Spring 2019

Interpreting the Other: Natives, Missionaries, and Colonial Authority In New England, 1643-1675

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by

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B.A. December 2016, Old Dominion University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

HISTORY

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 2019

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis studies the rise, maintenance, and decline of New England praying towns from 1643-1675. Nestled between the Pequot War and Metacom's War, the mid-seventeenth century was a period of relative peace between Indians and English settlers. Despite this supposed peace, violence continued between the two sides. The decades of peace were uneasy, and marked by increased tension over land and resources. Missionaries went to natives in Massachusetts and established towns aimed at converting large numbers of Indians. These towns would become a volleying point for local authorities, missionaries, and royal governors as natives, missionaries, settlers, and elites vied for power. Facing rapid depopulation, natives went to the mission towns to ensure their survival. This thesis seeks to understand why mission towns ended so rapidly, and how a period of relative peace could result in extreme violence. It argues that it was the overall misunderstandings on the part of missionaries and natives as to why they joined the other that led to the quick end of the mission system and ultimately to war. With legal disputes, fights over sovereignty, the English Civil War, lack of cultural knowledge, and inability to communicate with one another, the proclaimed peace of the mid-seventeenth century was really a period of exhaustive plays for power between waves of settlers in inhabited lands and those who sought to create a future that brought together natives and English.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and my sister

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was possible because of the Department of History at Old Dominion University. Without the classes and professors I had during my undergraduate and graduate years, I would have been unable to conduct the research it took for this thesis. The writing that is here is largely due to the guidance and editing of Dr. Merritt. The amount that she worked with me and helped me take this from a paper into a thesis is invaluable and I could not have done this without her. Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1648, an unnamed native woman died due to complications in childbirth. Her passing marked the first amongst many recorded deaths of native converts in New England. Depicted as industrious, able to spin cloth, and vastly different from natives who begged and bothered the English, she was the ideal worker and consumer.[1] Her narrative described the perfect English woman, putting distance between herself and unconverted natives. Like others to come, her life was overshadowed by her death and the dying speech that was the final testament to her conversion. Her speech, recorded by John Eliot who was not present for it, told her grown children to live amongst the English in the newly established praying town rather than return back to their family, which would undoubtedly try to turn them back to their "heathen ways."[2] Praying towns, established by missionaries as a place for converted Indians to live and practice Christianity in New England, were stressed as the only place natives could be saved. Her wishes touched all the concerns that surrounded missionaries, pleading with her children that "the word of God is taught, sins are suppressed, and punished by laws; and therefore I charge you live here all your days."[3] Her speech was everything a missionary would want to hear and the perfect example to show how they were successful. Not only had this native converted, she put her children into the protection of the English and she died. These elements created the best possible outcome for missionary practices; the word of God was received, processed, and another soul

[1] John Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England*, published by Edward Winslow (London: Hannah Allen, 1649), *Gale Primary Sources*, 6.
[2] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress*, 7.
[3] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress*, 7.

was saved while creating a system missions would strive for: the separation of native children from their families, a process which was believed to help ease the transition to English culture and make their education stronger with less fear of backsliding.

This woman's story is as enlightening as it is inherently problematic; so is the nature of studying native voice and agency in Puritan mission records. Written into the pages of letters, journals, pamphlets and books are native words, questions, ideas, and actions. Despite the abundance of commentary on natives, none are written directly by native peoples. This forces scholars to look through the lens of seventeenth-century Europeans to understand the goals and actions of natives. Fundamental differences between the two groups put the written accounts into question and make stories such as the one above suspect. Still, English sources from seventeenth-century New England show the interactions that continued to define the relationship between natives, missionaries, and colonial authority.

This study examines the years between 1643 and 1675 to explore the complexities of three groups in contact under the guise of religion. With different concepts of race, religion, and gender, events during 1643-75 are defined by a lack of understanding from all perspectives as to the purpose of missionization, which created a rift between missionaries, settlers, and natives that led to the demise of the praying towns and ultimately to war. Due to the numerous efforts to convert natives and the resources put into the missionary process, the surviving documents provide a window into native life during this period. Nestled between the Pequot War and Metacom's War, this period marked an extensive surge in praying towns and colonial efforts to anglicize and convert natives. Further attempts at acculturation pushed the English and natives physically closer together, creating a body of people that shared little trust as the English continued to gain more land and resources in southern New England.

Close proximity led to syncretic efforts either to maintain or eradicate native autonomy, and can be seen in the evolving nature of the documents produced by missionaries, as well as the events surrounding their creation and destruction. Laws, customs, religions, and societies were irreversibly altered by these interactions. Natives and English brought their own understandings of the purpose of the missions. The conflicting purposes led to deeper rifts between the two groups as natives fought to survive in an increasingly foreign world dominated by those who sought to end native beliefs and ways of life. It is through the missions that Indians fought to save their people and find new ways to adapt. The inability of Europeans to understand native cultures and their reasons for joining New England missions also led to the end of praying towns. English Puritans created a strict racial and cultural hierarchy that denied indigenous culture and identity, and thus undermined efforts to proselytize natives.

Blinded by a need to make Indians English, missionaries and colonial authorities limited native practices that defined Indian culture. In doing so, missionaries attacked native gender roles, economic structures, and kinship ties; religion was less of a concern, as many of the English denied the existence of native religious beliefs.[4] The goals of each missionary, whether it was Thomas Mayhew and John Cotton Jr. on Martha's Vineyard, John Eliot in Massachusetts, or the wandering trader and native advocate Roger Williams, can be seen in their interpretation of and emphasis on native culture. English missionaries were both fascinated by and disdainful of native culture. Their written comments about native life reflect how they viewed Indian culture and the missions. Their place as missionaries put them in a position that was between natives and local elites, and mission records show their relationship with each, indicating that the existence of praying towns depended on both sides addressing their concerns with the other, and the

[4] Kevin Sweeny, "Early American Religious Traditions: Native Visions and Christian Providence," *OAH Magazine of History* 22, no. 1 (January 2008): 9.

lengths to which they would go to control or continue their own practices. Because of this, "many Indian people had to find new ways of surviving, of being Indian, in the new world created by the invasions from Europe, and many Europeans assimilated Indian elements into their new definitions of themselves as Americans."[5]

Missionaries' fear impacted the understandings and interactions of native communities. The Pequot War, 1636-38, was a "series of bloody raids and surprise attacks: traders killed, corn burned, and captives taken. Eventually the violence escalated toward a wholesale assault on the Pequot people."[6] Those who were not killed were either sold into slavery or forced to join other tribes. Though the Pequot were in modern day Connecticut, all of New England felt the impact of the war, especially Massachusetts Bay Colony. Natives were put into reductive categories that labeled them hostile or nonhostile, and the depleting native population in New England had to face a great influx of settlers into a war-torn landscape. Indians saw the mission towns, or praying towns, as a means for survival and a way to prevent further bloodshed. Those who joined became known as praying Indians. Despite joining, natives could not escape the English's preconceived ideas about them.

The goals of the missionaries must be examined alongside native practices and beliefs, since one informed the other. Some historians such as Robert Naeher and Alden Vaughan have continuously argued that "natives were not coerced" into joining the missions; they even reject counterarguments that question the goals of missionaries.[7] Vaughan argued that in many instances missionaries had the best intentions and the use of violence by English settlers was part

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[5] Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2013) 8.

[6] Katherine A. Grandjean, "New World Tempests: Environment, Scarcity, and the Coming of the Pequot War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (January 2011): 76.

