Talon’s project of securing the St. Lawrence. In Talon’s words, their presence would turn the colony into a *proedia militaria*, a Roman-style military settlement in which the presence of these loyal subjects of the king would “keep the habitants within the colony within the bounds of duty and ward off external enemies” (quoted in Roy, 1924: 61, my translation). In other words, they, like the French settlers of the Jesuit program, would ‘civilize’ the increasingly unruly habitants. The colonial authorities felt that this was a necessary expedient for the maintenance of the king’s long distance control over his colony because:

l’obéissance et la fidélité dûes au prince souffrent plutôt altération dans les pays de l’état éloignés que dans les voisins de l’autorité souveraine, résidant principalement en la personne du prince et y ayant plus de force et de vertu qu’en tout autre, il est de la prudence de prévenir, dans l’établissement de l’état naissant du Canada, toutes les fâcheuses révolutions qui pourroient le rendre de monarchique aristocratique ou démocratique, ou bien, par une puissance et autorité balancée entre les

sujets, le partager en ses parties et donner lieu à un démembrement.
(quoted in Roy, 1924: 64)

For the colonial authorities, the attraction and maintenance of settlers was vital to their efforts to secure the St. Lawrence. First of all, their labour power was necessary in order to sow and harvest the crops which would provide the colony with the energy source necessary to maintain the Laurentian network in a functioning state. Secondly, they would clear the valley of the forests which facilitated the guerilla activities of the Iroquois and the subversive movements of the *coureurs de bois*. Thirdly, they would be enrolled into the local militia where they would be trained in the use of arms.

In order to increase population levels, Talon and the French state coordinated the largest influx of immigrants in the colony's history. Between 1663 and 1672, the colony's population had increased by 160% from approximately 2500 to approximately 6500. During this period, Talon made every effort to settle them in seigneuries in the narrow strip of arable land running between Quebec and Montreal on the north shore and Montreal and Cape St. Ignace on the south shore. Furthermore, the first seigneuries in the Richelieu valley began to be granted during his intendancy. Settlement west of Montreal, however, was forbidden in the belief that any settlement in the area would simply lead to abuses of the fur trade as well as a further dispersion of the colony's resources.

In order to provide land for these new settlers, Colbert advocated the reorganization if not annulment of certain seigneurial grants. In the 1640s and 50s. the cabal which controlled the Council of Quebec doled out huge land grants to itself and its creatures. Colbert charged Talon with investigating which of these grants had gone undeveloped and seizing those lands and regranting them in smaller parcels to other

settlers. Furthermore, in a land starved for labour, everything possible was done to reduce the demands placed upon the habitant's time and pocketbook in order to induce them to remain productive citizens of the colony. Talon made it his task to curb seigneurial abuses of power which might frighten off potential settlers. In 1667, for example, he and the other colonial authorities ordered the deportation of a seigneur back to France on account of the "plusieurs et différentes plaintes qui nous ont esté faites contre la conduite du Sr. De la Fredière par les habitants de Canada" (quoted in Roy, 1924: 74).

Besides populating the valley, Talon took measures to reduce its 'opacity'. Though the fact that the habitants lived in riverine settlements which did not permit centralized or mutual surveillance was vexing enough to governmental authorities, the 'porousness' of the settlement pattern was made worse by the fact the high level of undeveloped farmland and low population densities in the rural areas meant that the colonists were generally separated from one another by large forests. In 1667, Talon began to take measures to stimulate the clearing and settlement of the spaces intervening between farmsteads and increasing the population densities. On May 22 of that year, he published an ordinance which declared that every habitant had to maintain '*feu et lieu*' (permanent occupation) of his conceded lands but he also had to clear two arpents per year. If the habitant did not comply, their lands would be seized and regranted to another censitaire. To complement these coercive methods, Talon also began to lobby the French crown to grant titles of nobility to those seigneurs and 'medailles du Roy' to those *censitaires* who had been particularly diligent in settling and clearing the land.

He also endeavored to increase the state's presence in the lives of the rural habitants through the formation of the militia. Though some form of the militia had been

around since as early as 1651, the organization of all habitants into militia companies began in the time of Talon. In 1669, Louis XIV ordered Talon to induce the governor, de Courcelles, to “exercise the inhabitants from time to time, collecting them for the management and carrying of arms” (quoted in O’Callaghan, vol. IX: 69). Though Courcelles organized the militia, it was Talon who made the innovation which tied this potentially subversive force firmly to the apron-strings of the state. Talon decided that each district should have a militia unit and that each unit should have a standard and a captain chosen by the unit. As W.J. Eccles makes clear, these officers became the intendant’s eyes and mouth in the countryside: “in addition to their military duties they had civil functions to perform; they acted as the intendant’s agents in the rural districts, communicating his orders to the habitants and seeing to it that they were carried out.” (Eccles, 1964: 37)

Mandatory membership in the militia meant that even the habitants in the most remote rural parishes would periodically come under the gaze and the guardianship of an agent of the central state. This guardianship is consistent with what Eccles calls the paternalism of the colonial government. The political hierarchy in the colony was organized on a family plan—the King was a great father with paternal care for his subjects and paternal authority over them while the governor and the intendant were father figures expected to enforce the king’s paternal will. In such a paternal system, there is no clear demarcation of the boundaries between ‘state’ and ‘civil society’. As a result, no aspect of the lives of the subjects was too big or too small to draw the interest and intervention of the top officials. On the other hand, the state began to also portray itself as

a 'universal benefactor' which began to place the interests of 'each and all' its subjects above narrow class interests.

This paternalism is powerfully manifested in one of Colbert's instruction to Talon in which he proposed that the intendant scrutinize the behaviour of the colonists with scope and intensity rivaling the watch of the Jesuit missionaries over their 'reduced' converts. Colbert writes that like the 'good master of a household', Talon should create the conditions necessary to stimulate his 'children' to engage in industry and commerce. This involved above all, an inquiry into the minutiae of their daily lives: "nothing can better contribute [to attract abundance to the colony] than entering into the details of their little affairs and of their household, it will not be mal-a-propos if, after being established, he visit all the settlements, the one after the other, to understand their true state" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855: 27-8). Once this 'true state' was known, Talon was to redirect their activities towards more useful and profitable ends by making available the expertise and resources necessary to increase the population and its productivity.

True to the paternalistic form of the governance in which no aspect of the settler's life was too minute or private to go unregulated, Talon began to use police regulations to increase the population and population density of the Laurentian valley. First of all, numerous regulations were enacted to encourage couples to have large families. For example, families with ten children were awarded an annual pension of three hundred livres per year while those with twelve received four hundred livres. In response to Colbert's suggestion that he encourage intermarriage between French men and Amerindian women, Talon undertook a study of the reproductive capacities of the latter and was struck by the fact that they nursed their children for two or three years. He

concluded, however, that “this obstacle to the speedy building up of the colony can be overcome by a police regulation.” (quoted in Diamond, 1961: 9).

Talon also enacted several measures aimed at promoting marriages in the colony. Each newly married women received a gift of fifty livres from Talon and fathers whose daughters were not married by the age of sixteen or whose sons were not married by the age of twenty were summoned to court every six months and fined. In 1670, the Council passed a resolution ordering all bachelors to marry women from the latest shipment of ‘filles du Roi’ within fifteen days of the arrival of the ships carrying them or face a year long ban on hunting, fishing and trading with Amerindians. In the next year, Talon reiterated the order and added that all non-married men would not be allowed to even enter into the forests as long as there were eligible women in the colony.

This concern with increasing population was accompanied by a concern with increasing colonial productivity. One of the hard lessons learned from the capture of Quebec by the Kirkes and the Iroquois blockades of the fur routes was that as long as the colony relied upon France for its supplies of finished products and the Amerindians and coureurs de bois west of Montreal for his supply of raw materials, it was at the whim of any marauder who might interrupt the long line of communication at any point. As a result, Talon was given the responsibility of promoting industry in the colony to ensure that it would always have the bare minimum of tools, goods and arms necessary to maintain the settlements. He was to encourage farmers to grow cash crops like vegetables, fruit, tobacco and hemp besides wheat while the smaller trees of the valley could be turned into barrel staves for export to France while the large oaks could be the raw materials to supply a colonial shipbuilding industry. Furthermore, it was envisaged

that these newly constructed ships would form the basis of a colonial trading fleet which could engage in trade with Acadia, Boston and the French Antilles. In these ways, it was hoped that the colony could be weaned off its dependence upon the fur trade.

Though these measures were primarily taken in order to increase the colony's population and productivity, Talon believed that they would also have the effect of 'fixing' the coureurs de bois in place by "les attacher par le mariage à quelque corps de communauté par les nécessiter à travailler à la culture de la terre" (RAPQ, 1930/31, vol. 11: 153). The coureurs de bois were French men who, after the destruction of Huronia, traveled in the unpoliced spaces west of Montreal in quest of furs. Though their membership was initially comprised of only a handful of guides and interpreters in the 1650s, it was estimated that by Talon's time, their numbers reached as high as 500 able-bodied men leaving the colony per year. Not only did this constitute a huge loss in manpower but colonial authorities feared that when they when left the confines of the colony, they could either defect to the Protestant Anglo-Dutch traders to the south or worse, they could slip into a state of savagery in which there would be "ni curés qui les gèrent, ni gouverneur, ni pères qui les gouvernent et les contraignent" (quoted in Jacquin, 1996: 125). Though some served as loyal guides, interpreters and diplomats for the French state, Talon complained in a letter to Colbert that, for the most part, "they ruin, partially, the Christianity of the Indians and the commerce of the French who labor in their settlements to extend the Colony. It were well did his Majesty order me, by *lettre de C'achet*, to fix them in some place where they would participate in the labors of the *Communauté*" (O'Callaghan, 1855: 65).

By 1672, it was clear that stronger measures than enforced marriage were needed to fix the coureurs in place. In that year, the new governor, the Count Frontenac, reported to Colbert that the coureurs de bois were quickly developing into rivals for power over the St. Lawrence:

Their insolence, as I am informed, extends even to the formation of leagues, and to the distribution of notices of rendezvous; threatening to build forts and to repair towards Manatte and Orange, boasting that they will be received and have every protection ther. They have begun last year to carry their peltries thither. (cited in O'Callaghan, 1855: 91)

In order to prevent these potentially subversive communications and limit the amount of French settlers leaving the colony, Frontenac and Talon began in 1672 to pass ordinances banning all habitants from leaving the colony and 'plunging into the woods' without licenses known as 'congés' issued by the Governor.

