

The Flesh Made Word: The Vatican Archives and the Study of Canadian History, 1600-1799

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Canadian historians have grown accustomed to conducting research in the libraries and archives of Europe. The most obvious sources for this work have been the repositories of France and England, the nations whose histories have been connected most intimately with Canada.¹ Some historians, however, have also made use of libraries and archives in Rome. Among these repositories, the archives of the Roman Catholic Church or the Holy See have great significance for Canadian research.

The establishment in 1622 of the Holy See's Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* resulted in creation of a large amount of some of the earliest and most important documents in Canadian history. *Propaganda Fide* was originally created for the "direction and correlation" of the Holy See's missions to heretics and infidels, but there were certain areas, including North and South America, "which came to be particularly its own and where it exercised special powers."² This special relationship has been amply illustrated in a number of studies which have appeared since *Propaganda's* archives were opened to researchers. In the field of Canadian history, the most important of these has been produced by Luca Codignola, Associate Professor of American History at the University of Pisa. He has recently completed a systematic survey of *Propaganda's* archives for the period 1622-1799 and also compiled a multi-volume calendar of documents pertinent to the history of both French and British North America. This calendar, now available as Public Archives of Canada finding aid no. 1186, was begun in 1977 under the auspices of the PAC in collaboration with the Centre de recherches en histoire religieuse du Canada of the Université Saint-Paul in Ottawa.³ The compilation was based on careful scrutiny of approximately 1,900 volumes of material in various *Propaganda* series. This resulted in a calendar of over 2,430 items varying from simple

1 The recent publication by the Public Archives of Canada of the *Guide des sources de l'histoire du Canada conservées en France* (Ottawa, 1982) provides a good illustration of the importance of European archives for Canadian history.

2 C.R. Fish, *Guide to the Materials for American History in Roman and Other Italian Archives* (Washington, 1911), pp. 119-20.

3 Luca Codignola, *Vatican: Archives of the Sacred Congregation "de Propaganda Fide"* (Public Archives of Canada Finding Aid No. 1186), 6 vols. (Ottawa, 1984). The *Propaganda Fide* project was announced by Victorin Chabot of the Public Archives in *L'Archiviste* 6, no. 6 (novembre-décembre 1977), pp. 3-4.

memoranda to lengthy and detailed dossiers. This work strongly suggests that *Propaganda's* archives are the most important Roman repository for material related to North American history. However, *Propaganda Fide* was only one arm of the powerful Roman Catholic Church.

As is well known, most of the church's records are preserved in the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano* (ASV). Given the relations between the Holy See and *Propaganda Fide*, between the Holy See and other European powers, and between the European powers and their North American colonies in particular, this repository also contains material relevant to North American history. The early results of *Propaganda* research, together with references in some published studies, suggested the need for a preliminary survey to explore such records. The survey was organized under the auspices of the Canadian Academic Centre in Italy (Rome) and carried out by Luca Codignola and Pierre Hurtubise, O.M.I., of the Université Saint-Paul.⁴ The promising results of the survey, which included other Roman repositories as well as the ASV, led to a successful application for funding to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC) for a project to produce a calendar of documents of Canadian interest in the archives and libraries of Rome. Two research assistants, the authors of this article, were hired according to the terms of the grant application. The institutions which proposed the project also contributed. The Université Saint-Paul provided funding for project supervision by Pierre Hurtubise. The Public Archives of Canada did the same for Luca Codignola and also accepted responsibility for bilingual translation and publication of the proposed calendar. The Canadian Academic Centre in Italy was ideally situated and equipped to provide a base in Rome for the project. It undertook general coordination of the work and also provided office and related facilities. After twenty-two months the authors were able to realize the project's objectives; in fact, we were able to compile two calendars based on our ASV research. The larger of the two contains 1,050 entries. It describes material produced in the period 1600-1799 and was compiled from an exhaustive survey of the series *Francia*, part of the ASV archives of the Office of the Secretary of State of the Holy See. The other calendar, with 225 entries, was compiled from limited surveys in a total of twelve ASV series and sub-series.⁵

These calendars follow the same selection criteria Luca Codignola adopted for the archives of *Propaganda Fide*. The material selected was also calendared in a format similar to that used in his work. Codignola decided to omit documents pertinent to Spanish territories in North America. From a Canadian perspective, with the exception of Louisiana, they had few connections with French territories. The same was obviously

4 The preliminary survey was conducted in 1981 with a grant provided by the Canadian Embassy in Rome through its Canadian Cultural Centre.