[7] Robert James Naeher, "Dialogue in the Wilderness: John Eliot and the Indian Exploration of Puritanism as a Source of Meaning, Comfort, and Ethnic Survival," *The New England Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (September 1989): 367.

of a larger process that had previously been vilified and taken out of context.[8] Both Vaughan and Naeher ignore a full picture that looks at the ways in which both sides approached the missions. Though not outright coerced, natives had a choice between continuous fighting for land, autonomy, and preservation of their culture and finding a new way to survive by adapting English cultural practices. While settlers killed Indians and disease wiped out villages, some natives chose the missions.

What natives faced and saw in their world created the catalyst that made them join missions and made them willing to adopt a culture that was often the antithesis of what they knew.[9] For example, in the praying towns English missionaries questioned native gender and family practices. Eliot and Mayhew argued that living in close proximity to the English would teach Indians proper behaviors and centered around the distinct roles taken on by men and women. Historian Todd Romero argued that the "the history of gender and colonialism over the course of the century is intertwined with that of religion, exchange, and violence," and that "religion filled gender identities with meaning."[10] With that, natives based masculinity on spiritual ties, success in hunting, and their earned levels of respect within their community.[11] Indian female autonomy, skills in farming, and their control of food sources also differed from English ideals, prompting settlers to believe that "unbalanced gender roles was another distinguishing mark of the savage."[12] Many of the markers of native masculinity were seen as

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[8] Alden Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620-1675*. 3rd ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995) xxvii.

[9] James Ronda, "We Are Well as We Are: An Indian Critique of Seventeenth-Century Christian Missions," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 34 (January 1977): 67.

[10] Todd R. Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians: Masculinity, Religion, and Colonialism in Early New England* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011) 9, 7.

[11] Todd R. Romero, "'Ranging Foresters" and "Women-Like Men': Physical Accomplishment, Spiritual Power, and Indian Masculinity in early-Seventeenth-Century New England," *Ethnohistory* 53, no 2 (April 2006): 289; Romero, *Making War and Minding Christians*, 19.

[12] Karen Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000) 150.

unmanly by the English. English associated hunting practices with elite behavior and farming, which native women performed, as a masculine pursuit. In the realm of child rearing, perceived overindulgence of children and lack of discipline on the part of native fathers was another marker of their masculine identities. The English interpreted the close relationships between native parents and children within their homes as a negative, since the English sent their children to school and out of the house. Additionally, colonists thought that native children were spoiled and wanted for nothing. This treatment was seen as poor parenting that made the children disobedient and lazy adults.[13] The English insisted that native childrearing was a marker for Indian extinction, because they lacked a strong father and therefore a strong community.[14]

The Puritans' critique of native childrearing was matched by their misunderstanding of female gender roles. Often seen as the victim of lazy husbands, women were pitied and thought to be susceptible to conversion because it would create a better life for them. Englishmen viewed native women as either victims or spoils of war, reducing them to a state that denied women agency in native culture. An attack on women, whether in word or in a physical act, was also seen as an attack on masculine identities.[15] According to Karen Kupperman, exposure to Indian gender roles forced Englishmen to question their relationship with women and the nature of their masculinity, a factor that seventeenth-century English writers satirized. The subsequent unease created an assumption that "a husband who failed to keep his wife's respect as Indian husbands were said to do was responsible for the subversion of good order."[16] As the missions forced

[13] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 153.

[14] Todd R. Romero, "Totherswamp's Lament: Christian Indian Fathers and Sons in Early Massachusetts," *Journal of Family History* 33, no 1 (January 2008): 5-6.

[15] Stephanie Wood, "Sexual Violation in the Conquest of the Americas," in *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, ed. Merrill D. Smith (New York: New York University Press, 1998) 25.

[16] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 152.

native men into agriculture, women were pushed into the domestic arts.[17] This took native women away from agriculture and their position of authority within their kinship networks and into a realm of subservience. Women were in control in their own homes, and their kinship ties meant that power transferred along female lines, and matriarchs wielded power within their families while men dictated actions in the larger community. Female autonomy was taken away by people who did not understand their culture enough to realize they had it in the first place.

Historians such as Carol Devens and Lisa Poirier have argued that native women used their perceived inferiority to their advantage. By misjudging women's role in native communities, the English underestimated native ability to retain native cultural practices after joining mission communities. With men and masculinity often being the focus of change, and the driving force of English belief that changing men's roles would therefore change women's, female natives had the opportunity to work on their own, with less control than what was being exerted on men. Women continuously did what they could to avoid the change Christianity brought.[18] Conversion often relied on the urge to survive, and natives realized that in doing so they could keep trade links, industry, and hopefully kinship ties. Women did what they had to do to survive, and baptism was seen as a small price to pay for immunity from diseases. By entering a mission community, they could adopt new cultural practices while still maintaining old ways in private.[19] Other women fought for their own control over religious pursuits and worked within the changing system. Allan Greer, in his study of French Jesuit relations with Iroquois in New

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[17] Trudie Lamb Richmond and Amy E. Den Ouden, "Recovering Gendered Political Histories: Local Struggles and Native Women's Resistance in Colonial Southern New England," in *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, ed. Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003) 184.

[18] Carol Devens, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992) 39.

[19] Lisa Poirier, *Religion, Gender, and Kinship in Colonial New France* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2016) 104, 171.

France, argued that women like Catherine Tekakwitha used conversion to escape challenges she faced within native society, and in doing so maintained a status of control over herself by practicing extreme elements of worship such as self-flagellation.[20] She and other native women found a way to continue a semblance of power over their lives and still join the mission towns. Other historians like Juliana Barr, who examined gender and the Spanish borderlands, have demonstrated that native women were used as mediating factors between the two groups. Seen with trade and diplomatic pursuits, the presence of women indicated peaceful intentions, and made way for negotiations, often with women as objects to barter.[21] Though it was illegal for Englishmen to marry natives, exceptions existed. Girls like Pocahontas were forced into marriages for the sake of Indian diplomacy and English propaganda. After being taken from their homes native women were used as Indian examples in Europe; native women's presence allowed for travelers to show the possibilities of the Americas.[22]

English attacks on Indian cultural traits that went beyond religion, farming, and child rearing also challenged native gender roles. For example, lack of animal husbandry was seen as another native practice the English had to change. Natives, who saw some animals as deities and connections to the divine, had to make sense of the new creatures taking over their ecosystem.[23] While native hunters honored animals that they killed and made use of the land, native communities lacked domesticated livestock. When domesticated animals from Europe were set loose in North America, native practices were irreversibly altered. European animals not only ate

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[20] Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 133.

[21] Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[22] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 200.

[23] Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "Chickwallop and the Beast: Indian Responses to European Animals in Early New England," in *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, ed. Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003) 36.

the food sources for indigenous animals, but native food sources as well. Crucial staples to their diet were eaten and destroyed by roaming pigs and cattle with no repercussions or payments for damage. Living outside the praying towns meant that their land and food sources were inconsequential and little more than the stomping ground of free range European animals. Historian David Silverman argued that there was a direct link between animal husbandry and the rate of conversions as natives were forced to take on European farming practices to combat the decrease in traditional food sources. Because the deer population was declining and native cornfields and granaries were being destroyed, Native Americans chose to change practices to survive.[24]

For other historians, racism drove the relationship between missionaries and Indians and permeated English knowledge of native culture and their approach towards the praying towns. English settlers found ways to distance themselves from natives by establishing a racial hierarchy that worked to teach natives English culture while still placing Indians in an inferior status. Puritans had to face the cultural misconceptions and mindsets of English settlers as well as their own.[25] Interactions between the two groups "revealed the degree to which race limited religious inclusion."[26] The political makeup of the praying towns were directly linked to this constructed division between groups, as mistrust of natives continued to be a pervasive factor in relations between Indians and missionaries. While Puritans preached that "all true Christians were morally obliged actively to resist injustice in every form," they continued to practice an

[24] David J. Silverman, "'We Chuse to be Bounded': Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 511-548.