Punishments for traders operating without a license ranged from public flogging for first time offenders to a sentence of public branding followed by life in the galleys for repeat offenders. Furthermore, anyone caught supplying illegal traders with credit or items of trade or buying furs from the coureurs would risk having all their goods seized by the state and be subject to fines and pillory. Though the authorities allowed a six month grace period before this legislation took effect, Frontenac makes it clear that these rules are to apply to all habitants:

Mandons à tous gouverneurs, commandans, seigneurs, juges et autres officiers qu'il appartiendra de tenir la main à l'exécution des présentes qui seront leues, publiées et affichés partout où besoin est à ce que aucun n'en ignore. (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855: 113)

Despite this attempt to limit access to the fur trade, such ordinances were bound to remain dead letters as long as fur remained the economic lifeblood of the colony. Since

participation in the fur trade was the only means by which colonists in every social strata could raise their standards of living, it would be very difficult to expect widespread compliance with these new regulations. Furthermore, since policing capabilities during the French régime were rudimentary at best with a Maréchaussée consisting of a marshal and six to fifteen archers expected to police the entire Laurentian valley, there was little chance of the state imposing its will on the colonists by means of force alone. Talon, however, sought to provide the habitants with more 'useful' ways to increase their prosperity.

First of all, he fostered the development of colonial industry. Under his aegis, shipyards, tanneries, mines, and an iron foundry were established in the colony. Artisans were attracted to the colony by a loosening of guild restrictions which allowed them to set up their own shops much quicker than they could in France. Attempting to teach by example, Talon himself invested in several schemes, the most famous of which was his brewery. In a letter to Colbert, Talon makes it quite clear that this tutelage involved inculcating colonists with love of 'industry' in both its productive and moral senses:

pour divertir plusieurs fainéants d'entrer dans les bois et se joindre avec les sauvages...j'ay ouvert la porte au travail et j'ay formé des ateliers qui ont entretenu près de trois cens cinquante hommes durant tout l'esté, je puis dire mesme que j'ay fait un espèce de guerre à l'oisiveté. (Roy, 1931, vol. 11: 153)

Though the sequestration of several hundred men in the disciplinary spaces of the workhouses was probably in itself a good thing in the eyes of Talon, it became doubly important when placed in the larger perspective of the colony economy. All of the industries mentioned above rely upon raw materials readily available in the Laurentian countryside. Shipyards need lumber, tanneries need leather, linen-makers need flax, breweries need wheat and so on. The genius of Talon's plan is that at the same time that

he is disciplining a group of idlers, he is also accomplishing his objectives of francisizing Laurentian space by providing farmers and potential farmers with domestic outlets for their produce and hence encouraging them to clear and plant more land.

In order to accommodate this increased movement of goods and people within the colony, Talon improved the communicational infrastructure of the colony through the construction of bridges and roads which would make it easier for farmers to bring their goods to market and sought to find or acquire from the British an all season port from which they could ship their goods. In order to provide farmers with even more markets for their products, Talon endeavoured to establish trade networks outside the colony with Acadia and the French Antilles.

Furthermore, he worked diligently alongside the governors of the colony to prevent further Iroquois incursions on the Laurentian network. In his first year as intendant, his energies were mainly devoted to preparing the colony for the arrival of the Carignan-Salières regiment and an eventual assault on Iroquoia. This involved overseeing the construction of 152 small barques capable of carrying 15 men each and the construction and munition of a line of forts along the Richelieu-Lake Champlain water system which would serve as forts protecting the Laurentian valley as well as advance posts for raids into Iroquois lands. Within several years, Talon began to believe that it was also necessary for the French to secure the northern shore of Lake Ontario at present day Kingston and Niagara in order to control access to the Pays d'en Haut and staunch the flow of western furs into Albany.

Even though Talon offered to pay the costs of the fortification of Lake Ontario with his own money, the response of the metropole was that "it would be much better to

restrict yourself to a tract of country that the colony will, of itself, be able to maintain, than to embrace too vast a quantity, a portion of which we may perhaps be obliged one day to abandon, to the decrease of his Majesty's reputation and that of his crown." (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855, vol. IX: 41). At the same time, however, the crown was also pushing for more exploration of the lands west of Montreal. By 1672, Louis' instructions to Talon asserted that "next to the increase of the Colony of Canada, there is nothing more important for that country and His Majesty's service than the discovery of the passage to the South Sea" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855, vol. IX: 89). Talon followed these somewhat contradictory commands by commissioning explorers such as Lasalle, Saint-Lusson, Casson, Albanel and others to map out the waterways running south, west, and north of Montreal, all the while working at strengthening the fortification of the three towns of the colony and especially those protecting Quebec.

From this overview of Talon's administration and the years leading up to it, we can see that a new principle of governance was taking root on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Though the Colbert-Talon project of creating 'useful communications' developed out of Champlain's essentially military project of securing and fortifying the Laurentian communication network, their measures went far beyond his in their extension into what would later be described as 'civil society'. Unlike previous administrations which sought merely to assure the security of the population, Talon sought to procure peace, repose and plenty for the population. However, as F. A. Hayek was fond of pointing out, a government which seeks to secure happiness for its population recognizes no limits on its intrusion in the everyday affairs of its subjects.

This movement of the state-system under Talon and Colbert into hitherto 'uncharted territories' required them, like the early explorers, to develop new means of knowing and representing the population. This prompted the development of a series of devices and techniques ranging from maps to censuses to passports to the statistical calculations of political economy which allowed them to track a new discursive entity, 'the population' and its growth, its productive capacities and its movements. This 'accumulation of traces' makes it easier for the authorities for authorities to manage the population through what Foucault calls 'large-scale campaigns' or discrete tactics which channel the movements and activities of its subjects without their knowledge.

In New France, the central term in this project of population management was 'communication'. As Colin Gordon points out, 'communication' in this period, was "a term whose meaning embraces all the processes of human intercourse, exchange, circulation and cohabitation within a governed population." (Gordon, 1991: 20). Ever since Cartier, successive governmental authorities aspired to, in Foucault's term, 'set up useful communications and hinder transgressive ones'. Champlain, for example, concerned himself with securing the St. Lawrence from English, Dutch and Iroquois depredations through the construction and alliances and his tireless promotion of settlement and colonial self-sufficiency. The Jesuit reduction, for its part, was an attempt to 'civilize' the Amerindians by enclosing them in delimited spaces where the watchful eye of the 'black robe', the gossiping mouths of their neighbours or the punishing arm of the law would ensure that they could not slip off into the 'disorderly' woods but remained 'fixed', 'obedient' and 'productive'.

During the Talon-Colbert period of the history of New France, the Jesuit 'reduction' was secularized and expanded in scope. Where the Jesuits contented themselves with channeling communication within the space of the village, Colbert-Talon sought to 'reduce' the entire St. Lawrence valley in order to secure the territory which undergirded the Laurentian communication network and to increase the productivity of the population within that space. This desire to create a well regulated system of communications in the Laurentian valley and beyond explains why Colbert and Talon put so much effort in trying to settle the habitants in nucleated villages, to populate and clear the riversides, to implant sanctioned communicators in each and all seigneuries, towns and parishes, to regulate the fur trade, to create new trade routes for colonial produce and so on. In the next chapter, I will evaluate how well this system actually worked.

Chapter 6: The Failure of ‘Useful’ Communication

In 1685, the Governor Denonville complained that “There is nothing fairer nor better conceived than the rulings that govern this country, but I assure you that none are so poorly observed.” (quoted in Dechêne, 1992: 402). In the history of New France, this belief was reiterated many times by exasperated secular and religious authorities alike. In this chapter, I would like to discuss how the Colbert-Talon project of creating a legislative edifice which would set up ‘useful’ communications while blocking off ‘disorderly’ ones was doomed to at least partial failure in the ensuing quarter century.

For the inhabitants of the American lands over which the French state claimed sovereignty, the power of the state was experienced differently depending upon whether they lived in one of the colony’s towns, in the Laurentian countryside or in the vaguely defined frontier lands known as the Pays d’en Haut. During the French Regime, what Anthony Giddens calls the ‘administrative reach’ of the colonial state-system was fairly limited. This attenuated ‘reach’ severely curtailed its ability to enforce its directives over the expanse of the colony. As Robert Harang-Tiercin points out in La Police de l’alcool et de la course au Canada, sous le régime français:

Les difficultés qui entravent toute législation répressive coloniale semblent s’exprimer selon des règles permanentes. L’éloignement du Pouvoir Central en amoindrit singulièrement la force alors qu’elle exaspère celle des autorités locales. Nulle part la toute puissance du grand Roi ne fut plus dédaignée qu’en Nouvelle France. La lenteur et les difficultés de la transmission des ordres, la difficulté du contrôle, l’absence du moyen de coercition paralysent la répression. (Harang-Tiercin, 1941: 12-13)

As a result of these ‘infrastructural’ deficiencies, power and its manifestations tended to be concentrated in and radiate out from those locales in which the power holders were also concentrated—the cities of New France. In the countryside and the

frontier lands, however, “There were close and finite limits to the administrative state’s ability to penetrate and organize the colonial countryside... many colonists remained remote from central authority, unaware of many of its directives, and prepared in many cases to transgress against others without a fear of detection” (Wynn, 1992: 316). In other words, the power of the state-system to influence the behaviour of its subjects grew more diluted as the space intervening between it and those subjects increase. In recognition of this radial pattern of power, I will divide my discussion of colonial insubordination into four parts: citadel, city, countryside and frontier.

The Citadel

In his writings on state formation, Anthony Giddens argue that in ‘traditional’ states, the concentration and coordination of military, administrative and religious resources in the city allowed it to act as a ‘power container’ or, in Miller & Rose’s words, a ‘power centre’ able to dominate the neighbouring countryside. The towns of New France were arranged in a manner that attempted to communicate both the glory and the strength of the French control of the St. Lawrence. Placed at key points along the St. Lawrence, the soldiers stationed within their walls and the cannon placed on those walls protected the countryside and secured the orderly movement of goods, messages and people along the river’s course from dangerous interlopers.

Within their walls, the layout of the towns reiterated that message of the King’s power. Following a tradition of urban design which dates back to antiquity, Quebec, the colonial capital, was built in two parts: the lower and upper towns. The lower town was a narrow shelf of land running along the St. Lawrence and the site of the town’s port, its public places and the homes, stores and workshops of most of the town’s workers,

artisans and merchants. The upper town was built upon a cliff which rose up abruptly from behind the lower town and was linked to the latter by means of a tortuous road. Unlike their 'mediocre' counterparts in the cramped and noisome lower town, the secular and religious authorities of the upper town were able to build imposing structures and sumptuous gardens on its airy heights. By 1672, Lanctôt reports that the Chateau St. Louis, the Governor's palace, the Bishop's palace, the Jesuit seminary, the Ursuline monastery, the Hôtel Dieu and what would later become the Intendant's palace were all perched on the rock overlooking the lower town.