5 The original SSHRCC grant provided funding for one year of research from October 1982 to September 1983. It was followed by an additional grant for a further ten months from October 1983 to July 1984. The project was ably supported through the first year of research by Dr. Amilcare Iannucci, Director of the Canadian Academic Centre in Italy, and by his successor, Dr. Roberto Perin. In addition, the authors would like to express their appreciation for the invaluable assistance provided by Antonella D'Agostino, assistant to the Director of the Academic Centre. The two yet unpublished calendars are entitled *A Calendar of Documents of North American Interest in the Series "Francia," Archives of the Secretary of State of the Holy See* and *A Calendar of Documents of North American Interest from Various Series and Sub-Series of the "Archives Segreto Vaticano."* The Public Archives of Canada will make the calendars available on microfiche for sale or loan.

not true for English territories, and his calendar includes all *Propaganda* documents relevant to British as well as French North America.⁶ Otherwise, Codignola's selection criteria were extremely broad.

Codignola included all material directly concerned with French or British individuals, activities, and territories in North America, and he also calendared all documentation which might be relevant for determining *Propaganda's* "American policy." Similarly, he included material by or about individuals which might have had a bearing on their North American experiences even though these documents were produced before or after those experiences. Finally, he also included all material for individuals who had "continual dealings with America but never set foot in the country" or those who attempted unsuccessfully to go there.⁷ In his calendar, all of this material was recorded in individual but standardized entries. In each entry, an item's exact archival location is described as well as the language in which it was composed, the place of composition, its date, and author(s). This information is followed by a résumé of an item's contents, which contains additional biographical, geographical, and other information needed to clarify the résumé or connect it with related items. To facilitate its use by other researchers, the *Propaganda* calendar also includes a very detailed index and similar aids.

Project research in the ASV was, in many respects, an expansion of Codignola's work in the archives of *Propaganda Fide*. The report which follows describes why the ASV, and in particular its series *Francia*, was chosen as the focal point for research and how its contents were surveyed. These were important research decisions given such factors as the size of the ASV (it is estimated that its holdings occupy twenty kilometres of shelfspace) and the number and diversity of series and sub-series which it contains.⁸

The potential of the ASV as a repository for materials relevant to Canadian and North American history has been suggested by other scholars besides Codignola. Carl Russell Fish spent what must have been a very hectic year in Italy in 1908 when he conducted several surveys in various Roman and Italian archives. Over a third of the published results of his research are devoted to the Vatican Archives. He decided "to study thoroughly a few volumes of every set [of documents] which might be supposed to contain anything relating to [Central and North] America."⁹ This sampling provides a useful guide to an enormous amount of material. For each "set" or archival series or sub-series which Fish sampled, he provides a brief description of its provenance together with a list of volumes consulted and a brief summary of relevant material found in them.

These summaries are often not complete. Some of Fish's descriptions of documents from the records of the Secretary of State of the Holy See do not include the folio-number location for the volumes in which they were found. Moreover, his summary of the

6 Luca Codignola, "L'Amérique du Nord et La Sacrée Congrégation 'de Propaganda Fide,' 1622-1799: Guides et Inventaires," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 33, no. 2 (1979), p. 19; see also Codignola, *Vatican*, vol. 1.

7 Codignola, *Vatican*, vol. 1.

8 A very useful survey of the ASV holdings is provided by Father Leonard Boyle, O.P., in his *A Survey of the Vatican Archives and of its Medieval Holdings* (Toronto, 1972). Monsignor Charles Burns, one of the ASV archivists, personally conducted a tour of the archives for the authors; we would like to express our appreciation for this and other kindnesses. The estimate of the amount of shelved material in the ASV was made by Monsignor Burns; for general information about the ASV see also Martino Guisti, "The Vatican Secret Archives," *Archivaria* 7 (Winter 1978), pp. 16-27.

9 Fish, *Guide*, p. 1.

contents of the volumes he surveyed cannot be considered sufficient. In his survey of volume 180 in the ASV's Secretary of State series, *nunziatura di Francia*, now known simply as *Francia*, Fish noted only two items of North American interest. He prepared a résumé of the news of the unsuccessful English attack on Québec in 1691 and the correspondence concerning the Bishop of Québec's delay in returning to his see. He does not mention other items from the same volume: Frontenac's report of the attack on Québec; the first letter of 1691 by the Holy See's nuncio in Paris announcing the arrival of the Bishop of Québec in France; and news of the two ships which arrived at Brest from Canada with "four prizes of war."¹⁰

These omissions notwithstanding, the portion of Fish's study which discusses the Vatican Archives in relation to North America is more useful than a similar survey conducted by historian Conrad Morin, O.F.M.. Morin laboured in the Vatican and other Italian archives for eight years to complete a study of the history of the Canadian Roman Catholic Church.¹¹ Not content with Fish's volume, Morin carried out his own systematic search for source materials. However, the article in which he describes his research is little more than a catalogue of collections which might contain Canadian material. Morin does not cite or reproduce any relevant documents. Instead, he proposed a multi-volume work which would contain "unexpurgated texts, with translations and annotations" of relevant Canadian material. It is evident from his doctoral thesis that Morin's proposal would have been a useful contribution to Canadian historiography, but, unfortunately, he was not able to complete the work.¹²