[25] Henry M. Knapp, "The Character of Puritan Missions: The Motivation, Methodology, and Effectiveness of the Puritan Evangelization of the Native Americans in New England," *The Journal of Presbyterian History* 76, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 120-124.

[26] Zubeda Jalalzai, "Race and the Puritan Body Politic," *MELUS* 29, no. ¾ (Autumn-Winter 2004): 260.

intolerant religion with direct ties to English political institutions driven by a racial hierarchy they refused to dismantle.[27]

The racial hierarchy that controlled the mission towns were seen in the laws created during this time period. Natives, who believed treaties would guarantee their autonomy, fought on the grounds that they were equal to the English.[28] Although converted natives were subjects of the crown, they did not share the same rights as white colonists. As tensions grew between the groups by the mid-seventeenth-century, English inclusivity reached its limits. During the 1670s and Metacom's War, "Puritans abandoned their commitment to a society shared with Christian Indians."[29] Tension was met with violence as the two groups confronted their inability to create a society that incorporated both cultures. Jenny Pulsipher argued that Metacom's War, which targeted the mission system and put the natives who joined in danger in both English and Indian society, was not about conversion itself but about politics, race, and colonial charters.[30] The issue of authority was exacerbated by Puritan racism as natives sought ways around colonial authority and directly challenged their hold by petitioning the crown. This play for power, wrapped around the missions, only furthered the struggle between natives and English.

The missionaries themselves must also be studied to better understand their reactions to and interactions with natives. Different missionaries were competing with one another and were working within a system that closely intertwined politics and economics with missionary practices.[31] When the first praying town was created on Martha's Vineyard by Thomas Mayhew,

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[27] Nicholas Tyacke, "The Puritan Paradigm of English Politics, 1558-1642," *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 3 (September 2010): 529, 550.

[28] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) 15.

[29] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, "Massacre at Hurtleberry Hill: Christian Indians and English Authority in Metacom's War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (July 1996): 486.

[30] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 191.

[31] Francis Jennings, "Goals and Functions of Puritan Missions to the Indians," *Ethnohistory* 18, no. 3 (Summer 1971): 197.

John Eliot responded by creating his own establish mission communities in Massachusetts that were in his control. Meanwhile, Puritan leaders pushed for missions in an attempt to legitimize their control in certain territories. This left Indians with the choice to convert, but only in a manner deemed appropriate by the missionaries and only when they abandoned their land and practices to join the praying towns.[32] Conflict reached beyond the Puritans, who soon competed with other Protestant denominations and other empires. Quakers wrote of and directly challenged Puritan involvement with natives, as they themselves had been exiled from Massachusetts. While applauding native hospitality, Quakers believed the Puritans replaced the best parts of native society with the worst parts of the English.[33] Competition for souls and trade with foreign nations also dictated Puritan interactions with natives. Direct competition with Spain and France created a need to rapidly convert as many natives to a Protestant religion rather than the Catholic competitors.[34] Therefore, economies and politics drove the missionary process along with religious aims.

Missionaries also faced competition that went deeper than rifts between empires. Working to maintain control over their religious pursuits, missionaries had to work with and in opposition to colonial elites. The struggle for power between Creoles, colonial authorities, local elites, and the missionaries was reflected in the work being done amongst the Indians.[35] Inter-colonial conflict between Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony and newly formed colonies such as Connecticut and Rhode Island that surrounded it created a system that worked to maintain alliances with natives and their subsequent subjugation. Fearing native alliances with non-Puritan

[32] Jennings, "Goals and Functions," 201, 206.
[33] Stephen W. Angell, "'Learn of the Heathen': Quakers and Indians in Southern New England, 1656-1676," *Quaker History* 92, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 1-3.
[34] Knapp, "The Character of Puritan Missions," 111-112.
[35] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King,* 150.

colonies, Massachusetts worked to further missions to keep natives complicit while they vied to continue their colonial charter and maintain power amongst local elites rather than with men born in England.[36] Conflict for power among political leaders substantiated the racial hierarchy seen within whites and increasingly land poor natives.[37] Missionaries had to work within conflicting colonial powers while trying to fund and maintain control over praying towns. Treatment of religion and conversion of natives was further hindered by relationships with a mass influx of settlers after the Great Migration of the 1630s.

The goals of the missionaries varied between religion and politics. According to Timothy Sehr, John Eliot was a firm millennialist who believed that natives were descendants of the ten Lost Tribes of Israel and their conversion would bring on the apocalypse.[38] His continued perceived successes validated his theory that was shared with other contemporaries, including fellow Indian advocate Roger Williams.[39] The end of days became a guiding factor in conversions, and created a desire for quick conversions. Eliot's religious goals were met with other missionaries' concerns over the events surrounding Puritan expulsion from Europe and the current state of England. The seventeenth-century saw a multitude of events that reaffirmed religion as product of politics and society across Europe and into the Americas. It was also the result of centuries of war and challenges to the faith that created religious leaders who sought to prove their superiority. New Spain, New France, and New England experienced what was happening in Europe, each in their own way. In New Spain, Franciscans took the Reconquista as a model for treatment of Indians, creating a militaristic frontier order that worked to subdue and

[36] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 23, 36, 50.
[37] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 80.
[38] Timothy J. Sehr, "John Eliot, Millennialist and Missionary," *The Historian* 46, no. 2 (February 1984): 190.
[39] Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2010) A5.

convert.[40] French Jesuits reacted to the counterreformation in their missions, which created a need to convert as many souls as possible amongst natives.[41] The English Civil War permeated Puritan mindsets as faith and power were called into question.[42] Massachusetts, who firmly supported a commonwealth rather than the restoration of Charles II and harbored fugitives who executed Charles I, looked to assert their own authority over natives rather than allow them to take orders from the crown. The Bay Colony's power struggle resulted in the Colony's assertion that their authority was above the crown's, creating tension between missionaries and local authorities who wished to work with natives or petition Parliament directly. Each missionary, and each town they created, reflected the current global politics.

The towns themselves varied based on location and the surrounding natives. Though one missionary could control multiple towns, as in the case of Eliot, their success depended not only on native willingness to join, but finances gained from commissioners and those willing to donate to the cause. Competition for resources meant that the different missionaries had to write in a way that made them appear to be successful while still in need of further investments. The urge on the part of colonial leaders to use these towns as a means to gain more land fueled part of their funding. The treaties created for the towns and with the natives for land reflected this growing desire for land and people.[43]

Trends in recent historiography have shown a shift towards emphasizing native agency and autonomy within colonial history. Before the 1970s, historians often neglected native agency within the history of southern New England praying towns and missionary efforts during the

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[40] Robert C. Galgano, *Feast of Souls: Indians and Spaniards in the Seventeenth-Century Missions of Florida and New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005) 31.

[41] Greer, *Mohawk Saint*, 63.

[42] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 28.

[43] Jeffrey Glover, *Paper Sovereigns. Anglo-Native Treaties and the Law of Nations, 1604-1664* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014) 211-225.

mid-seventeenth century. Francis Jennings and other leaders in the field led the way for future research, but still used now outdated methods and ignored questions as to native agency. The changing trends in American history question previous narratives of conquest and conversion that have been used to explain periods of contact and colonization. The American experience did not exist within a Eurocentric vacuum, and natives were joining an increasingly global network of communication and power.[44] Other historians such as James Merrell have called historians to task, demanding that terminology and modes of thought need to change, and a consensus needs to be reached within the field of colonial history that demand an integration of native histories. Otherwise, the stories are not complete. Natives, Merrell believes, are still framed in a derogatory way and have to be part of the story.[45]

The historiography of Native Americans has become advanced in recent decades, but still needs work. American history in general cannot be complete without a deeper understanding of the struggles, reactions, cultures, and interactions of natives. A cross-discipline approach can help create a fuller history that shows the past in a way that goes beyond the writings of European settlers. This approach is increasingly being integrated into the research on the colonial period. Historians such as Neal Salisbury, Jean O'Brien, Colin Calloway, Karen Kupperman and many others in addition to the ones examined in this piece, have included native thoughts, relations, concepts of gender, religion, kinship, and the ways in which Indians preserved their cultures through the appearance of assimilation. Cultural preservation and assimilation were prevalent during the colonial period and can be viewed through the methods natives took to maintain a modicum of control.