The cliffs rising behind the lower town created a natural set of fortifications which defended the upper town from attack and limited the access of the residents of the lower town to its lofty heights. According to Lewis Mumford, this assemblage of religious and military monumental structures behind the walls of a (in this case natural) citadel was the main spatial characteristic which differentiated the city from the village: "The mark of the city, let me repeat, is the coming together of these two institutions in a sacred precinct." (Mumford, 1961: 65). In city endowed with such a precinct, Mumford argues, "even the humblest could vicariously participate in greatness and claim it for his own" (Mumford, 1961: 68) through the direct experience of the majesty of the structures built to house gods and kings. Rising out of the rocks of the cliff, the solidity of the stone structures of the upper town must have given observers in the lower town or on the river a sense that the French power in the valley was chthonic, that it stemmed from the very earth while their spires and towers linked that power to the heavens. This message of the connection of earthly and spiritual power in the expansion of the French empire was reiterated in the

stained glass and statues like those of Christ holding a globe in his hand which adorned many of the churches of the period.

As Quebec gradually replaced Tadoussac as the colony's main ocean port, it also became the entry point for messages and ordinances sent from France. As New France's "window on the world", the port of Quebec was not without its problems. The fact that it was frozen shut six months of the year combined with the two or three months it took to make the trip from Europe to severely limit the frequency of communications between the colony and the home country (this prompted the colonial authorities to sponsor the exploration of the Mississippi in search of an all year port and repeatedly petition the French state to somehow 'acquire' Manhattan). The ships from France arrived each summer some time in late July or early August bringing goods, people and mail from Europe. In order to avoid being caught by the river's annual freeze-up, they had to be sure to leave by late October. This meant that a message sent to France from Canada generally had to wait between eight and ten months for a response.

This irregular postal communication, however, was not enough to ensure effective colonial governance and the loyalty of the king's agents. In this manner, the metropolitan authorities found themselves in the same boat as the other major transoceanic organizations of the period: the commercial enterprise. In "The Nature of Enterprise", Barry Supple argues that the basic modes of the organization of commercial enterprise in this period can be understood as a response to the problem of inadequate communication and slow transportation. The trading capitalist, like the King, is almost always separated both spatially and intellectually from his agents and their field of action (whether that be a market or a colony). In that field of action, constantly changing circumstances and the

metropole's inability to obtain precise and timely information forced the King and the resident merchant to place a great deal of trust in the hands of his agents. It was in recognition of this that entrepreneurs tended to fall back upon kinship and religious ties to reduce commercial risk. Supple writes that:

In a business world where the unknown was a credit risk and the entrepreneur's success lay so much in the hands of men beyond his immediate control, the ties of the family, of religion, and of the social community which went with both, were the cement of commercial confidence and commercial organization. (Supple, 1977: 410)

In the absence of any such emotional ties, it became imperative upon the trader to attempt to create them. J.F Boshier writes that personal connections or introductions were necessary for the French trader without any prior connections to break into the Quebec market. It should come as no surprise, then, that in order to maintain these ties, written communication had to be supplemented with regular visits to recharge loyalties and associations. The merchant, therefore, "was always a writer and a traveler, a specialist in communication" (Miquelon, 1975: 4).

This same organization logic was at work in the long-distance administration of New France. As I have been arguing, the sporadic communications created by the seasonal rhythms of the St. Lawrence between the colony and France forced the metropole to cede a considerable amount of autonomy to the colonial government to act in emergency situations as well as on how it dealt with small scale "police" issues such as public hygiene, mercantile regulation, fire regulation and so on. Though there has been considerable debate among scholars of the period as to whether the Sovereign Council was set up to provide a system of "checks and balances" in order to prevent egregious abuses of power, it is clear that the often overlapping jurisdictions of the colonial officials,

the explicit orders given to each to survey the activities of the others and the demand that each official send regular and detailed reports back to Versailles were designed as a means of long distance control.

Some colonial officials like Talon seemed to have been firm believers in the legitimacy of the great civilizing project of French empire-building. A few bon mots from the King and the dispensation of 'medailles du Roy' to those who performed some notable service to the King was often enough to maintain their loyalty. Others, however, had to kept in line through the other major means of long distance control at the disposal of the metropole: patronage.

In 17th century France, patronage was one of the main weapons in the crown's centralizing arsenal. The patronage networks which issued from the King permeated and linked every level of French society in this period and turned potential rivals for power into suitors for royal favours. Officials would accept appointments in far off territories like New France and do everything within their power to follow the King's orders simply in hopes of advancing their positions at court. Despite these safeguards, the metropolitan government's inability to effectively supervise its agents could lead to considerable abuses of power. As the intendant De Meulles complained about the activities of the Governor General la Barre: "The empire may be said to be divided between the King and his Governor; and were this to last long, the governor's share would be far greater than that of his Majesty" (quoted in O'Callaghan, 1855: 229).

In the colonial career of Louis Buade de Frontenac, this division between king and governor became a chasm. Frontenac's career proves Kenneth McNaught's assertion that the history of New France is "that of biographies: even the limits imposed upon authority

by the circumstances of frontier existence are revealed in the activities of adventurous individuals more than in the evolution of classes" (McNaught, 1988: 28). Frontenac arrived at Quebec for his first tour of duty as governor general in the summer of 1672. In the fall of that year, Talon returned to France forever and Colbert had hoped that the Sovereign Council would be able to minister to the police, justice and finances of the colony without an intendant while Frontenac would concentrate on the colony's military and diplomatic affairs. Before long, however, he was attempting to arrogate to himself the former functions and began accusing the three members of the council who opposed his grab for power of sedition and ordered that they be placed under house arrest until they could be sent to France to face trial. This was the first of many disputes which Frontenac would have with the other colonial officials, many of which were played out on the streets of Quebec and Montreal, the net effect of which was to destroy any popular notion of elite self-control in a period in which the leaders were expected to be models of 'policed' behaviour. Furthermore, as W.J. Eccles explains, after engaging in these public feuds, Frontenac would alter his behaviour in late summer in hopes of eluding royal sanction:

the summer was advancing; the ships would soon be leaving with the dispatches to the Court and the letters of all concerned to friends in high places, giving full accounts of all that had transpired... Consequently, Frontenac suddenly decided that it would be wise to moderate his attitude until after the last ships had sailed and communications had been severed for another year... when the last ships sailed for France he knew that no matter what the attitude of Louis XIV and Colbert might be, no one in New France, including himself, would hear of it for nine or ten months. (Eccles, 1959: 138-41)

Frontenac exploited his remoteness from Paris not merely to feed his seeming endless appetite for self-aggrandizement but also to refill the coffers of his various creditors as well as his own. Like many courtiers of the period, Frontenac lived well

beyond his means and ran up considerable debts. As a result, when Frontenac was appointed governor of New France, he seemed to believe that the king was giving him *carte blanche* to make money by whatever means in order to pay off his debts and to eventually retire from the harsh frontier to live in civilized metropolitan comfort.

Like his predecessors, Frontenac was paid a fairly modest salary which did not allow him to live in the luxury which he believed to befit his social station. In order to rectify this situation, he began to engage directly in the fur trade. Although there was nothing unusual about a government official engaging in private enterprise in this period in which state officials, finances, properties and functions were often confused with private ones, Frontenac's action revealed the limitations of such an undifferentiated system. Though most governors and intendants took advantage of their positions in minor ways in order to increase their competitive advantages in the fur trade, Frontenac used all the coercive tools at his disposal in order to consolidate his control over the colonial fur trade.

In this period, Montreal was the terminal point of all the furs flowing in from the waterways west of Lachine via the Ottawa river or the southern route from Lake Ontario. In order to putatively secure the southern route and to divert furs away from Albany, Frontenac decided in the summer of 1673 to establish a post at Cataraqui (present day Kingston). Frontenac acquired the transport and manpower necessary for such an enterprise by commandeering canoes from Montreal and ordering four hundred residents of the area to supply more than a month of *corvée* labour to build the fort and shuttle supplies up and down the St. Lawrence. In order to supply the fort with munitions, supplies and trading goods, he borrowed liberally from the king's stores.

Since this was all done without the consent or knowledge of the metropolitan authorities, Frontenac dispatched one of his creatures, Robert La Salle, to France before the summer was out in order to obtain the king's consent for his actions as well as the concession of the post as a seigneurie before the torrent of complaints from the habitants and merchants of Montreal could reach the king's ears. La Salle was successful in obtaining Fort Frontenac as a concession and over the next few years, the Frontenac-La Salle syndicate would construct similar posts at Niagara, Detroit, Chicago and in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys without the king's knowledge. W.J. Eccles argues that this spate of fort-building marked the death of Colbert's compact colony policy. These new posts shifted the focal point of the fur trade away from Montreal and into the west. As a consequence, he argues, in order for Montreal merchants to compete with Frontenac and his associates, "the Montreal fur traders were now obliged to hire *coureurs de bois* to take trade goods to the Indian villages; had they not done so, La Salle and his men would have had first pick of all the furs in the west." (Eccles, 1959: 84)

The merchants at Montreal faced competition in other ways from Frontenac and his associates. When Frontenac arrived in the colony, he almost immediately began issuing edicts threatening unlicensed *coureurs de bois* and anyone who abetted their activities with sundry punishments. He also carried out his threats: in 1674, he arrested twelve *coureurs* in the employ of the Montreal merchants and immediately put one to death 'pour encourager les autres' to repent which they as well as, so he claimed, all but five of the hundreds of other *coureurs* did. At the same time, however, Frontenac was busily issuing trading permits and, when the king later banned all trading outside the

colony, hunting licenses to his associates so that they could directly visit the Amerindian villages while the Montreal merchants had to wait for the latter to come to them.