Illness prevented Morin from finishing more than only the first portion of what was originally intended to be a three-part doctoral study. Nonetheless, the first portion contains a preliminary list of sources relevant to all three portions of the proposed larger work.¹³ At first glance, the list of *sources manuscrites* seems a very valuable guide. For the ASV, Morin names thirty-two series he consulted and, within these, several hundred volumes. The list is very promising for researchers seeking material of Canadian interest in the Vatican Archives since his research was concerned solely with developments ending in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, and series such as *Francia*, for which Morin listed a total of ninety-three volumes, also exist for the entire eighteenth century as well as the early years of the nineteenth century.¹⁴

10 *Ibid.*, p. 73; see also ASV, *Segretaria di Stato, Francia* (hereafter *Francia*), vol. 180, f. 77r for Fish's résumé of the attack on Québec dated 22 January 1691; see f. 290r-v for the nuncio's letter of 3 September 1691 concerning the Bishop of Québec. Other items of Canadian interest in the same volume are found on f. 87r-v, the news sent by Frontenac; f. 110r, further news concerning the English defeat at Québec; f. 147r for the nuncio's report of Saint-Vallier's sudden return to France; and f. 625r, the arrival at Brest of two ships from Canada with their four prizes of war.

11 Conrad Morin, "Les Archives du Saint-Siège, importantes sources de l'histoire politico-religieuse du Canada," *Culture* 7 (1946), p. 155.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 156, note 13, for his proposal to produce a monograph with the general title *Les sources de l'histoire de l'Église canadienne aux archives du Vatican et 'de la Propagande'* which would have reproduced the texts found during his research. For a further appreciation of Morin's endeavours see Luca Codignola, "L'Amérique du Nord et la Sacrée Congrégation 'de Propaganda Fide,' 1622-1799: Études," *Bulletin du Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française*, 21 (décembre 1980), pp. 1-12.

13 Conrad Morin, "Le Saint-Siège et l'Établissement de l'Église au Canada sous le régime ou la Mission Apostolique (1615-1658)," (Ph.D. thesis, Gregorian University, 1942).

14 Fish, *Guide*, p. 71.

A careful reading of Morin's thesis, however, raises some questions about the significance of his list of *sources manuscrites*. Only three specific documents from the series *Francia* are utilized, although Morin lists forty-two volumes in his *sources manuscrites* which seem, at least according to their dates, relevant to the first portion of his thesis.¹⁵ Presumably, whatever Morin found in these volumes falls into the category of "the many documents" he saw but did not find necessary to cite.¹⁶ Still, his *sources manuscrites* appeared to be a useful guide to the series and volumes within series in the ASV which contain material of interest in Canadian history before about 1675. Acting on this assumption, some of the volumes identified by Morin from a number of series were surveyed, but only a few were found to contain relevant material.¹⁷ We can only conclude that Morin's *sources manuscrites* for the ASV is a record of his "long and monotonous methodical scrutiny" during which "sometimes entire days were spent paging volumes of bundles of documents with no other consolation than that of having satisfied the historian's conscience."¹⁸ He appears to have selected the volumes according to their dates; he listed them without specifying either his selection criteria or the relevant documents they might contain.¹⁹

Fish and Morin are the only authors known to have conducted general surveys of Roman archives, and the Vatican Archives in particular, in an effort to establish their potential for research into Canadian or North American history. Some of the contents of various ASV series occasionally appear in scholarly works on Canadian history, but these are concerned with specific themes and topics. Presumably their authors, perhaps like Morin, selected volumes from various series and sub-series in the hope of finding relevant material. An older generation of historians cited by Morin appear to have followed this method.²⁰ The same might be said of more recent endeavours. For example, in an important study of the origins of the first diocese established in French America, Lucien Campeau utilizes both *Propaganda* and ASV documents. His discussion of the contest between the Archbishop of Rouen and the Holy See over ecclesiastical jurisdiction in New France is supported by documents found in Secretary of State correspondence from the mid-seventeenth century. However, the author does not provide information about his selection of material; hence we cannot reconstruct his survey of a given archival

15 Morin, "L'Établissement de l'Église," p. 39, note 120, for his use of *Francia* vol. 53, f. 41v-42; p. 48, note 145, for vol. 54, f. 131; and p. 49, note 148, for vol. 294, f. 182. The list of all the *Francia* volumes he consulted is given on p. xiii.

16 *Ibid.*, p. iii.

17 See note 48, below, for project research which was based partially on Morin's work.

18 Morin, "L'Établissement de l'Église," p. iii.

19 The criteria followed by Morin in his search for documents are not apparent. He lists several volumes in the series *Francia*, for example, which contain material relevant to this period of study (pre-1658), but he does not make use of the documents they contain; see *ibid.*, p. xiii, where he lists *Francia* vol. 110A without citing from it f. 89r-v, f. 100r, f. 101v, or v. 258r which include two letters written in 1657 concerning the appointment of Laval as Vicar Apostolic in Canada and two memoranda on the same topic.