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[44] Daniel Richter, "Whose Indian History?" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (April 1993): 379-393.

[45] James Merrell, "Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (July 2012): 451-512.

Native reactions to missions varied, with some accepting "the new religion and the new life-patterns it commanded," while other natives "incorporated certain Christian elements into their lives while rejecting the essence of the white man's message."[46] Other natives resisted all aspects of English culture and maintained their distance. Natives who chose to go to mission towns lay in an uncertain position. No longer trusted by their people and not accepted into English society, Praying Indians were a group of their own and had to navigate the colonial world with increased hostility. Positive responses were seen by natives who were allowed to maintain some political autonomy.[47] David Silverman argues that the mission at Martha's Vineyard was able to survive and remain isolated from the conflicts on the mainland, such as the Pequot and Metacom's Wars, because natives were allowed to maintain some control, and both natives and English chose to work alongside each other rather than resort to violence.[48] He argued that bloodshed was not inevitable in this period, and native responses were dependent on the ways in which the English treated converts.[49] A stress over religion rather than Englishness created another difference between native responses on the island as opposed to the mainland.[50]

Other natives resorted to nonviolent resistance. They wore their own clothing, ornamentation, hairstyles, and combined English and native traits. Indians resisted English assimilation through continuous practice of their own culture.[51] Others chose to use the political rifts between colonies against each other. Indians in Massachusetts used the colony's insecurities by making alliances with non-Puritans. Some, like Metacom, also known as King Philip, went

[46] Ronda, "We are well as we are," 67.
[47] Ronda, "We are well as we are," 79.
[48] David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 13.
[49] Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries,* 43, 56.
[50] Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries,* 74.
[51] Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians*, 109.

directly to colonial authorities to challenge the power of local elites.[52] Indians who did resort to violence were often taking reactionary measures. The violence of the Pequot war in the 1630's altered the balance of power between natives and English, and created a new standard for resistance through war in response to English brutality.[53] Through culture preservation, adaptation, and violence, natives found ways to resist the other.

Conflicts and differences between the English settlers, missionaries, and natives can be seen through remaining sources and have been reexamined in recent historical works. What must be understood about the sources themselves is that there were inherent language barriers that contributed to the misunderstandings prevalent in missionary documents. Historians have confronted this issue by analyzing what the sources do and do not say. Sources must then be read with the awareness that only what was deemed important at the time was written down. Missionaries tended to alter, condense, or omit words the natives said. Published writing was further altered by the publisher, which created a very different account from what initially happened.[54] Although Puritans and natives worked to learn the other's language, certain concepts and words had no ready translation, and in the case of John Eliot, new Algonquian words were simply created to replace the old ones.[55]

The sources for this thesis are problematic. Like Allen Greer's study of Tekakwitha, this study uses the lens of missionaries to explore natives in praying towns in the mid-seventeenth century. Understanding the global context and lives of the Jesuits, Greer argued that the documents show us what the missionaries and natives believed about the mission towns, religion,

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[52] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 32, 36, 70.
[53] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 223.
[54] Kristina Bross, "'Come over and Help Us': Reading Mission Literature," *Early American Literature* 38, no. 3 (2003): 395.
[55] Jeffrey Mifflin, "'Closing the Circle': Native American Writing in Colonial New England, a Documentary Nexus between Acculturation and Cultural Preservation," *The American Archivist* 72, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2009): 347.

and the purpose of their relationship. Similarly, this research relies on published documents from the seventeenth century, specifically the writings of John Eliot, Thomas Mayhew Jr., John Cotton Jr., and Thomas Shephard. Their works, both published and unpublished, show the nature of missions and the natives within them. Personal letters to one another and to colonial powers, which were compiled and published every few years, allow insight to the struggles and successes of mission communities. Missionaries used natives as justification for funding and tried to give them voice in these records to measure success and failure. Their questions, speeches, and movements were recorded. Though not without other motives, the written evidence of native involvement in the missions is invaluable. Assessed in the methods taken by Greer and others in this study, native reasons for joining the prayer towns can be seen, as well as the failure of the towns themselves.

Sources can be addressed in a multitude of ways. Scholars cross-reference the bodies of work they study to analyze the validity based on other research. Historians like Allen Greer take the documents a step further and utilize the many layers within them, studying not only the subject but the writers themselves and pairing that with a study of modern understanding of seventeenth-century Iroquois culture. Looking into the mindset of the writer gives deeper meaning to the issues at hand and shows the influence their lives had on the missionary process. This must be done with any document in this period due to their inherently biased nature. The writer's background and global events influenced the production of documents in the seventeenth century.

Using letters, missionaries' records, and court records from 1643-1675, this thesis examines the creation, maintenance, and decline of New England praying towns, which cannot be done without understanding the major events at each end of the outlined period. The 1630s

saw a wave of mass English migration, which brought up to 21,000 people into an already inhabited area. Land disputes and rampant starvation created a war that decimated an entire Indian population in New England. The Pequot War of 1636-1638 showed what the English were capable of, and set up an uneasy alliance with other natives such as the Nipmucks, Narragansets, and Wampanoags. In the wake of a destructive war that forced natives to witness European style warfare that killed women and children, Indian allies found their way into missions.[56] The praying towns offered a place for natives to stay away from warring sachems, and would hopefully ease some suspicion off natives. Paired with an onslaught of disease and rapid depopulation, natives who joined praying towns had many reasons to do so, and were often misunderstood and misrepresented by the missionaries. Natives were thus placed into a system they did not understand, while missionaries worked to advance their own name and goals while competing amongst themselves for funding. The limited resources that made their way to missions slowed down the process of conversions, and missionaries were often forced to train natives to act English for public forums, rather than teach them a deeper understanding of faith.

The political climate in New England as well as in England itself created unrest amongst colonial powers and directly impacted the ways in which praying natives were treated during the mid-seventeenth century. Laws placing natives at the mercy of colonial powers were continuously challenged by natives who sought to assert their position of equality amongst the English as equal subjects of the crown. The struggle that ensued between missionary, local, colonial, and empirical powers placed natives in an increasingly dangerous position, one that led to another war in 1675; but this time the war was seen as an act of treason by English subjects. Natives got what they advocated for, equal treatment. Those involved in the uprising were tried

[56] Grandjean, "New World Tempests,"81-83, 92, 100.

as English subjects who committed treason against the crown. Later called King Philip's War, or Metacom's War, the violence that ensued between natives and New Englanders put praying Indians in a more precarious position than before the Pequot War. Converted natives were seen as more suspicious than natives who outright fought the English. Settlers started to believe praying Indians were waiting for the right moment to attack. Unaccepted in English society, praying Indians were also forced out of native culture. Required to be punishers, allied natives were used by the English to enforce punishment on natives who rebelled against the crown and further isolated those in praying towns from native tribes.[57] The war, which changed the relationship between natives and Puritans in New England, reduced the fourteen praying towns by more than half and restricted the mobility of natives who chose to stay in them.[58]

This thesis analyzes the period between the Pequot War and King Philip's War to understand how the establishment of praying towns in the early 1640s led to outright war between natives and English after a bloody war had already occurred between the two groups. Unresolved disagreements between Indians and English were placed in the middle of international conflicts out of their control. The English Civil War and Massachusetts Bay Colony's question of the crown's authority put natives at the bottom of a hierarchy that Indians did not agree with. The play for power amongst colonial leaders and royal authorities pushed natives around as settlers created laws that matched Puritan ideals rather than English politics. The continuous misunderstanding as to the intentions both on the part of missionaries, settlers, and natives led to periods of mistrust and growing resentment amongst those living in New England. Framed in three sections, this study looks at the rise, maintenance, and fall of praying

[57] James Drake, "Restraining Atrocity: The Conduct of King Philip's War," *The New England Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (March 1997): 52.