Even when the Amerindians came to Montreal, Frontenac and his creatures still managed to hamper the efforts of the merchants. Ever since the time of Champlain, Montreal had been the scene of annual trading fairs in which Amerindian and French traders gathered on the common between the town and the river to engage furs for European goods. It was also an occasion in which the French and up to 500 members of the tribes of the Pays d'en Haut could reaffirm their political and military alliance. These fairs typically began with the familiar ceremony of speech giving and reciprocal gift exchange followed by feasting before the trade began in earnest on the second day. In his relentless pursuit of his own self-interest, Frontenac, however, put the alliances cemented by his predecessor's correct participation in these ceremonies at risk. Before the ceremonies had a chance to begin, Frontenac and his associates would visit the camps of the various tribes and demand a 'fee' which would offset the cost of 'guarding' them. In other words, like a common street hustler, Frontenac was attempting to extort protection rents from the colony's allies.

Throughout this study, I have been using Philip Abrams' term 'the state-system' as shorthand to describe those actors and institutions which sought to regulate communication in the Laurentian valley. As I have detailed, this system comprised of personnel drawn from the administrative, military, religious and 'civilian' classes of the colony and the metropole. The problem with using such a shorthand term is that it suggests that the members of the governmental elite of the period were highly unified in their goals and actions. By the time, however, that Frontenac was recalled by Colbert in

1682, any illusion of elite unity had been dispelled. Between the years 1672-75, Frontenac was openly competing with the Sovereign Council for control over the finances, police and justice of the colony and had arrested the Governor of Montreal, François Marie Perrot, and one of his supporters, the Abbé Fénelon (related to Colbert by marriage) on charges of sedition when the former arrested two of Frontenac's 'hunters' who had set up shop on the lower Ottawa and the latter gave a sermon lambasting Frontenac's abuse of power in protest. By 1675, Colbert was forced to take measures to curb Frontenac's power. He named a new intendant; he made the Sieur de Villeray the senior member of the Council and decided that, from that point onwards, the King and not the governor and bishop would choose the members of the Council. Even with these checks on his authority, Frontenac continued to clash with other members of the elite: he accused the intendant and the Jesuits of illegally engaging in the fur trade while the bishop and the other religious orders in the colony opposed his decision to allow the sale of brandy to the Amerindians as well as his plans to present Molière's *Tartuffe* in Quebec's Upper Town. Despite these and other recurring problems, Frontenac successfully parlayed his personal connections at court and his proficiency at performing the rituals of patronage into two separate appointments which lasted a total of 19 years (1672-82 & 1689-98).

Under Frontenac, many of the shortcomings of the colonial administrative structure were revealed. The metropole's inability to survey his activities and to communicate with its other colonial agents, the lack of any clear distinctions between public and private interests, the lack of 'popular' feedback mechanisms and the metropole's continued reliance on patronage and trust (despite Colbert's bureaucratizing reforms) to keep colonial agents in line meant that a cantankerous and self-aggrandizing

nature like Frontenac would have many opportunities as governor to increase his own power and/or wealth at the colony's expense. As I have been arguing in this study, the maintenance of the imperial network linking Versailles to the Ottawas of Michilimackinac and beyond required a fair degree of consensus among both the secular and religious elite of the colony and the various tribal leaders of the Pays d'en Haut. Frontenac's words and actions consistently threatened this consensus and, as a consequence, the peace and prosperity of the network.

The City

Social stratification in 17th century Quebec and, to a lesser extent, the other towns of New France, had a distinctly spatial character. Corresponding to these spatial distinction but was a series of sartorial cleavages which also allowed the denizens of the towns to determine the class membership of passersby. The governor, accompanied by his personal guard clad in gleaming breastplates, paraded about town in full military dress adorned with gold lace. The members of the Sovereign Council and the Intendant appeared in public wearing scarlet robes and carrying ceremonial swords. Soldiers and members of the religious orders also wore clothes which reflected their functions—uniforms, robes and habits.

For women, membership in the circle of the colonial elite was marked by the use of expensive materials such as muslin and lace to adorn necklines and cuffs, fine cloth for their skirts cut 'à la française', the finest wool for her socks, crafted leather shoes and so on while notable men distinguished themselves by dressing in the 'costume bourgeois' of the age—an ensemble comprising of a long coat (justaucorps), vest, a shirt of fine cloth, culottes, silk or wool socks, buckled black leather shoes and often topped with a

powdered wig. On the other, the 'mediocres' of the town dressed in a manner that made more economical use of the coarse and inexpensive materials at their disposal and allowed them the freedom of movement necessary to accomplish their daily labours.

The fact that there was a spatial separation between the precincts of power and those of the popular classes in the towns did not mean, however, that the latter were left to themselves to build and govern their quarters as they saw fit. As my discussion of Talon suggested, the thought that certain social spaces should be left free of overt or covert state interference simply did not cross the mind of the governmental elite of the period. Because of the spatial proximity of the city dwellers, the latter found themselves under a great deal more scrutiny than their rural counterparts.

To begin with, the practice of billeting soldiers among the townspeople during periods of intense military activity placed members of the state-system directly into the homes of the common people (the clergy, the nobility, high functionaries, royal notaries and militia captains were exempted from this duty). Though billeting was primarily intended as a means to house soldiers, it was also used in this period as a particularly inefficient means of social control (billeted soldiers tended to commit far more than their share of crimes). Colbert, for example, recommended the billeting of soldiers in France as a non-violent means of convincing people to pay their taxes: "You must use every possible means to end this constraint through billeting" (quoted in Mettam, 1977: 100).

The occasional omnipresence of soldiers in the towns was supplemented by a similar concentration of administrative officials who sought to regulate both the spatial arrangement of the town and the circulation of goods, people and messages within its carefully engineered channels. Quebec, as the administrative center of the colony, housed

the governor general, intendant, the Sovereign Council as well as the Prévôté (municipal court). The upriver towns had their own governors, a subdelegate of the intendant, and a lower royal court (all of which were subservient to their cognate institutions at Quebec). Each of these courts had at least one judge, one *procureur* (an official who tried the case on the behalf of the state) one *greffier* (clerks) and one *huissier* (the official who had the often unpopular task of arresting suspects and seeing to the execution of court decisions).

After 1677, the efforts of the *huissiers* were aided by the creation of a colonial *maréchaussé*. Charged with “la recherche et punition des crimes qui pourront être commis par des gens sans aveu et vagabonds” (quoted in La Grenade-Meunier, 1992: text 17), this office was headquartered in Quebec where the provost marshal was assisted by a lieutenant, six archers and a clerk while the Montreal detachment was comprised of a lieutenant and three archers (presumably Trois-Rivières was too small to require a permanent police force). In certain situations, the *maréchaussé* would be aided in its searches by members of the militia and/or regular soldiers.

While these officials busied themselves with the maintenance of public morals, they were also called upon to help to reduce the possibilities of fire and disease by enforcing police regulations against townspeople keeping livestock on their city properties, building codes which were set up to ensure that houses were built in the most fire-proof manner possible, with latrines and so on. The colony also had a more specialized official known as the ‘grand-voyer’ who was in charge of designing and maintaining the colony’s road network. Though the rural road network would remain underdeveloped until late in the French régime, the grand-voyer was kept busy in the towns where he was given the task

of ensuring that newly constructed houses did not encroach on the streets and that the streets remained open to traffic at all times.

The ‘grand-voyer’ was aided in this task by ‘arpenteurs’—surveyors who, on the basis of their demonstrated mathematical abilities, were chosen to serve in the profession by the intendant. Though the state-system’s attention to the standardized division of land was of great importance in determining the extent and limits of each colonists’ property, Henrik Ronsbo suggests that there is more at stake. In pulverization of American space into a series of grids connected by channels of communication, that space is delocalized and brought under the dominion of the power centres:

When representing possession through geometrical procedures, a particular type of decontextualized knowledge is produced, knowledge that enables state apparatuses to describe possession independently of local knowledge and practice. (Ronsbo, 1996: 67)

With this imposition of a pattern of grids on Laurentian space, the explorer’s representational project of arranging American space within the gridwork of the map or the orderly lines of the text became a socio-spatial project in the hands of the colonizer.

Through this creation of a police force and the meticulous arrangement of the space of the towns, the authorities were better able to control where, when, whom and how the habitants interacted with one another than in the rural areas of the colony. This is reflected in the crime statistics of the period. In “La vie urbaine en Nouvelle France”, André Lachance points out that even though only 20% of the population lived in towns in this period, 60% of the crimes pursued by the authorities occurred in the towns. He argues that these elevated rate of criminal prosecution in the cities was the result of two main factors. First of all, the city populations were small enough that the citizens would

recognize one another but sufficiently concentrated that few transgressions would go unobserved and unreported. Secondly, the concentration of the judicial or policing institutions within the town meant that the transgressive acts could be punished through 'official' channels.

As Lachance suggests, this system of justice depended heavily on the cooperation of the community in identifying and reporting those acts which the state-system labeled criminal. Lachance argues that the state could expect communal cooperation in cases like theft, murder and rape in which the safety of the community and its goods were at risk but in cases in which the community believed that criminal prosecution of a certain behaviour constituted an infringement on their rights, the community was not so agreeable. As the official who had to enforce unpopular decisions, the *huissier* was often the target of the ire of the habitant. One *huissier*, for example, reported that he was intercepted by a mob of angry habitants while he was on his way to deliver a controversial summons. This mob was armed with rocks and sticks and began chasing "screaming: Stop, thief, we are going to kill you and dump you in the marsh." (quoted in Dechêne, 1992: 269). This resistance to these state officials became so widespread that by 1677, the intendant was forced to issue an ordinance against "troubler, empêcher et violenter les officiers de justice, et de s'immiscer dans les règlements de police ni dans l'exercice des fonctions des dits officiers" (quoted in Roy, 1924: 222). Even on occasions in which they were not directly hindering the activities of the officers, the habitants practiced a form of passive resistance which prompted the posting of another ordinance which ordered all habitants of Montreal present while a 'rebellion against justice' was being committed to 'prester main forte' against the transgressor when asked by a state official.

The fact that the latter ordinance was addressed to the inhabitants of the city of Montreal was not surprising. Though the city was putatively under the control of Quebec, it continued to assert its sovereignty throughout the French régime over the issue of smuggling. Ever since the destruction of Huronia, Montreal had been the staging post for inland ventures while Quebec was the seat of the metropolitan factors who controlled the prices of goods shipped to and from New France. The mainly Canadian-born Montreal merchants were forced to equip their trading voyages with goods bought at inflated prices from the Quebec merchants while they were legally bound to sell their furs to the latter at prices far below those offered in Albany. As a result, a profitable smuggling trade between Montreal and Albany soon developed.