20 Morin, "L'Établissement de l'Église," p. ii, where he states that the five principal historians in his day of the Canadian Roman Catholic Church did not "effectué le dépouillement méthodique des archives romaines," although he notes that Odoric Jouve "semble avoir consulté sérieusement ... celles [archives] du Vatican."

series.²¹ Fish's *Guide* remains the only published study which attempts both to indicate the potential of the ASV and reproduce in some detail the results of a sampling of various series.

Both Fish and Morin emphasized the value of the Secretary of State series in the ASV for North American historical research. In particular, they recommended various *nunziatura* series (Spain, France, Flanders, and England) as deserving special attention. Fish focused on two of these, the *nunziatura di Spagna* and the *nunziatura di Francia*. In the former, he found material mainly relevant to Central and South America. In accordance with the geographical criteria we chose, which exclude this area of the New World, this series was not considered for our project research. The best source therefore seemed to be the series *Francia*, which Fish described as important but not much used, and where he found relevant material in twenty-seven of the thirty-three volumes he surveyed.²²

Within the Holy See's *nunziatura* or ambassadorial system, which was the oldest and most elaborate in Europe, the nuncio at the French Court occupied an extremely important position.²³ France, of course, was one of the powers engaged in the contest for territories in the Americas, and we might expect the papal nuncio to express interest in this conflict if only, as Fish notes, as a "news agent."²⁴ The Papacy, however, was often deeply involved in peace negotiations between European powers. The nuncio sometimes participated as a mediator or an observer. When New World territories were included in discussions they were usually mentioned in the dispatches he sent to the Holy See.²⁵ This reporting was part of the nuncio's responsibility and coincided with his relationship with the French missionary orders and with the interest of his superiors in territories where the Holy See felt it had ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Thus in the 1650s, when the Holy See contested jurisdiction over New France with the Archbishop of Rouen, Nuncio Celio Piccolomini, played an important role. He helped to expedite Laval's appointment as Vicar Apostolic and to keep the Holy See informed about Rouen's reactions; he also negotiated with the archbishop on the Holy See's

21 Lucien Campeau, S.J., "L'évêché de Québec, 1674; Aux origines du premier diocèse érigé en Amérique française," *Cahiers d'histoire*, 26 (Québec, 1974), p. xi, under *sources manuscrites* cites ASV, *Francia*, vol. 427; but on p. 80 he also cites a letter from the Papal Nuncio in France, Fabrizio Spada, to his superior, Cardinal Altieri, which he preserved in *Francia* vol. 153, f. 241. Campeau does not refer to the letter of 8 February 1675 in the same volume (f. 68r) in which the nuncio reported Laval's plea for a quick expedition of the bulls for his church so that he would not miss that season's departure of ships for Canada.

22 Fish, *Guide*, pp. 72-75.

23 H. Biaudet, *Les nonciatures apostoliques permanentes jusqu'en 1648* (Helsinki, 1910), provides a good introduction to the Holy See's *nunziatura* system; see also P. Richard, "Origines des nonciatures permanentes: la représentation pontificale au XV^e siècle, 1450-1513," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 7 (1906), pp. 52-70; and L. Karttunen, *Les nonciatures apostoliques permanentes de 1650 à 1800* (Geneva, 1912).

24 Fish, *Guide*, p. 72.

25 In a ciphered report of the peace negotiations which resulted in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, for example, the nuncio reported that one of the problems encountered arose because of England's refusal to discuss the fate of Cape Breton; see *Francia* vol. 490, ff. 376r-377r, cipher dated 27 June 1746 and deciphered 12 July 1746 by the Holy See.

behalf.²⁶ In one of his last letters to the Secretary of State concerning this affair, Piccolomini observed that the “jealousy and rivalry between Jesuits and Sulpicians [in New France, the former was supported by the Holy See and the latter by Rouen] would not be harmful if it occurred where our religion was already established.”²⁷ The nuncio’s role in this affair and others like it, the material described by Fish, and the correspondence between *Propaganda*, the French nuncio, and clerics who were involved with the New World (which Codignola noted) encouraged us to choose the ASV’s series *Francia* as the most likely starting point for project research.²⁸

Since the publication of Fish’s *Guide* in 1911, this series has received some of the attention which he felt it deserved. In particular, the Gregorian University, with the École Française de Rome, began in 1962 to publish the correspondence of various nuncios under the general title *Acta Nuntiaturae Gallicae* (ANG). To date fifteen volumes have been published which reproduce the correspondence of eighteen nuncios. Fourteen of the nuncios held office in the sixteenth century, while the other four were nuncios in the seventeenth century. No edition of eighteenth-century correspondence has been published. A review of the ANG volumes for two seventeenth-century nuncios, Fabrizio Spada and Angelo Ranuzzi, will prove useful for describing the research methodology adopted for the project.²⁹ The review will also help to describe the series *Francia* and some of the material of Canadian interest which it contains.