[58] Pulsipher, "Massacre at Hurtleberry Hill," 467.

towns by studying laws, funding, purposes, and concerns that challenged the growth of praying towns and limited potential progress.

CHAPTER II

ESTABLISHING ORDER

In the summer of 1647, a man named Wabbakomets asked missionary John Eliot why the English waited so long to introduce Indians to God.[1] Having just witnessed his sachem fall to his knees begging for forgiveness for sins that were not his own doing, Wabbakomets's question was met with a less than complicated answer. To Eliot, it was simple; the Indians had refused to hear them until this point.[2] For missionaries like Eliot, recent history was marked by constant tension and warfare instigated by natives who constantly refused to hear the word of God. Neglecting to mention competition over resources, establishing political authority, language barriers, and a multitude of extenuating circumstances that delayed the proselytization of the gospel, Eliot's answer was a clean response that placed no blame on the English. Indeed, the sermons being presented to natives focused on original sin, thus blaming Indians for their present circumstances. Cutshamaquin, the sachem begging for forgiveness, was consumed by this concept, and the usually stoic man was reduced to tears as he realized his past and present sins.[3] Wabbakomets's question stemmed from this concern as well; if there were so many sins, and the natives had so many faults, why had the English not tried to save them from themselves sooner? Eliot did not present an answer that reflected recent events, did not justify English actions by discussing the Pequot War, or the issues of funding between the various missionaries. Instead, by reiterating the inherently sinful nature of man, and the exceptionally sinful nature of Indians,

[1] John Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians of New England*, published by Thomas Shepard (New York: J. Sabin, 1865) *Gale Primary Sources*, 54.
[2] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 55.
[3] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 52-5.

Eliot, like all English at the time, implied the lack in progress was due to native faults, not English.

This meeting, as recorded in a letter from Eliot to Thomas Shepard, was one of many that Eliot shared with the world. Conversations with natives, whether they were simple or complex, marked the pages of his letters, often resulting in lists of questions asked by natives at bimonthly sermons. Many of these sermons and conversations reflected missionary mindsets, from hopeful in the beginning, enduring in the middle, and desperate in the end. Tension between natives, missionaries, and the English that surrounded them resonated in the publications coming out of New England during the 1640s-60s. Letters throughout the period reflect on why the missionaries were working amongst the Indians, as well as what cultural elements the missionaries saw in the natives. With detailed accounts over the span of thirty years, the reasons for establishing praying towns can be seen, showing that it went far beyond bringing gospel to the heathen.

Reasons for missionization, English mindsets towards natives and religion, native culture, and their perception of the other will be explored in this chapter while seeking to answer the question: why establish mission towns? This question, and the answers that follow, indicate an inability for each side to understand the true reason for establishing mission towns, with reasons going far beyond missionaries looking to save souls and natives seeking redemption. Based on the remaining sources from missionaries during the establishment of mission towns, it is clear that these conflicting understandings were the root cause of failure. The meaning of success was different for everyone involved, but with the context of this thesis, success is defined by peaceful conversion of natives living in praying towns. Historians such as Jenny Pulsipher and Jeffrey Glover have argued that it was the political ramifications of praying towns that led to their

destruction, while other historians such as David Silverman argued that it was the way in which the towns were conducted, strict scripture and laws or loose interpretation of the Bible and flexible syncretism, that led to their end. Through the study of Martha's Vineyard, a mission town that did not end in bloodshed but was sustained longer than mainland praying towns, Silverman argued that the totalitarian approach of Puritan authorities paired with unwavering missionaries led to mainland mission towns' downfall. The Vineyard's approach of syncretic growth meant that the natives could slowly adopt and make sense of Christianity without entirely abandoning their cultural practices, which created less tension between settlers and natives. Jean O'Brien and others have argued that public records indicate that conflicts over land and resources created the illusion of native disappearance, but not their demise. For O'Brien, natives left their villages and praying towns, even sold off their land but they never disappeared. They merely stopped being recorded.[4] Rather than colonial political and economic concerns setting the stage for failure, this chapter argues that initial development of mission communities stemmed from international political concerns and misinformation which created colonial political and economic concerns in later years, making the end of mission towns in the late seventeenth century rest not on their maintenance, but their establishment. Praying towns were set up in a way that did little to ensure their survival. The reasoning behind this rests in the English political climate, which created a general uncertainty amongst settlers, religious leaders, and colonial authority alike. Competition for resources, the schism within the Puritan church, and a play for power between settlers and missionaries dictated the ways in which the mission towns were

[4] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Jeffrey Glover, *Paper Sovereigns: Anglo-Native Treaties and the Law of Nations, 1604-1664* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jean O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003).

created. The English world, and its vastly changing nature was met with misconceptions of native culture and paired with language barriers that made questions like Wabbakomets's logical, but not easily answerable. So why did the English make these towns, and why did it take so long for them to start?

THE ENGLISH POLITICAL CLIMATE

Understanding missionaries' thoughts towards the political climate is crucial to understanding their motives for establishing control in New England during the seventeenth century. Marked by civil war from 1642-1651, England was in turmoil and missionaries believed it had a direct correlation to England's break from God. Their beliefs impacted interactions and dealings with natives, as well as dealings with colonial authority.[5] Many Puritans, like John Cotton and John Eliot, were vocal about their thoughts on power and authority, though to varying degrees. Cotton continuously wrote about the separation of church authority from colonial authority, whereas Eliot advocated for a union between the two, with the Church dictating the path of the government. People debated the role of the church in politics, how leaders were chosen, who got to wield power, and why England had reached its current state of uncertainty. Missionaries took the resulting anxiety and framed their work amongst local congregations and natives by it. Puritan ideology towards politics and change infiltrated mission towns as colonial leaders addressed the English Civil War and the ramifications it had on the English world; by doing so, missionaries sought to change the wrong that had been created in England by making a new society and natives became their experimental key to salvation. Addressing natives as the missing element to redeeming English society created missions that

[5] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King,* 5-7.

ignored native culture and lacked an established structure, creating a faulty foundation for praying towns to rest upon.

Missionaries framed their interactions with natives in a redeeming light to justify further interactions. In an opening letter addressed to the English Parliament from 1648, an unknown author lamented that the Indians were the "saddest spectacles of degeneracy upon the earth," and that despite early successes, men in England and in Massachusetts were "wrestling with discouragement."[6] The list of New England colonists who signed the letter also authored the following document, but this time they addressed Christian readers across England. While the first letter detailed the wretched nature of Indians, the latter went on to question the nature of England and its people. Without directly mentioning the civil war, the date of publication, 1648, places the letter six years into the war. This letter argued that discouragement and lack of progress stemmed from English inability to create a unified front in dealing with the natives, rather than native inability to learn English customs and religion. To the twelve signers of the document, England was in decline, and they feared "god may seek out for other ground" and that "he may bespeak another people to himself."[7] England had fallen to its supposed vices, and became overabundant in its indulgences. No longer were the people God-fearing, but had invited their end and by doing so "we have sad decays upon us, we are a revolting nation, a people guilty of great defection from God."[8] Falling in line with contemporary apocalyptic verses found in Puritan jeremiads, these letters show the role war had on the decay of the England's mentality, honor, and religion.