The Quebec mercantile and governmental elite was clearly distressed at this state of affairs and began to characterize Montreal as a lawless outpost. In 1683, the governor general suggested shifting the court of the Prévôt de Maréchaux from Quebec where 'obedience is well established' to Montreal where he found that

all the people of those parts were indifferently inclined to obedience and little acquainted with justice, and no royal officers being in those places, that nobody thinks himself bound to obey the Bailiff (*huissier*)...all sorts of excesses, robbery, concealing stolen goods, and desertion, are the ordinary practices followed by 200 libertines who reside on that Island and in its vicinity. (quoted in O'Callaghan, Vol. IX: 205)

Even though the Quebec authorities might increase the number of officials in Montreal and offer the habitants various incentives to inform on one another, it was in the interest of Montrealers of all social strata to keep the illegal trade alive. As Jean Lunn argues, the Quebec government's attempt to curb smuggling were doomed to fail in light of this widespread participation in the smuggling:

Even given conscientious officials, the chances of evading the law were still enormous. A few men, although armed with the right to search any building, could not possibly cope with a community interested almost without exception in the smuggling trade. So unanimously was the law opposed by public opinion that an attempt to enforce it by offering increasingly attractive rewards to informers was an almost total failure. (Lunn, 1939: 71)

Throughout most of the history of New France, stringent controls were placed on the colonists' freedom of association and expression. There was never any printing press nor is there any evidence of hand-written journals circulating in the colony. The reading material in the colony consisted of the mail and the occasional book which was sent from France each summer. Most of the mail was commercial in character containing news of prices, shortages, oversupplies, prospective war and political changes. Its confidentiality was protected by each merchant who revealed to his associates only those contents from which he could draw no profit. Charlevoix tells us that this annual influx of news provided fodder for colonial political debate and speculation: "The current news consists of a very few articles, and those of Europe arrive all at once, though they supply matter for discourse for the greater part of the year. They reason like politicians on what is past, and form conjectures on what is likely to happen" (Charlevoix, 1966: 112). Though some of the habitants had acquired considerable libraries by the time of the British conquest, non-religious books were still a source of concern to the authorities in the 17th century. For example, the Baron de La Hontan recounted how the church authorities "défendent et font brûler tous les livres qui ne traitent pas de dévotion..." and how the *cure* of Montreal entered uninvited into his room and "se jette à corps perdu sur le roman d'aventures de Pétrone" (quoted in Lagrave, 1975: 58) and tore it up.

Other than in certain carefully supervised and controlled situations, most forms of public assembly were also considered to be seditious. This fear of public assembly stemmed from Louis XIV and Colbert's desire to prevent the formation of a potential resistance to French rule in New France. Vehement in their opposition against the formation of a representative assembly of the 'états généraux' in the colony, they argued that royal power functioned best when "chacun parle pour soi, et que personne ne parle pour tous" (Province de Québec, 1893: 206). This was a powerful consensus engineering device because it meant that if a subject wanted something from the government, s/he would have to go through the patronage networks of the colonial state-system to get it.

If anyone should have the temerity to publicly or even privately question the authority of the colony's political or religious structure, they could be charged with the crime of *lèse-majesté*. In its manifestation as *lèse-majesté divine*, this category of crime covered the usual transgression: atheism, heresy, magic, witchcraft and so on. *Lèse-majesté humaine*, on the other hand, had three levels of gravity. The first was high treason and it comprised of plots to kill or overthrow the king, his family and his representatives, incitement to armed rebellion and communicating with and aiding and abetting his enemies. The second, lesser treason, comprised of a number of offences ranging from private discussions of state affairs to the recruitment of a private army to counterfeiting to desertion from the army while the lowest level comprised duelling (the state was attempting to arrogate complete control over life and death to itself), the destruction of fortifications, the erection of unauthorized fortifications and the unsanctioned melting down of artillery pieces.

Despite this tight regulation of the opportunities for political discussion, some habitants still voiced their complaints. In 1671, a Pierre Dupuy was arrested and sentenced to public pillory and branding for saying publicly that ‘the English had done well to kill their king’ and publicly denying the existence of God. In the early 18th century, Montreal-area farmers staged public protests to express their wrath about the high price of salt. Other habitants composed songs which satirized the political conditions of the colony and/or individual political authorities. In response to the latter offence, the state issued ordinances which banned such songs, arguing that they serve to “troubler la charité chrétienne et l’union qui doit être entre tous les hommes, ce qui va directement contre les commandements de Dieu et contre les intentions de Sa Majesté..” and warned that the composers and/or singers of such songs would be “poursuivies extraordinairement et châtiées suivant l’exigence des cas.” (quoted in Lagrave, 1975: 36-7).

When the habitants met in the town, it was usually in one of three places: the public square, the church and the cabaret. For most of the French régime, open squares like the Place Royale in Quebec and the Place des Armes in Montreal were the spaces in which the ‘flâneurs’ of the colony would meet and exchange gossip and the state authorities would announce and post their edicts and ordinances. They were also main markets for the sale of agricultural goods. Since the maintenance of a healthy population was very important to the state authorities in this period, police regulations (which limited market days to two days a week) were created to regulate the activities of the vendors and prices so that habitants could acquire fresh and infection-free food at affordable prices. André Lachance describes how in order to ensure their compliance with these regulations, their activities were closely monitored:

D'ailleurs, les jours de marché, le lieutenant de police circule au milieu de la foule des vendeurs et des acheteurs, observant les uns et les autres, veillant à ce que les habitants donnent bon poids bonne mesure et se gardent de surévaluer leurs denrées. (Lachance, 1987: 27)

The state-system made its presence known on these public spaces in other manners as well. Police officials would patrol the squares in order to keep them clear of unruly types like prostitutes, beggars, vagabonds and drunks. The public squares were also the scenes of the grisly rituals of sovereignty associated with the punishment of criminals. By 1686, this spectacular representation of authority was supplemented by the construction of a chapel and the erection of a bust of Louis XIV in Quebec's Place Royale. The state's incursions on these public spaces, however, met with occasional resistance. For example, in 1663, the inhabitants of Trois-Rivieres refused to allow an unpopular order to even be posted in the public square while Peter Moogk reports that "in 1685, Montrealers uprooted a newly planted pillory post and threw it in the river to express their hostility to executions" (Moogk, 1996: 65).

While a great deal of the energy of the authorities was expended in structuring the colony's space and the spacing of the colonists, the regulation of time was another important aspect in the state-system's drive to create an orderly society. In this period, the clock was the chief instrument by which habitants days were, like the Laurentian valley, segmented into regular portions. The ringing of the 'police clock' in the towns determined the beginning and end of the working day for the labourers in the factories, workshops and the Hôpital Générale, they determined when the cabarets and shops opened and closed, they called the habitants to help fight fires and marauders while the church bells called them to worship.

The year, on the other hand, was carved up by the calendar which was largely under the control of the Church. During most of the French régime, the Church demanded that habitants devote 89 days a year to their religious duties while the rest were to be devoted to work. The Church domination of the calendar even extended to the name given to specific days. Although, as in France, the colony used the Gregorian calendar to mark days and months, significant days such as the day that seigneurial dues were to be collected were still referred to by their saints' names. On the basis of these considerations, André Lachance concludes that:

Par le contrôle qu'elle exerce sur les fêtes chômées et l'influence de son calendrier sur la vie urbaine, l'Église, aidée par l'État, règle la période annuelle de travail, et par conséquent le revenu des salariés aussi bien que le rythme économique et social de la vie urbaine. (Lachance, 1987: 106-7).

During the various holy days, the Church stepped up its efforts at regulating the bodies and souls of its parishioners. Church attendance was mandatory and the habitants were expected to comport themselves in a disciplined manner in the church, focusing their attention exclusively on the sermon being read or the ceremony being performed. Furthermore, there were strict controls placed upon how they could dress and what and when they could eat and drink on holy days. Besides this disciplining of the body, the religious and political authorities of the period sought to regulate when, where and how habitants could interact. As Jean-Paul de Lagrave reports:

Durant les jours des fêtes religieuses, qui sont tort nombreuses, il est ordonné de s'abstenir des 'jeux, festins, et autres dérèglements'. On condamne 'les paroles sales et deshonnêtes'. D'autre part, il faut éviter 'les lieux, les entretiens et les fréquentations trop libres des personnes d'un autre sexe, la lecture des mauvais livres, les danses et les excès de bouche'. (Lagrave, 1975: 63)

From the time of Talon onwards, the intendants sought to aid the *curés* in this civilizing project by passing a seemingly endless list of ordinances against blasphemy, the sale of meat and alcohol in cabarets on holy days and so on while the metropolitan authorities sought to prevent the dissemination of subversive religious and political literature in the colony by imposing tight controls on what could be shipped to the colony and banning the setting up of a colonial printing press.

As the 17th century progressed, however, French society was undergoing secularization and fissures began to appear in the civilizing alliance of Church and State. Since at least the mid-1650s, the consensus among the secular authorities of the colony and the metropole was that the Church and specifically the Jesuits and the bishop Laval were overstepping their boundaries and involving themselves in temporal affairs. This belief manifested itself in the various administrative reforms beginning with the creation of the Council in 1647 which progressively lessened the Church's involvement in political affairs. Culturally, this belief manifested itself in the overt clashes between the religious and secular elites in this period over the control over entertainment and consumption.

For men like Frontenac or the baron de La Hontan who were used to the artistic, scientific, intellectual and cultural vitality of Louis XIV's Paris, the colonial church's attempt to enforce Catholic orthodoxy and to regulate the sale of alcohol, women's apparel, dancing, theatre, books and so on through the threat of excommunication and a constant intrusion into their homes was an inducement for all to leave the colony. In 1683, La Hontan complained that "Ils ne se contentent pas (ces ecclésiastiques) d'étudier les actions des gens, ils veulent encore fouiller dans leurs pensées." (quoted in Lagrave, 1975: 59) while Frontenac wrote to the king that the clergy's strictures on women's

apparel were “si extraordinaires qu’elles font beaucoup murmurer les peuples.” (quoted in Lagrave, 1975: 60).

Contrary to this image of New France as a priest-ridden colony, however, historical evidence suggests that the ratio of secular priests to habitants was low by the standards of the time. W.J. Eccles calculates that in 1665, there were only ten secular priests to service a widely dispersed population of three thousand and by 1700, there were only sixty to minister to fifteen thousand souls (Eccles, 1964: 225). Even in 1730, only twenty of the hundred parishes in the colony had their own permanent *curés*. The parishes with permanent *curés* tended to be clustered around the urban centres while the more isolated rural parishes had to rely upon itinerant priests who traveled from parish to parish. In a letter written to Versailles in 1683, the intendant De Meulles complained that the result of this low church presence in the colony was that “Three-quarters of the Canadian settlers barely attend four masses a year and often die without the sacraments. They know as much about our religion as the Indians do.” (quoted in Dechêne, 1992: 261-62).