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and especially during Spada’s term of office, the correspondence between the nuncio at the French Court and his superiors in Rome followed a fairly strict format.³⁰ In a weekly packet, the nuncio sent to his superior in Rome plain or ciphered letters, plain or ciphered notes or memoranda, newsletters or *avvisi* (a type of weekly gazette in manuscript form produced by the nuncio or his staff in an impersonal style without specific indication of sources, some of which might also be sent in cipher), and an assortment of documents, either in printed or manuscript form, such as *arrêts du Conseil* and copies of printed gazettes. The nuncio received a similar packet from his superior via the regular courier service which in 1674-75 connected Rome with Paris in about twenty days.³¹

26 The nuncio consecrated the new bishop *in partibus infidelium* because of the opposition of the French clergy. Campeau, “L’évêché de Québec,” p. 67, bases his account of events on *Propaganda Fide* and archbishopric of Québec documents; these can be supplemented with further sources found in *Francia* vols. 110A, (see above, note 19), 113-16, and 119-20. The nuncio’s letter to the Holy See announcing his consecration of Laval is in *Francia* vol. 113, f. 470r. It was dated and signed at Paris on 13 December 1658.

27 The rivalry to which the nuncio refers involved the Holy See as promoter of the Jesuit “cause” and the Archbishop of Rouen as defender of Sulpician claims. In other words, would Rouen, and hence the Gallican church, or the Holy See exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction over New France? Piccolomini’s letter on the “jealousy and rivalry” is found in *Francia* vol. 119, f. 229r. It was signed and dated 27 May 1661 at Moret-sur-Loing where the nuncio had gone to accompany the French Court.

28 For the correspondence between *Propaganda Fide* and various nuncios at the French Court see the indices to the volumes calendared in Codignola, *Vatican*.

29 Bruno Neveu, ed., *Correspondance du nonce en France, Angelo Ranuzzi (1683-1689); Tome I: 1683-1686; Tome II: 1687-1689, Acta Nuntiaturae Gallicae*, vols. 11-12 (Rome, 1972); and Segolene de Dainville-Barbiche, ed., *Correspondance du nonce en France, Fabrizio Spada (1674-1675), Acta Nuntiaturae Gallicae*, vol. 15 (Rome, 1982).

30 During Spada’s term of office, the papal nuncio did not correspond with the then Secretary of State of the Holy See, Francesco Nerli, but with the Cardinal *padrone*, Altieri. On this point, and for a more detailed description of the correspondence of Spada and Altieri than what follows, see the useful *préliminaires* in Dainville-Barbiche, *Spada*, pp. vii-xvii.

31 *Ibid.*, p. xii.

A glance through the *sources manuscrites* in the ANG editions of the correspondence of the Nuncios Spada and Ranuzzi reveals that a thorough edition of a nuncio's correspondence can be produced only with the aid of many volumes from series other than *Francia* and often from other collections besides those in the ASV.³² However, this type of additional documentation is outside the immediate scope of the present project. Our concern was not with a particular term of office, but with one of the archival series in which the events and issues of that term have been recorded. In other words, we followed an *archival* rather than a *subject-oriented* research methodology. We decided to carry out a systematic survey of one archival series (in this case the ASV series *Francia*) rather than select a group of volumes from a number of series on the assumption that these would contain records of New World or North American events. In the series *Francia*, this involved careful scrutiny of 670 volumes or unbound bundles (*mazzi*) of material. These varied in length from a few to as many as 2,000 or more folios per item in the series.

The Nuncio Fabrizio Spada was closely involved in the creation of the first bishopric in North America, and his role is amply illustrated in *Francia* in volumes 150 and 153. All nine of Spada's letters on this topic to his superior, Cardinal Altieri, together with a note on the safe arrival in France of a fleet from Canada, recorded as part of Spada's *avvisi* of 7 September 1674, have been summarized for our calendar.³³ This correspondence is also noted in Dainville-Barbiche's volume where most of the letters are reproduced verbatim.³⁴ The arrival of the fleet from Canada is also mentioned as part of a *précis* of one of the nuncio's *avvisi*, which the editor believes is a useful adjunct to the correspondence of this *nunziatura*.

These nine letters in which Laval is mentioned represent only one side of a more voluminous correspondence. The letters from Altieri to Spada concerning the creation of the bishopric of Québec have also survived. Dainville-Barbiche reproduces them either verbatim or in summary form in the order in which they were written, and interspersed with their counterparts. Yet the reconstruction of nuncio and Secretary of State correspondence can only be accomplished by regrouping material which has not been preserved according to its provenance. In fact, the bulk of the Altieri-Spada correspondence appears in the series *Francia* in volume numbers 426 and 427, over two hundred volumes removed from its Spada to Altieri counterpart. The reconstruction of material produced during a given term of office is further complicated in this instance by the survival rate of different versions of that material.