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[6] "To the Right Honorable, the Lords & Commons Assembled in High Court of Parliament," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 6, 10.

[7] "To the Godly and Well affected of this Kingdome of England; who pray for, and rejoice in, the thriving Gospel of our Lord Jesus," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 15.

[8] "To the Godly," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 15.

The threat of continued war was also clear to the reader. Those who had access to the series of published letters edited by Thomas Shepard in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel* encountered these letters before going on to reading fifty pages of the successes found in the New World; the risk of failure was seen as irreversible. Because "the glory of the lord is much departed from us," the only chance of saving souls in England and the country itself was in redemption through the conversion of natives.[9] Calling for the reader to "let those poor Indians stand up incentives to us," the writers of this letter also noted that "who knows but God gave life to New England, to quicken old, and hath warmed them, that they might heat us, raised them from the dead, that they might recover us from that consumption, and those sad decays which are come upon us."[10] For the men who declared England lost and in need of salvation, the New England natives became a rallying cry, and the success of missions amongst the Indians were key to fulfilling John Winthrop's promise to create a 'city upon a hill.'

Missionaries looked towards natives as a symbol for the purity the English had lost. With England falling into decay, natives were seen as "separated from worldly delights and encumbrances, where patterns of Purity and Holiness" can be witnessed.[11] For Samuel Danforth, England was marked by overgrowth and troubles immeasurable, where "pride, contention, worldliness, covetousness, luxury, drunkenness, uncleanliness breaks in like a flood upon us."[12] His writing, first introduced by Thomas Shepard, called for the English to remember why they went to the New World, and what part natives played. Though the English believed God meant to pull them from their own wickedness, it first meant diving into the wilderness and embracing

[9] "To the Godly," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 17.
[10] "To the Godly," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 18.
[11] Samuel Danforth, *A Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness* (Samuel Green: Cambridge, 1663) *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 15.
[12] Danforth, *A Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness*, 19.

an uncharted calling. The wilderness became an entity of itself for the Puritans, one that needed to be subdued and controlled, otherwise they would be lost.[13] Puritans believed they knew the proper way to deal with nature, and by doing so had control over it. By going into the wilderness, the missionaries sought to emulate John the Baptist and work their way towards salvation. This meant facing new languages, new people, and new challenges to save the souls of their people. Facing the wilderness was not meant to better the natives, but meant to ensure the survival of the English people. Sacrifice in the wilderness would allow them to shed the sins of the King's court and control those they encountered amongst foreign peoples. Danforth argued that it was "time for us to remember when we are fallen, and repent," making their time in the wilderness a necessary element to their redemption.[14]

Eliot brought ideas of apocalypse to his work, a mindset that missionaries shared through the Christian faith across the Americas. Men like John Eliot and Roger Williams argued that the conversion of natives would usher in the millennial, which would bring on a thousand year reign of Christ, a statement that was justified by missionaries' belief that natives were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.[15] Though millennialism was not directly in Eliot's writing, his stress on the lost tribe connection shows a concern for the link between converting heathens and bringing on the end of days.[16] With the final conversions, a new age would be ushered in, and missionaries were looking for that connection.

Aside from bringing England back to its former glory, economic concerns also infiltrated the minds of the English and led to the establishment of fourteen praying towns. Praying towns

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[13] Gordon Sayre, "Native American Sexuality in the Eyes of the Beholders," in *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, ed. Merril D. Smith (New York: New York University Press, 1998) 35-38.
[14] Danforth, *A Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness*, 26.
[15] Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2010) A5.
[16] Timothy J. Sehr, "John Eliot, Millennialist and Missionary," *The Historian* 46, no. 2 (February 1984): 188-91.

were not merely "an attempt to save them [Indians] from land-hungry settlers nor a guileless exercise in soul-winning" but an economic opportunity in response to financial uncertainty in England.[17] For example, Edward Winslow, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, noted that missions could help expand English territory among the Indians while also creating a new market to sell English goods.[18] In the 1640s, Massachusetts Bay Colony created laws that made Indians dress in English manner, creating a new group of potential consumers. If they failed to dress as the English, they were fined. Either way, the English were making profit.[19] Eliot also saw the potential to turn natives into workers in the English sense. He especially admired women who were industrious, and no longer begged but produced goods.[20] The promise of payment, though not fruitful, would lead to rapid development of praying towns, and the eventual creation of fourteen by 1670, nine alone under Eliot.[21]

Influenced by the civil war, religion, and the potential for profit, the English began to establish relationships with natives as missionaries and settlers began cohabitating with natives. The ideas missionaries drew from their political climate as well as the Bible neglected the reality of the world they were about to enter, one that was met with extremely different cultural practices and language. The missionaries aimed to teach sin to a society that did not have the concept; they asked natives to trade many gods for one, and attempted to change their farming, clothing, child rearing, marital, habitation, and overall living practices. With a cultural and language barrier hindering the process of conversion, missionaries and colonial leaders had to

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[17] James Ronda, "We Are Well As We Are: An Indian Critique of Seventeenth-Century Christian Missions," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 34 (January 1977): 66.

[18] Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England* (London: Hannah Allen, 1649), *Gale Primary Sources*, 7.

[19] "Conclusions and Orders made and agreed upon by divers Sachems and other principal men amongst the Indians at Concord," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 26.

[20] John Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 13-14.

[21] John Eliot, *A Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England, in the Year 1670* (John Allen: London, 1671), *Gale Primary Sources*, 11.

come to grips with the complexity of their task. Indians were a foreign group that they had to understand; this proved to be a difficult task from the start.

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE THROUGH ENGLISH EYES

English settlers made sense of natives in many ways, often framed by racial constructs that attempted to create categories for people they saw as savages. At the time of arrival, the Indians in New England had faced the ramifications of deadly diseases that spread from European settlements across the Americas. Epidemics came in waves across the area, and those who were spared were often the first to convert. Martha's Vineyard, the first established praying town led by Thomas Mayhew, witnessed this as well. The first Wampanoag to convert, Hiacoomes, was a survivor and ultimately became an advocate for Christianity. His quick conversion and obedience to the English showed Mayhew that Hiacoomes could be used to convert more natives. Many around him did so with the hope that it would end their suffering and stop their people from dying.[22] As natives converted, both on the islands and in the mainland, some concluded that there was sickness in their souls, and that perhaps they could be saved by joining the English.[23]

A state of uncertainty caused natives to turn to the English for help. To convert to Christianity, or to even agree to the terms the English gave natives in return for their service, meant turning away from a major element of their culture: the powwow. Known to the English as witches, the powwow was the religious leader or priest of the natives.[24] He was imbued with

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[22] Thomas Mayhew, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day*, published by Henry Whitfeld (London: John Bartlet, 1651), *Gale Primary Sources*, 11-12.

[23] John Eliot, *A further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel Among the Indians in New England*, 1659 (New York: J. Sabine, 1865), *Gale Primary Sources*, 24.