Even when habitants did attend church, they did not always act in the pious and orderly manner expected of them. Whole parishes refused to pay tithes or to provide wheat for the sacrificial bread. While many continued to work or go to the cabaret on holy days in spite of prohibitions against those activities, the habitants who did attend church seemed to treat the weekly gatherings at the church as opportunities to renew old acquaintances and to see and be seen rather than as exercises in moral and spiritual instruction. While the parish notables clad in their ‘Sunday best’ would vie for the pews closest to the altar and for the prestigious positions on the church council, the ‘mediocres’ in the back rows would catch up on the latest news and gossip. Scant respect or attention

would be paid by some to the priest—they would leave the church while the sermon was in progress to have a smoke or get a drink and something to eat at one of the local cabarets which was violating prohibitions against serving meat and alcohol on holy days. Nothing is more suggestive of this widespread obstinacy than the fact that the civil authorities were forced in 1706 to post an ordinance which banned “tous les habitants de la Nouvelle-France de contester aux portes des Eglises, de prendre querelle et en venir aux coups pour aucune affaire” (Quoted in Séguin, 1973: 579) within the church.

The cabaret was the third locus of habitant sociability and it was easily the most troublesome for the colonial authorities. The cabarets were centers of popular culture where the soldiers, workers, *coureurs de bois*, domestic labourers and visiting Amerindians and farmers would meet to exchange news, drink and sing songs. André Lachance explains that they were also “l’endroit où se fomentent quelques délits” (Lachance, 1987: 99). Besides the illicit consumption of meat and alcohol on holy days alluded to above, the overwhelmingly male clientele would also use the cabaret to solicit the services of the ‘belles à la cuisse alerte’ who tended to frequent their spaces and to indulge in one of the great passions of the habitants: gambling. This potent combination of drink, games, sex and ribaldry would often escalate into fights or duels. Restless soldiers, disgruntled workers and Amerindians would leave the cabarets to walk the streets of the town ‘flushed with wine and insolence’ like Milton’s ‘Sons of Belial’, terrorizing or robbing from the other denizens of the towns.

Not surprisingly, the cabarets attracted a great deal of the attention of the colonial authorities. Using their usual instruments, they sought to control the cabaret’s capacity for creating disorder. First of all, an attempts were made to regulate the number of

cabarets by the introduction of a licensing system which limited proprietorship only to those whose “probité sera reconnue et qui en auront permission par écrit sur le certificat de leurs bonne vie et moeurs.” (quoted in Roy, 1924: 194). Secondly, rules were elaborated to regulate who could gain entry into the cabarets: prostitutes were banned and it was made illegal to serve workers during working hours, soldiers except at dinner time, domestic labourers without the permission of their masters and Laval’s threats of excommunication sought to suppress the sale of alcohol to Amerindians entirely (in Montreal, however, nine cabarets existed to serve the latter population exclusively). Thirdly, other ordinances banned the sale of alcohol and meat on holy days and ordered that they close down when the police clock struck 22:00. Finally, every cabaret was to post on its walls the rules governing morals, the punishment of blasphemy and other ‘disorders’ and the sale of alcohol and food on holy days.

Apparently the majority of the cabaretiers and their clients either could not read the posted regulations or, more likely, did not take them seriously because they went largely unobserved. In early 18th century Montreal, for example, it was estimated by the authorities that for every authorized cabaret, there was an equal number of illicit operations. The edicts governing when certain populations were allowed to drink were ignored—it was reported that one could find soldiers (their biggest customers) at the cabarets at any time of the day while Amerindians never had trouble getting served. Cabaretiers would disregard the police clock and stay open at night as long as people kept buying. As for the rules governing the sale of meat and alcohol on holy days, Lachance argue that they were a tough sell because:

selon une coutume longtemps en vigueur, l'auberge ou le cabaret le plus proche de l'église paroissiale est là pour recevoir les ruraux qui veulent y attendre l'heure de la messe ou des vêpres à l'abri des intempéries. Lorsque les cloches annoncent l'heure de l'office, les cabaretiers ont toutes les peines du monde à mettre à la porte des clients qui insistent pour continuer à boire et à dépenser leur argent. (Lachance, 1987: 97)

The Countryside

In the late 17th century, the St. Lawrence was the main axis of communication linking town and country and, as such, its use was subject to heavy regulation. By 1685, dozens of police regulations had been passed which banned unlicensed travel west of Montreal into the fur fields of the Pays d'en Haut and south via the Richelieu or Lake Ontario to Albany. Furthermore, a law was passed in 1676 which stipulated that all vessels navigating on the river must be supplied with a ship's manifest detailing what goods were on board, their value, the destination to which they were being shipped and the identity of their eventual recipients.

Licenses/passports and accounting tables remain two of the main devices by which the state-system tracks and controls the movement of goods and people within and beyond its borders. The effectiveness of these devices in the late 17th century, however, was limited by several factors. In Power, Surveillance and Modernity, Christopher Dandeker argues that there are four main variables which contribute to the ability of the state-system to effectively supervise its subjects. These are:

1. *The size of the files held in a surveillance system*—the numbers of persons and items of information which can be stored about them, the more precise the information, the greater the capacity to construct precise and subtle interventions of monitoring and/or control.
2. *The centralization of those files*—when the files of an organization are highly centralized, it is possible to gather information on a person at any point in the system and then to use it to control that person at any point.

3. *The speed of information flow*—the time taken for information on subject populations to be gathered, transmitted to a central point and then used to supervise or manage their behaviour.
4. *The number of points of contact between the system and its subject population*—how easily can deviants be identified and their behaviour monitored consistently and continuously. (Dandeker, 1990)

In the administration of 17th century New France, the capacity for the collection and collation of information on specific individuals was rudimentary at best. Though Talon, for example, seems to have gathered a great deal of general information about the colony's population, crop yields, the numbers of arpents under cultivation and so on, I have found no evidence that the state-system was constructing files on non-criminal individual subjects apart from place of residence and size of families in this period. More specifically, an Amirauté, an agency in charge of the 'police' of the ports and waterways and the systematic collection and collation of information on shipping would not exist in the colony until 1717. In other words, though passports might be issued to individuals, there is no evidence of the development of a bookkeeping or accounting system which was capable of systematically tracking the movement of his body and goods across space.

Secondly, even though a trader carrying a license to trade in the west was required by law to first show it to the Governor of Montreal and subsequently to the commanders of any French forts he might pass, there is no evidence that this information of his passing was ever collated in some central office. Furthermore, even if an attempt was made to systematically collate the files in a central place, the long distances between the various French outposts and the slow communications between them would mitigate any potential advantages. Finally, even though the ability of the state-system to monitor and channel the movement of its subjects within and even beyond its hazily defined borders was increased

by the construction of French outposts at nodal points of the various fur trade routes such as Chambly, Michilimackinac, Cataraqui, Niagara, Detroit, Chicago and so on, these outposts mainly tended to merely slow down interlopers by forcing detours through the thick forests which hid them from view. As a result of these mitigating factors, any hope of regulating movement on the St. Lawrence would have to continue to rely on the willingness of most of the habitants to accept the Law of the King and turn in possible offenders themselves.

If the city-dwellers of New France were simultaneously awed and cowed into a grudging acceptance of the King's Law, things were different in the country. As I have argued earlier, increasing the population and the population density of the Laurentian countryside was of central importance to the state-system's project of securing the Laurentian valley from 'noise'. In order to attract French settlers and seigneurs to the valley, the colonial administration had to offer them the promise of much better social conditions and possibilities of social advancement (even ennoblement) than they could obtain in France. According to Sigmund Diamond, the net effect of these policies was "to introduce slackness rather than rigidity into the society" (Diamond, 1961: 20).

Diamond argues that "The continued loyalty of the seignior to the system depended on his ability to profit from his privileges, and his privileges were such as to require a large and expanding population" (Diamond, 1961: 21). In New France, however, many conditions conspired against him being able to make even a modest living from his seigneurie. First of all, the plentiful land and low levels of population in the colony meant that it was a buyer's market for land—potential settlers could be choosy about where they lived and under what conditions and seigneurs had to compete amongst

each other to offer them the best deal. Secondly, if the seigneur took on the additional expense of recruiting *censitaires* from France, their freedom of movement within the colony meant that there was nothing stopping them from moving to another seigneurie once they arrived in Canada. Thirdly, the expense of maintaining the infrastructure of the seigneurie like roads, mills and so on fell upon the shoulders of the seigneur, some of whom were reduced to working their own mills. Fourthly, in a highly status-conscious age, they tended to clothe and house themselves in a manner which they deemed appropriate to their social station but far above their means. Fifthly, the traditional secondary means of supplementing a seigneurial income were not available in Canada—Canadian seigneurs lost their hunting, fishing and lumber monopolies and their ability to squeeze seigneurial court fees out of their *censitaires* was limited because the latter could always take his/her case to the free royal courts in the towns. Finally, as time passed, the lots of the seigneuries became increasingly subdivided as fathers passed on portions of their lands to their heirs which reduced the agricultural productivity of those lands.