Letters, memoranda, and *avvisi*, for example, appear in the Spada correspondence in three forms: a minute version, a register version, and the "original" — the version actually exchanged between Rome and Paris. These were produced by a scribal routine in which correspondence was composed first in a rough draft version (minute) from which the "original" was compiled, signed by the nuncio and expedited. Both offices also maintained a record of at least their correspondence in letters and memoranda in the registers — volumes of verbatim copies of "original" letters and memoranda without their signatures. The nuncio's registers sometimes also include copies of *avvisi* or, less

32 This assumes that all correspondence has survived and is available for consultation; see Neveu, *Ranuzzi, Tome I*, pp. 5-6.

33 The originals of these letters by Spada to Altieri are found in *Francia* vol. 150, f. 206r-v, f. 246r, f. 342r, f. 378r, f. 392r-v, f. 524r, and in vol. 153, f. 68r, and f. 241r-v. The *avvisi* extract is taken from vol. 150, ff. 691r-692r and is found on the *verso* of f. 691.

34 Dainville-Barbiche, *Spada*, p. 72, for summary of the "Mgr de Laval affair."

frequently, other documents that were sent to the Holy See. More importantly, registers or minutes were composed for all of a nuncio's correspondence, not only for the letters which were addressed to his superiors in Rome. Hence it is sometimes possible to discover the text of a letter which he might have written to someone other than his superiors concerning North American affairs.

Dainville-Barbiche's edition of this material is extremely thorough. She notes the location within the series *Francia* of both the register and minute versions of either the nuncio or his superior's correspondence.³⁵ She has also made use of Spada's *Giornali* (preserved as *Francia* volume 432) wherein the nuncio kept a daily journal of his official activities. She has cross-referenced most of the edited letters with *Giornali* entries.³⁶

Where necessary, we have also attempted to give topical unity to documents we calendared. For instance, in the Spada-Altieri correspondence, the letters exchanged between Rome and Paris concerning the creation of the bishopric of Québec have been cross-referenced to each other. Various versions of a document also have been connected using the "original" as the main reference. Thus, minute and register versions of an item, a letter for example, are cross-referenced to their "original." For the sake of brevity, however, no cross-references are noted between an "original" and other versions unless these differ significantly. Similarly, no cross-references are noted between minute and register versions of a document.

As noted above, not all of the material produced during a nuncio's term of office is preserved within the series *Francia*. Some references appear in other ASV series or even in other repositories. The ANG editors have made every effort to trace this material as in Neveu's edition of the correspondence of the Nuncio Angelo Ranuzzi.

Ranuzzi's term of office coincided with the appointment of Saint-Vallier as the second Bishop of Québec following Laval's illness and subsequent retirement.³⁷ Most of the nuncio's correspondence on the affairs of the bishopric in this period is reproduced, often verbatim, by Neveu; he also indicates the existence of relevant documents which are preserved in other archives. Thus, when he reproduces the first of Ranuzzi's letters on Saint-Vallier, he also notes the existence of a corresponding *mémoire* from the offices of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris.³⁸ Ranuzzi's stay in the French capital, however, was lengthy and produced a considerable number of documents. In the series *Francia* alone, there are thirty volumes extant from this term of office compared with only sixteen in the same series for Spada.³⁹ This may explain why the edited correspondence upon a

35 *Ibid.*, p. 137, letter no. 59, for example, Spada to Altieri on the reactions of the Bishop of Québec (Laval) to the accusations brought against him concerning the abbey St. Mary Lestrées from *Francia* vol. 150, f. 206r-v, which Dainville-Barbiche reproduces verbatim and also notes its register (vol. 433) and minute (vol. 429) versions.

36 *Ibid.*, notes four of a total of six references to Bishop Laval in Spada's *Giornali*. The other two are found in *Francia* vol. 432, f. 227v and f. 243v.

37 The appointment of the new bishop, Saint-Vallier, is recorded in *Francia* vol. 173, f. 114r-v in a memorandum dated 31 January 1685 where Laval's return to France to recover from his *rottura* (rupture or hernia) is also announced.

38 Neveu, *Ranuzzi, Tome II*, p. 53, letter no. 2524, which is taken from *Francia* vol. 176, f. 170r. Neveu's note to this letter describes a document titled "Mémoire sur la nomination de M. de Saint-Vallier" in the "Archives of the minister of foreign affairs in Paris, Political Correspondence, Rome," vol. 295, ff. 185-91.