[24] For further discussion on native thoughts towards spirituality, religion, and their faith, see Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

powers that frightened the English. Powwows were the healers in villages, and were seen as potentially vindictive. Native Americans risked the wrath of their gods and their leaders when they turned to the English for help. As early as 1646, laws began appearing in Concord, Massachusetts that stated "there shall be no more Powwowing amongst the Indians. And if any shall hereafter Powwow, both he that shall Powwow, and he that shall procure him to Powwow, shall pay 20s. apiece."[25] In 1648 a colony wide order stated that "no Indians shall at any time powaw, or preform outward worship to their false gods, or to the devil in any part of our jurisdiction."[26] English colonists and those just arriving to New England would have heard stories of the power of the powwow; their skills as healers and medicine men found their way into published books, which stressed that the true power came from devil worship.[27] With native leaders taking advice from powwows, and powwows conversing with the devil, Englishmen drew the conclusion that the devil rested in the highest position of authority in native communities.[28] The English feared what the sachems and powwows could accomplish through gatherings and tried to dismantle the system by promising missionaries could heal the sick, and if Indians converted to Christianity their powwow could not harm them.[29]

Replacing the role of the powwow in native culture became an immediate goal of the missionaries. Missionaries began to find willing powwows to renounce their power and authority, making the native spiritual leaders state they were "having fellowship with the old

[25] "Conclusions and Orders," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25.

[26] Massachusetts Bay Colony. *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes Concerning the Inhabitants of the Massachusetts,* (Cambridge: Matthew Day1648), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans,* 29.

[27] William S. Simmons, "Conversion from Indian to Puritan," *The New England Quarterly* 52 no. 2 (June 1979): 199.

[28] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians (of New England), 1637," *Fordham University*, accessed May 19, 2018, https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1637morton.asp.

[29] Mayhew, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day*, 16.

serpent, to whom they pray, and by whose means they heal sick persons."[30] Missionary writers explained that converting some Powwows meant convincing them that English healers could ensure the survival of native peoples. The English delegitimized the healing power of the native leaders as the first step to create a dependence on the English for medical care. Natives began questioning the power of the powwows, and Eliot assured them that missionaries had healing capabilities, touching on the native concern over their depleting population.[31] Indians were provided with a reason to abandon their culture and religion, and looked to the English to verify their new path would be the one that restored native population and make the spread of disease stop.[32] To reassure the Indians, Eliot promised to teach them English medicine so that they would be able to continue healing themselves, even after he was gone.[33]

Puritan missionaries commonly used rhetoric that compared Indians to witches, which coincided with their constant referral to Indian's link to the ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Harking back to medieval terminology and characteristics of Jews consorting with the devil and practicing witchcraft, missionaries made sense of Indian placement in the Americas by creating a link to biblical tales.[34] In William Steele's opening letter to Parliament in Henry Whitfeld's *Strength out of Weakness*, this very concern was addressed.[35] As the current spokesperson for the corporation established by Parliament for promoting the gospel amongst the heathen in New England, Steele's call to convert the lost tribes reflected decades worth of arguing the idea that

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[30] Thomas Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun-Rising of the Gospel with the Indians of New England* (London: Rich, 1647) *Gale Primary Sources*, 21.

[31] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 56.

[32] Ronda, "We Are Well As We Are," 72.

[33] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 58.

[34] Karen Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000) 39, 91.

[35] William Steele, "To the Supreame Authoritie of this nation, the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England," in *Strength out of Weakness*, published by Henry Whitfeld, 1652 (London: M. Simmons, 1652), *Gale Primary Sources*, 17.

the Indians were the lost tribes. John Eliot also wrote about the biblical origins of natives and how there was a link to Judaism, and not only by physical appearance but also by action and the nature of their faith.[36] In an earlier letter from 1646, Edward Winslow expressed the same belief as to the origin of Indians. After meeting with a "Rabbi-ben-Israel, a great Dr. of the Jews, now living at Amsterdam" if he found in all his travels where the lost tribes went; the Rabbi told Winslow "to this effect, if not in these words, that they were certainly transported into America, and that they had infallible tokens of their being there."[37] Winslow then listed observed traits of the Indians, such as the separation and purification of women during menstrual cycles, their grave nature, their ideas towards the soul, and their general thoughts towards religion. His reflection and talk with the Rabbi led him to conclude that "it is not less probable that these Indians should come from the Stock of Abraham, then any other Nation this day known in the world," reiterating that the timing of their discovery adding to the heightened idea that this group of people was meant to be found by the English at just the right moment in history. [38] In the same collection of letters, Puritan leader and co-founder of New Haven, John Davenport, concludes that the natives in New England are far too similar to the Jews in the Netherlands for it to be a coincidence.[39]

The link between Native Americans and Judaism was discussed in different circles, going beyond the arguments of missionaries and into the secular realm. Roger Williams in particular listed details similar to Eliot's observations. Williams translated the Algonquian language group and believed he encountered great similarities to Hebrew. Natives anointed their heads as the Jews did, they had dowries for wives, and "they constantly separate their women (during the

[36] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more Toward the Perfect Day*, 23-4.
[37] Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 5; Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 5.
[38] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 6.
[39] John Davenport, "Appendix," in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 30.

time of their monthly sickness) in a little house alone by themselves foure or five days."[40] Despite this correlation, his comparisons went beyond just a Jewish connection, as few of his contemporaries had. Williams also argued that native language and words showed evidence of Greek influence, which gave a further avenue for a connection between the Old World and the New.[41]

The English settlers and missionaries searched for ways to explain natives, while continuing to place them in a position that was culturally and racially inferior. This need to make sense of native placement in the New World at expense of their culture was prevalent in writings dedicated to understanding their lifestyle.[42] In *Indians and English*, Karen Kupperman noted that the English saw connections between natives and the Irish.[43] By comparing them to Jewish and Irish people, they were placing them amongst peoples the English were known for dominating and subduing. For example, in 1637 trader and traveler Thomas Morton noted in *Manners and Customs* that the Indians he encountered in Plymouth had bodies, styles, and homes that were akin to the Irish. The "natives of New England are accustomed to build themselves houses much like the wild Irish," with multigenerational homes centered around a hearth.[44] Thomas Shepard went as far as to compare the natives to England's own barbarous past. In a special sermon given in October of 1646, Shepard assured weary natives that they were not so different, and that long ago the men in England were also ignorant of God and that it took an intervention for them to learn the true meaning of religion.[45]

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[40] Williams, *A Key into the Language of America*, A5.
[41] Williams, *A Key into the Language of America*, A5-6.
[42] Zubeda Jalalzai, "Race and the Puritan Body Politic," *MELUS* 29, no. ¾ (Autumn-Winter 2004): 260-1.
[43] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 48, 54.
[44] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."
[45] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 5.

Native religion became a point of comparison as well. Though believed to be witchcraft or the work of the devil, theories on native religion varied amongst the English colonists, and were reflected in the laws and works being created in the early stages of cohabitation. Thomas Morton, like many contemporaries, thought Indians had no religion at all. This concern was paired with a question of universal principles. Morton's exploration and experience amongst Algonquians led him to believe there were origin stories similar to that of Adam and Eve in native dogma, creating a further link for missionaries that Indians had some relationship to Judaism and Christianity.[46] He assumed a universality of certain concepts and principals; he thought natives had an origin story that matched those of other religions, specifically the Christian story of Adam and Eve. Kupperman argued that Morton's explanation also showed native advancement as stunted and that Indians had never been able to reach a state beyond the purity of the Garden of Eden.[47] Eliot argued for the underlying principal of what he called universal truths to indicate that even the natives believed in something. His use of the term "pagan" indicated he believed natives had some form of deity, and that they were ruled by human needs and driven by wants that crossed any cultural or religious boundary. Eliot wrote that they followed the basic truths that "all men have in them a desire of happiness," that "all men more or less leave some indelible impressions of a Godhead," that even "heathen philosophers have acknowledged that no nation in the world is so barbarous where the confession and adoration of a Deity is not to be found."[48] What he saw as basic truths meant that he believed natives had some semblance of religion.

[46] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."
[47] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 170.
[48] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 10-11.