As a result, many seigneurs found that they had to supplement their incomes in other ways. Some found themselves pleading with the state for financial support of some kind and some tried to violate their obligations to their tenants, others chose to move to the cities to become businessmen or administrators while others simply gave up and returned to France. Many, however, chose a more well trodden route to affluence. As the intendant Champigny observed in 1691: “There will always be some people who will seek land concessions in distant places...for the sole purpose of going there to trade...without thought of settling” (quoted in Diamond, 1961: 24). Many seigneurs participated directly in the illegal fur trade while others condoned the construction of illicit cabarets on their

seigneuries in order to attract Amerindian traders and *coureurs de bois*. By 1685, the Governor General Denonville was complaining that the seigneurs were remiss in fulfilling their duties as chief agents of rural social control. He wrote that he knew of “seigneuries where there are only 20 houses and more than half are taverns” (quoted in Diamond, 1961: 24). Ideally, he argued, the seigneur would be responsible for the actions of his tenants while his orderly conduct would provide them with a good example but, as Diamond argues, “In making use of the major opportunity that existed to escape the discipline of the system—participation in the fur trade—they provided an example that others were quick to follow.” (Diamond, 1961: 25)

While the seigneurs were poorer and less privileged than their French counterparts, the habitants were conversely better off. After the first two hard years of clearing the land and building a house, the farmer could raise enough wheat to feed his family, buy a cow or two and some poultry and grow a vegetable garden. Furthermore, unlike their French counterparts, they could supplement their incomes through the fur trade, they had full access to the abundant hunting and fishing resources of the seigneurie and they paid no *taille*, no salt taxes and only very modest seigneurial tithes. As Lanctôt argues, “they were “rich” according to the standard of the time” (Lanctôt, 1964, vol.II: 79). Denis Monière argues that the adoption of the word ‘habitants’ as a term of self-description by the *censitaires* stems from a conscious recognition on their part that they were closer to the Canadian seigneur in terms of their social status than they were to French peasants: “The first Canadians wanting to be seen as distinct from those paying feudal rents insisted on being called ‘habitants’, which meant that they were free men, owners of land, settled permanently in the colony.” (Monière, 1981: 42)

Besides the poor and often ‘criminal’ seigneurs, the other main contact points between the state-system and the rural habitants fared little better in inculcating a love of the Word of God and the Law of the king in the hearts and minds of the latter. The captain of the militia was a *censitaire* who was chosen by the other habitants and not the authorities. Once in this office, he was given the task of training the habitants in the use of arms and seeing that the orders of the intendant and governor were at least partially adhered to in the countryside (I suspect that they would not try to enforce laws which went directly against the interests of the community). In return for this service, the captains received ceremonial perks such as walking immediately after the churchwardens in religious processions and receiving communion before the other parishioners.

As the 17th century progressed, this office held by a ‘mediocre’ soon came to rival the power and prestige of the seigneurs. As the following quote from one of Colbert’s successors suggests, the state-system started to use this office to bypass the often recalcitrant and disobedient seigneurs:

the *capitaines de milices* must not communicate to them [the seigneurs] the orders that they receive from the governors and intendants before executing them; that is not due to them and they have no right to demand it of the *capitaines*, who might do so as a matter of courtesy, however, when it is no interest to the service. (quoted in Diamond, 1961: 27)

Despite the fact that these officials were expected to act as agents of the crown, evidence from a later period suggests that they and their troops remained steadfastly independent. In 1736, the intendant complained of their ‘natural insubordination’ and 23 years later, Montcalm marveled that “Le soldat français ne connaît plus de discipline, et au lieu d’avoir formé le Canadien, il en a pris tous les défauts.” (quoted in Séguin, 1973: 586) Furthermore, the elevation of a commoner to such a position of prestige and power

seemed to further subvert the socially fixed society which the French society was trying to usher into existence on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

The church was the other main contact point between the rural habitants and the colonial authorities. In the late 17th century, beside the problems encountered by the church authorities discussed above, that contact was made sporadic by the low church presence in the countryside. In 1681, Duchesneau, the intendant, estimated that most settlers heard Mass only once every four to six weeks. This mass would be given by an itinerant priest who spent all summer canoeing and all winter snowshoeing from one seigneurial chapel to another. Outlying habitants who refused to travel the long distances to the chapel still expected the priest to occasionally visit their household and would complain if the missions proved too irregular.

Outside of the towns, there were only two consecrated stone churches in the entire Laurentian valley. Most of the rural chapels were impermanent structures made of timber and planks and built by the local habitants. Louise Dechêne recounts the construction of one such chapel in which, after an initial burst of religious enthusiasm prompted the locals to promise to provide land, labour, timber and stones to the project, the “work was begun and then abandoned for lack of funds, materials and labour. The receiver called assemblies to which no one came. He crisscrossed the *côte* in vain to remind settlers of their promises” (Dechêne, 1992: 267). Only once the intendant was called in to use his coercive powers to enforce their obligations did the frame go up. Dechêne suggests that this waning of interest was typical of the 17th century habitant’s response to the costs of church building. The intendant Duchesneau would later caustically remark that “Everybody here is puffed up with the greatest vanity; there is not one but pretends to be

patron, and wants a *Curé* on his farm; and all these persons are steeped in debt, and in the extremest poverty” (quoted in O’Callaghan, 1855: 151).

According to André Lachance, there was another contact point between the state-system and the habitants: the father. Lachance argues that in this period, the family was the fundamental institution of the absolutist social and political order. The hierarchical relation of child to father and wife to husband was the model for the obedience which the people owed to the king. Furthermore, it was through the teaching and the example of the father that the child learned obedience and the respect for both parental and social hierarchy and authority. Here too, the old French system of social control seemed to be failing (at least in the eyes of the elite) in its application to the new France. In 1685, for example, the governor general Denonville would lament that “Les jeunes gens du Canada sont si mal élevés que dès le moment qu’ils peuvent porter un fusil leurs pères n’osent plus rien leur dire” (Roy, 1924: 225).

The Pays d’en Haut

Though the official correspondences between Quebec and Versailles are peppered with statements such as “since the King loves the people of Canada as though they were his own children”, this image of the prince as father was most fully developed in the rituals of 17th century French-Amerindian diplomacy.

From the time of Champlain onwards, successive French governors sought to be more than just military and commercial allies with the otherwise autonomous Amerindian nations of the Laurentian drainage basin, they wanted to act as ‘Onontio the father’. ‘Onontio’ was the Iroquoian translation of ‘Montmagny’ and it would remain the title given by the Amerindians to all successive governors as well as the king who was known

as 'the great Onontio who lives across the sea'. The French governors believed that the preservation of the 'northern alliance' required them to guide and coordinate the activities of the otherwise bickering and indolent 'children', to mediate in their disputes, to protect them from their enemies, teach them 'virtue' and punish their sins and reward their obedient behaviour.

In the years following the destruction of Huronia in 1648-9 and the subsequent depopulation of southern and eastern Ontario, western Quebec, the Ohio valley and what is now Michigan by the Iroquois, many of the survivors of that holocaust fled to lands north of Lake Superior and south and west of Lake Michigan in hopes of eluding the reach of the Iroquois. This diaspora radically altered the social landscape of the Pays d'en Haut. Suddenly Hurons, Petuns, Nippisings, Algonquins, Ottawas, Miamis, Illinois and the other tribes who once occupied spatially distinct territories were forced to live together in the refugee centres which were mainly concentrated around present day Chicago, Green Bay and Sault Sainte Marie. Life in these centres was often difficult, disease spread easily and overfishing, overhunting and the poor soil and cold climate of the northerly settlements made corn crop failure and the subsequent starvation of many a regular event. Militarily, the refugees were hemmed in between the inhospitable Canadian Shield to the north, the Iroquois to the east, the equally warlike Sioux to the west and the Chickasaw to the south.

Furthermore, the close proximity of many different peoples and the generalized anxiety which must have permeated these settlements created tensions and rivalries which, at any given moment, threatened to throw the entire alliance in disarray. Intertribal accusations of witchcraft abounded, the competition for scarce resources led the hunters of some tribes to steal from and murder the hunters of others, some tribes tried to court

Iroquois friendship by betraying the others and so on. Though the refugee populations sought to reduce these tensions by creating kinship and quasi-kinship ties through intermarriage and ceremonial gift giving, it was clear by the 1680s that these disorders would continue unless some means of mediating these disputes could be developed. Richard White argues that it was the French ability and willingness to play the role of mediator which ended this Hobbesian war of all against all and “transformed the Algonquians from a terrified people confined to a few crowded and impoverished settlements to a confident and expanding people reoccupying the territory long denied to them by the Iroquois” (White, 1991: 34).

White writes that the French-Amerindian alliance was structured along Amerindian lines by a series of quasi-kinship ties created by the exchange of gifts. As the ‘father’ in the alliance, Onontio and his representatives were expected by the Amerindians to be protectors, providers, and mediators at the same time that no one was under any compunction to obey them. Though the threat of the withdrawal of French military backing could be an effective tool in keeping the alliance together, it was the two latter characteristics which were most important in maintaining peace between the allied tribes.

As I mentioned above, intertribal murder was a fairly common occurrence in the refugee centres and the source of considerable tension. In Amerindian society, when a member of a given tribe was murdered by a member of another group, the surviving members of the tribe could be compensated for the loss through the acceptance of slaves or gifts from the offending group or taking the life of a member of the offending group in revenge. The problem with the latter solution is that it tended to turn into never ending blood feuds. For the French, this was the worst possible outcome because it meant the

furthering weakening of the 'northern alliance' both in numerical terms and in terms of solidarity. As a result, the French authorities took the leading role in the 'covering the hatchet' by providing more than ample compensation to the aggrieved parties while using all their influence to try to ensure that such disputes would not arise in the future.

According to White, the capacity of the French to defuse Amerindian disputes rested on an elaborate 'infrastructure of mediation' which linked the Pays d'en Haut to Quebec. First of all, this infrastructure consisted of the physical structures of the refugee centres. Like in the towns of the colony, the concentration of large populations of Amerindians in a centre like Michilimackinac made them easily accessible to the French authorities who lived amongst them in forts and missions. The Amerindians could count on those posts for military protection while their commandants could readily dispense the gifts which kept the alliance together, arbitrate disputes and hold intertribal councils on military and commercial matters and the missionaries could carry on their projects of achieving widespread conversion.

The presence of these forts in the Pays d'en Haut along with the licensing system for the fur trade also allowed the French authorities to better regulate with whom the Amerindians came into communication. Contrary to the beliefs of Champlain and the Récollets in the first half, a half century's bitter experience of prolonged French-Amerindian contact led many of the authorities came to believe that nothing had been so corruptive to Amerindian and Canadian society than the uncontrolled intercourse between the former and the coureurs de bois. According to the authorities, the coureurs 'debauched' the Amerindians by setting a bad example of 'civilized behaviour'. Unlike the Jesuits who sought to reform the comparative loose Amerindian social structure, they

took full advantage of the lack of strictures on sexual activity, drunkenness, idleness and theft. By regulating that intercourse through licensing and maintaining a military/judicial presence in the areas of the Pays d'en Haut in which population and trade were concentrated, the French authorities had hoped that they would be able exert enough control over the traders that the latter would become potential diplomats and emissaries.