39 Neveu, *Ranuzzi, Tome I*, pp. xv-xvii; and Dainville-Barbiche, *Spada*, p. ix. Neveu describes in *Ranuzzi, Tome I*, p. xii some of the editorial problems which he faced because of the quantity of documents.

topic such as Saint-Vallier's nomination and consecration is not as complete as it might be. Neveu does not reproduce, for example, the first notices of the movements of Laval and Saint-Vallier between Québec and France in 1685.⁴⁰ Instead, he begins with Ranuzzi's 1687 letter to the then Secretary of State, Cardinal Cibo, in which he reports Saint-Vallier's return from "Québec in Canada" after a stay of more than one year.⁴¹

There is one other editorial decision taken by Neveu which had significance for our research project. As has been noted, the Ranuzzi volumes in the series *Francia*, like those produced during Spada's term of office, contain weekly manuscript *avvisi* and printed newsletters which were forwarded to the Holy See. In both periods, the *avvisi* are often no more than translations or adaptations made from printed Gazettes.⁴² Neveu felt that neither type of document was important for his edition, and unlike Dainville-Barbiche, he does not provide résumés of *avvisi*; in addition, neither editor utilizes the printed counterparts. Where either of these two types of documents appear in the series *Francia*, however, the present authors surveyed them carefully, often finding interesting items of North American or Canadian news among the contents.⁴³ Thus, our calendar includes everything found in the series *Francia*, regardless of its provenance, which seems to be pertinent to North American affairs. Where the *Francia* volumes edited in the ANG have also been surveyed for the calendar, the latter is generally more detailed in terms of material of North American interest. Every effort has been made to record all relevant items discovered in the course of our research.

Calendaring decisions were normally not difficult to make. We followed the geographical criteria described above which exclude all references to Central or South America, including the Caribbean, unless individuals were mentioned who were also known to have been involved in North American events.⁴⁴ Within limits this principle was also applied to individuals known to have been involved in North American events, but who were also mentioned in a European context. La Fayette's activities in France just before and during the American Revolution were calendared, but not his activities during the French Revolution.

Material found in the series *Francia* on the European careers of relatively unknown individuals who were active in North American or Canadian affairs has been calendared fully. A good example is Dominique-Marie Varlet who, for 1717-18, was Vicar General of the Bishop of Québec. The biography of Varlet written by Pierre Hurtubise can now be expanded with material calendared from the series *Francia*.⁴⁵ In Europe, Varlet "had the misfortune to fall into the disgrace of the Holy See;" he eventually settled in Holland.⁴⁶

40 See above, note 37; and also *Francia* vol. 173, f. 115r-v, where the nuncio's *avvisi* include news of the arrival in France of the Bishop of Québec who has come to cure his "indisposition." In the same volume, on ff. 451v-452r, there is a report in the nuncio's *avvisi* of Saint-Vallier's departure for Canada from La Rochelle.

41 Neveu, *Ranuzzi, Tome II*, p. 53, letter no. 2425.

42 *Ibid.*, *Tome I*, p. 55.

43 In the *Gazette d'Amsterdam* of 17 October 1675, for example, now in *Francia* vol. 153, ff. 675r-676v, there is a report of an expedition of three English vessels — the *Kits*, the *Shaftesbury*, and *Prince Robert* [recte *Rupert*] — to Hudson Bay and the Northwest Passage.

44 See above, note 6.

45 The biography of Dominique-Marie Varlet is in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3 (Toronto, 1974), pp. 691-93. Father Hurtubise cites *Francia* volumes 234 and 389 for his biography and these can be supplemented with material found in volumes 235, 241-43, 258-59, 262, and 267-68.

46 *Francia*, vol. 243, f. 467rv.

There his associations with Jansenists became vexatious to the Holy See. The nuncios in France were given the task of watching his movements and, if possible, of enticing him into French territory where his conduct could be controlled more closely. They were never very successful in controlling the “bishop of Babylon,” but their reports to their superiors on his activities provide useful supplementary material on the career of a former member of the church in New France.⁴⁷

In other calendaring decisions, we were equally cautious when doubts arose about the significance of an item or document. Items which contain references to “America” were calendared although sometimes it was not possible to establish either in *Francia* volumes or in standard reference works which part of the Americas was intended. Where possible, references were completed or explained in square brackets in the résumé of a document.

Some difficulties arose with items taken from newsletters or similar sources. In the period 1750-1800, for example, news of North American affairs normally reached the nuncio via letters from London by the French ambassador or by other unspecified persons. This type of letter was usually prefaced with the phrase “toutes les lettres de Londres disent....” However, in times of war between the two nations, the route between France and England was closed; English or American events were normally reported via letters from The Hague. These letters were written in French, and as a rule the nuncio forwarded them to the Holy See without providing a translation or translated résumé of their contents as was normally done for other items which he forwarded. Information was also obtained either from letters or individuals bearing news and reports from French ports where vessels arrived from America. The nuncio, of course, was also privy to some of the reports as well as most of the rumours which circulated at the French Court.