Though French gifts, military power and the regulation of potential communicators played an important role in maintaining the imperial network, White argues that this network was bound together by the presence of literate French officers, traders or Jesuits in all the centres. White writes that "The French established a command of distant events that allowed them to intervene propitiously in Indian politics and coordinate their own actions with a precision and secrecy Indians could not match" (White, 1991: 35). For example, when the governor Denonville was planning an excursion against the Senecas (the westernmost Iroquois tribe) in 1686, he knew that he had to keep his preparations secret from the Mission Iroquois at Caughnawaga and the Jesuits who had missions in Iroquois territory because those groups had alerted the Iroquois to previous French expeditions. He sent out written orders to the governors of the towns and all the seigneurs to fortify their settlements, letters to the captains of the militia to prepare to muster their troops and to the commandants of the posts in the Illinois country, at Green Bay, Michilimackinac and Detroit to converge at an appointed time on the western and southern flanks of the Senecas. On the day that the expedition was launched, the commander of each unit was given a sealed set of orders detailing the expedition which they were not allowed to open until they were ten miles south of Montreal. The result of these careful preparations was that on the morning that Denonville's assault force made its

final landing near the Seneca cantons, an army led by the commandants of the outposts arrived with a force of one hundred and eighty *coureurs de bois* and four hundred allied Amerindians drawn from all corners of the Great Lakes. In other words, the French command of literacy allowed Denonville to precisely coordinate the movement of people distributed over thousands of square miles.

Despite these logistical advantages, the French state-system's project of organizing and mediating between their allies was in grave danger of foundering on many occasions in the late 17th century. Though the French authorities were always quick to blame the *coureurs de bois* for any fissures which might arise between the French and their allies, the evidence seems to suggest that, in fact, the governors were the main obstacle to the maintenance and amplification of this alliance. Two governors in particular were at fault in this regard: Frontenac and La Barre.

Against the king's wishes and often without his knowledge (eventually their actions would be denounced by the presiding intendants), both of these governors were heavily involved in the fur trade. Frontenac's creatures, as will be recalled, had established trading posts in the upper Mississippi valley, on Green Bay, at Michilimackinac, at Cataraqui and Niagara. Out of the two latter posts, a booming trade was established with the western Iroquois nations while the other three catered to the refugee populations of the Pays d'en Haut. This apparent neutrality on Frontenac's part was of great concern to the Amerindians of the Pays d'en Haut who felt that they were being abandoned and that a French-Iroquois alliance was imminent.

After the Iroquois successfully resolved their wars with the Mohicans to the east and the Andastes to the south and reinforced their numbers by absorbing the two tribes in

1676, they began to strike out at the tribes gathered in the west. In 1680, seven hundred Iroquois warriors flooded into the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, destroying a major Illinois settlement and enslaving three hundred women and children and attacking several Miami villages on their way back to Iroquoia. When delegations from the Ottawas, Hurons and Miamis arrived in Montreal that summer to demand French aid against the resurgent Iroquois, Frontenac would only give them the promise that he would reproach the Iroquois for their actions. Furthermore, he made them promise that they would not attack the Iroquois but only fight back if attacked. Meanwhile, when he finally did speak to the Iroquois, he seemed to firmly believe their protestations of their peaceful intentions. In 1682, he reported to Louis XIV that the Iroquois “wished always to live on good terms with and in friendship, not only with the French but also with all the Ottawas, Kiskakons, Hurons and others” (quoted in Eccles, 1959: 120). According to Lamberville, the Jesuit missionary to the Iroquois, amongst themselves, they were saying very different things: “Several times they have insulted the French without being called to account, and this had led them to believe that the French are afraid of them. They gain every year from our losses; they crush our allies and make Iroquois of them” (ibid.).

When Frontenac was recalled to France in 1682, he continued to misrepresent the extent of Iroquois aggression in order to protect his interests in the fur trade. Frontenac’s replacement, La Barre, also succumbed to the lure of the fur trade and, like Frontenac, he tried to do everything in his power to prevent war with the Iroquois in order to protect his fur trading interests. After the Senecas attacked a French fort in the Illinois country, La Barre was finally forced to go to war in 1684. After a disastrous campaign in which La Barre’s indecisiveness and the Spanish influenza threatened the wholesale extermination of

the colony's military forces, he agreed to a most humiliating peace. In return for the safe passage of the French force back to Montreal, La Barre agreed to hold all future conferences on Iroquois territory and gave the Iroquois *carte blanche* to annihilate the Illinois, a tribe under French suzerainty. Though he did manage to convince them not to do the same to the Miamis, he could not secure the safety of any French traders whom the Iroquois might encounter in the Illinois country. With this peace, French prestige among the allied tribes was considerably diminished and it required the renunciation of this treaty by the French crown and fifteen more years of military campaigns to pacify the Iroquois to regain some modicum of their trust.

Conclusion: The Virtuality of Imperial Communication

If the Colbert-Talon period marked the apotheosis of the French effort to make Laurentian space knowable through the twin processes of creating a 'virtual' Canada through inscription in various information storage devices and that of creating a 'virtual' France on Canadian soil through the attempted francisization of the Amerindians, the imposition of French patterns of land use, the implantation of quasi-feudal social structures and the use of police regulations in order to 'reduce' the population and to 'fix' potential vagabonds and create orderly communications, the Frontenac period reveals its limitations in the face of the vagaries of Laurentian space.

Space, Claval reminded us, interferes with the reproduction of social system in two main ways. As distance, it impeded the movement of messages, goods and people. In this study, I have shown how the development of the state-system of New France in 16th-17th centuries was propelled by the need to overcome the spatial barriers to communication between colony and metropole. The inscriptions of the reconnaissance missions of Verrazzano, Cartier, Champlain and others were enhanced by increasingly sophisticated means of information gathering and inscription such as the annual census, the archived letters and annual reports of the intendants and governors and so on to create, by the end of the 17th century, a 'virtual Canada' in the offices of the Ministry of Marine at Versailles.

Similarly, the metropole's means of controlling its agents increased as time went on. When Roberval received his commission, for example, the metropolitan authorities gave him vice-regal powers in hopes that the patronage system would keep him in line. As the colony grew and diversified, however, corruption began to insinuate itself into the imperial network and the metropole was forced to take action. Changes were made to the

colony's administrative structure in order to distribute decision making capabilities while other officials, notably the intendant, were given the task of keeping tabs on the activities of the other officials. Furthermore, the increasingly regularized gathering and relaying of information on the colony allowed the metropolitan authorities to better assess for themselves the colony's true state. Finally, in the wake of Frontenac, the metropole began to take steps to limit the ability of its agents to engage in 'private' ventures.

Despite these 'bureaucratizing' developments, the various Frontenac episodes reveal that the metropole's abilities to oversee and police the activities of its agents remained quite limited. When these meager surveillance capacities were combined with the metropole's continued reliance upon patronage as a method of long distance control such as patronage, the possibilities for corruption remained rife.

Corruption was particularly damaging to the project of governance which the various state authorities were trying to usher into reality in this period. As I have shown, the latter believed that the creation of a 'policed' society required the implantation of sanctioned communicators in social spaces ranging from the family household to the church the towns, seigneuries and refugee centres. These 'communicators' were to be the eyes, mouths and swords of the king, exhorting the subjects to hard work and a Christian life, watching over their movements and interactions and using their command over physical, symbolic or moral resources to keep them firmly in their duty. True to the paternalism of the period, they were also expected to serve as positive examples of piety, obedience and hard work for the habitants and Amerindians to follow.

By the end of the 17th century, this system was breaking down. Governors, intendants, seigneurs, militia captains, church officials and councilors were openly

squabbling with one another. Rather than attending to their duties of fostering a love of police in the habitants and Amerindians, many occupied themselves with filling their coffers with revenues from the illegal fur trade. Though Colbert and Talon sought to mitigate the effects of corruption by promoting the impersonal techniques of governance of law as a means of implanting police, the fact remained that even if all the members of the state-system fully participated in the project of setting up policed channels of communication, the spatial and social distances which often separated them from the 'subjects' of their 'civilizing' efforts turned injunctions contrary to the interests of the latter into *lettres mortes*.

Along with these hindrances to metropolitan control over its agents, space as distance subverted the Colbert-Talon project in another important way. In this period, the colony's domestic markets for agricultural produce were fairly small at the same time that the distances separating colonial producers from other potential markets required long, dangerous and expensive voyages. In order to make such long voyages worth their investment, traders preferred to trade in small and expensive luxury items rather than in bulky products like wheat. In the colony, the only such item to be found was fur and if habitants, seigneurs, Amerindians and bureaucrats alike sought to raise their standards of living, they could only do so through licit or illicit participation in the fur trade.

In order to secure this vital means of social mobility and enrichment from Iroquois and British incursions, Talon proposed and then Frontenac began the now familiar Canadian tradition of 'defensive expansionism' by sponsoring the construction of a long line of forts along the Richelieu, on the Great Lakes, in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys and in James Bay (these forts were often constructed without the knowledge and approval of

the metropolitan authorities). Furthermore, this insecurity of territory repeatedly forced the state authorities to sacrifice their civilizing projects on the altar of the *realpolitik* of network maintenance. In order to preserve the security of their military alliances, state authorities allowed important go-betweens like Marsolet or members of allied Amerindians to commit serious crimes like murder and treason and escape unpunished.

This brings us to the second aspect of space—extension. As the template of social activity, the Laurentian valley facilitated certain types of communications and activities while it hindered others. In its ‘virgin’ form, if the valley and its myriad waterways facilitated the fur trade, smuggling to Albany and Iroquois ambushes, it also hindered agriculture and communication with the Atlantic. From the time of Cartier onwards, governmental authorities devoted a large allotment of the colony’s resources to their project of reconfiguring Laurentian space in order to render its every nook and cranny transparent to their gaze and within reach of the Word of God and the Law of the King.

What began with Cartier as the project of kidnapping the language of the land progressed through Champlain’s concern with the fortification of the river and then reached its culmination in the Colbert-Talon use of police regulations to regulate the most intimate aspects of the lives of each and all its subjects in hopes of realizing their scheme of turning the Laurentian landscape into a series of military camps linked by well-regulated communications networks. However, as Diamond points out, the grand historical irony of this quasi-totalitarian state project was that the rudimentary surveillance and communications technologies at the disposal of the state-system, its lack of coercive and financial resources and the continued ‘porousness’ of Laurentian space meant that the

project's realization had to rest for the most part upon the willingness of both the elite and the habitants to freely adopt state imposed strictures upon their behaviour.

As my review of colonial 'resistance' reveals, both elite and habitants were willing to accept only those regulations which did not impinge too much in their ways of living, and flaunted and/or ignored those which did. This widespread recalcitrance prompted the increased use of patronage, the development of increasingly sophisticated means of knowing and managing the population and ever-acute paranoia about the security of communication within and across its borders. This curious mixture of the politics of patronage, the concern with 'peace, order and good government' and 'defensive expansionism' remain New France's most important legacies to understanding the communicative patterns still so widely prevalent in contemporary Canadian governance and nationhood.

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