All of these sources were supplemented with printed newsletters — most often in the period 1750-1800 by the *Gazette de France* in addition to the *Gazette de Cologne*, the *Gazette de Vienne*, and the *Gazetta Universale*. In the calendar these news items have been treated as if they originated in the nuncio’s office. A manuscript newsletter written in French and addressed and dated from The Hague may have been routed to Rome via the nuncio’s office without modification, but this is an assumption that could not be verified. Instead, the provenance of all such documents is given as Paris, the site of the nuncio’s permanent headquarters, and in their résumés the items in question are described according to their given places of origin and dates.

As noted above, the survey of the series *Francia* produced a calendar of 1,050 items, a result which confirms Fish’s judgement of its importance for North American history. Fish also recommended other collections in the ASV which were produced, like *Francia*, by the activities of various offices or institutions of the Holy See. However, we were not able to carry out exhaustive surveys of these collections. Instead, we concluded the project with a scrutiny of selected volumes in twelve ASV series and sub-series.⁴⁸ We

47 See above, note 45. Varlet’s role in the consecration of Jansenist bishops in the Low Countries became a particular concern for the Holy See. See the nuncio’s letter of 28 September 1733 in which he reports his effort to prevent the consecration of the “pseudo-archbishop of Utrecht” by Varlet in *Francia*, vol. 258, ff. 555r-556r.

48 The series and sub-series, together with the volumes surveyed from each, are described in full in the calendar. The choice of volumes to be scrutinized was made on the basis of references provided by Fish and, in particular, Conrad Morin. We were fortunate in having access to some of the latter’s research notes. Pierre Hurtubise provided some guidance in their use and also contributed several calendar entries from his own work in the ASV series *Acta Sacra Congregationis super Disciplina Regularium*.

cannot say whether our research into these records has uncovered all of the material of North American or Canadian interest which they might contain.

In the series known as *Acta Congregationis Consistorialis*, our references suggested that pertinent material would be found in fifteen of approximately 368 volumes, but three of the volumes surveyed did not contain relevant material. The other twelve volumes, however, were found to contain approximately 120 relevant items. These varied from simple memoranda on the affairs of the church of Québec to detailed drafts of the bull proposed for the erection of the first bishopric.⁴⁹

In conclusion, the complete survey of the series *Francia* proved to be very worthwhile but the research completed in other ASV series and sub-series can only be seen as an indication of what remains to be done. Further research might bring to light material for relatively well-known episodes in Canadian history of the type mentioned above in the series *Francia*. It might also uncover material for less well-known events. In the latter category, besides news of the activities of the “bishop of Babylon” in the series *Francia*, we also have information on the capture of Bishop Saint-Vallier while returning to Canada from France and his subsequent five-year imprisonment in England. His plight is described in the letters exchanged between the nuncio and the Secretary of State of the Holy See as various diplomatic channels were tried in an effort to secure his freedom.⁵⁰ In a very different domain, the series *Francia* contains information not only on aspects of the history of New France such as the fur trade, but also reflects the caution required in the use of documentation. Thus the news of the safe arrival at La Rochelle of a fleet from New France with “a great cargo of pelts” seems interesting but not especially remarkable save the fact that all the sailors with the fleet were reported to have been sent to Brest. Some clarification is provided by a subsequent report. The safe arrival of the fleet is described as a rumour which was circulated by someone who wanted to enter the fur trade and wanted to be able to buy furs at good prices! Were the sailors only rumoured to have been sent to Brest in order to explain their “absence” in La Rochelle given the fictitious arrival of their fleet?⁵¹

In short, the two calendars which were produced as a result of project research contain a wide variety of material which should prove useful for Canadian historians. They provide further evidence of the importance of “Rome” for North American history; a complete survey of ASV holdings would no doubt confirm this observation.⁵²

49 The drafts of the bull and related material are found in ASV, *Sacra Congregationis Consistorialis, Acta Congregationis Consistorialis*, vols. 1666-90 and vol. 1668 Tom. 1.

50 Saint-Vallier's imprisonment was announced by the nuncio in a letter to the Holy See of 8 September 1704 in *Francia* vol. 213, on f. 313r-v. The affair is extensively documented in this volume and also in volumes 214-16.

51 The fictitious arrival of the fleet was reported in the nuncio's *avvisi* dated 2 January 1696 in *Francia* vol. 190, ff. 8r-v, 9v, and the discovery of the rumour was reported in his *avvisi* of 16 January 1696, f. 65r in the same volume.

52 For the moment no further work in the ASV is planned. Luca Codignola, however, has moved on to research nineteenth-century subjects in the archives of *Propaganda Fide* and Monique Benoit is occupied in the same archives in a survey of the important Leo XIII Collection (1878-1903).