Still, men like Shepard, Winslow, and Eliot barely mentioned native belief systems in the letters they compiled and published. One reference was found in a letter from Thomas Mayhew to Henry Whitfeld. In this letter, Mayhew detailed a conversation between his first convert, Hiacooms, and the chief and sagamore of Martha's Vineyard, Myoxco and Towanquatick respectively. The brief conversation showed that Myoxco questioned the power of the one English God, since he prayed to thirty-seven principal gods.[49] This reference was unique, and shows a guess at how many deities were observed by the natives on Martha's Vineyard. Mayhew's account gives a rare number of how many native gods existed in New England. The rest of the story was quick and simple; all Hiacooms had to do was attest that God is all powerful, and that the natives would be able to hear God's words through Mayhew. This plea resulted in Towanquatick agreeing to listen to Mayhew every few weeks. Though the reality may have been very different, Mayhew chose to stress the rapid conversion of native leaders and the ability for them to abandon their old gods, which inspired the rest of the village to follow.[50]

The Indians that English missionaries encountered used religion to explain natural phenomena, rather than for spiritual concerns. Native questions of God and Christianity show large concerns over mainly tangible concepts before addressing mystical ones as they sought to replace their own understanding of the world. Concerns first rested in making sense of the natural world, of things they could see and experience. With deities and powwows controlling the weather and things like rain and thunder, Indians had to make sense of the world around them in a Christian manner before distancing themselves from their old ways. Eliot included long lists of questions asked by natives in his letters, and from the beginning they asked about the cause of

[49] Mayhew, in *The Light Appearing more and more Toward the Perfect Day*, 13.
[50] Mayhew, in *The Light Appearing more and more Toward the Perfect Day*, 13-14.

thunder, and who ruled the earth and sea, as well as who created the sun, moon, and stars.[51] Though his answers are rarely included, others like Abraham Peirson not only explained it, but included a basic translation to tell natives that God created all things, and caused all extraordinary events.[52]

Puritan missionaries attempted to regulate native behaviors in a number of ways. The English used laws to control native behaviors including basic actions, farming, and childrearing. Women were seen as modest in some cases, at times more so than their English counterparts, and well protected by their fathers and husbands.[53] They were well adorned with beads and furs. Yet other women were described as vulgar and required the intervention of laws to make sure their hair was not loose and their breasts were not naked.[54] English law also forbid the seclusion of women during menstruation, a practice witnessed among Algonquians and sects of Judaism.[55] The practice of isolating women became another link to the Lost Tribes as well as another behavior the English worked to change.[56]

Englishmen attempted to control Indian marriages and sexuality. Women in native society were seen and described within the context of native marital practices. Gender dynamics were not a concern in the writings of missionaries, but its presence can be found. Natives asked questions which referred to their lifestyle before the English arrived. Many asked questions about God's thoughts towards adultery and polygamy. Native's concerns came from kinship practices that allowed leaders to take multiple wives, as well as natives taking on multiple wives in their

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[51] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 40.

[52] Abraham Peirson, *Some Help for the Indians Shewing them How to improve their natural reason, to know the true GOD, and the true Christian Religion* (Samuel Green: Cambridge, 1658), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 7.

[53] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."

[54] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 22.

[55] Todd R. Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians: Masculinity, Religion, and Colonialism in Early New England* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011) 28.

[56] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 27.

lifetime.[57] The English passed laws prohibiting natives from having multiple partners.[58] These laws were established not only by missionaries but by the Massachusetts Bay Colony as well. While women were seen as potential wives, men were shown as passionate, angry, and easily given into their temper.[59] Their sexuality was enough of a concern that series of laws were created to monitor and control their behavior. If limiting the number of wives were not enough, laws involving fornication and premarital sex were created.[60] These were furthered by laws making adultery punishable by death.[61] Other laws made bestiality punishable by death as well. Whether or not some of these concerns were watched behaviors or feared behaviors is not indicated, but laws were created to establish order and modify the preexisting behaviors of natives, showing that at least some of these practices were exhibited by Indians.

Missionaries also targeted family life. Missionaries continually stressed that all children were tempted to sin and were rebellious by nature, and the relationship between native adults and children only exacerbated the tendency to sin. Aside from that, missionaries suggested taking children from their parents to train them in the way of the faith. This did not indicate how natives treated their children, though, and neglects to specify any mistreatment or concern for the physical safety of native children. The only concern was for their salvation, and the negative influence that Indian adults could have on younger populations. Missionaries wanted to teach native children English values, and worried that as soon as the children were back with their parents, they would revert back to old ways. Schools and towns were used as a tool to take children away for periods of time to immerse them in English culture, a method that would last

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[57] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 12.
[58] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 26.
[59] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 29-30.
[60] Edward Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made at the General Courts in May 3. August 1. & October 11, 1665* (Boston: General Court, 1665), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 1.
[61] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 27.

centuries. While towns allowed for Indians of all ages to convert and learn new customs, there was always fear that something would be able to trigger natives into reverting back to their traditional values.[62]

Labor and work habits became a point of concern for missionaries as well. A general stress on animal husbandry and farming practices in missionary letters focused more on the ways in which missionaries taught natives English farming methods. This neglected traditional farming practices, where women were the main source of labor. One thing that was noted was that natives would set fire twice a year to the forests to keep the undergrowth from getting too full.[63] Native men were also believed to be prone to idleness because they did not have the same work schedule as English. Fear that Indians would not do as they were taught was prevalent in the writings of missionaries tasked at civilizing the natives.[64]

Native daily lives were either condemned or idealized. Though Indians were described as "barbarous natives of this wilderness" by some, other English settlers believed natives lived far better lives than those in England.[65] To Thomas Morton, the Indians of New England "live richly, wanting nothing that is needful," the world around them providing every necessity, and because they do not know of the riches Europeans do, they cannot want for them, making them happy with what they have.[66] Despite vast natural riches, Indians were seen as stoic, betraying little emotion, and were "not be subject to tears."[67] Eliot and other missionaries misinterpreted

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[62] Carol Devens, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) 110; Todd Romero, "Totherswamp's Lament: Christian Indian Fathers and Sons in Early Massachusetts," *Journal of Family History* 33, no 1 (January 2008): 5-6.

[63] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."

[64] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 20.

[65] John Winthrop, *A Declaration of Former Passages and Proceedings betwixt the English and Narrowgansets* (Boston: Commissioners, 1645), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 1.

[66] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."

[67] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 63; Laura J. Murray, "Joining Signs with Words: Missionaries, Metaphors, and the Massachusett Language," *The New England Quarterly* 74 no. 1 (March 2001): 64, 80.

native behavior and body language. The lack of emotional display coming from Indian men led Eliot to believe they were not moved by worldly things. Further misinterpreting male behavior, missionaries believed Indian men were careless to the point of idleness, and their denial of basic emotions caused them to act violently when provoked.[68] Eliot also believed that they "speak much in few words," which was interpreted as rude behavior.[69] Puritans created laws to modify any native behavior that would hinder the work of missionaries, such as ones outlawing trickery and lying, which Puritans believed Indians were prone to do.[70] For men, this meant taking away traditional physical outlets such as games and sports.[71]

English sought to modify burial practices amongst natives with a series of laws. Though Indian burial practices were not detailed, Thomas Shepard spent time discussing the English way of burying the dead with questioning natives. Indian confusion and interest in modifying and understanding new burial practices demonstrated a way in which the English were infiltrating all aspects of native life.[72] Funeral practices, on the other hand, were described briefly in laws that outlawed them. Natives would "disguise themselves in their mourning," by painting their faces to look like the spirits; they would then make a "great noyse by howling" for days to show their sadness.[73] This practice was listed amongst the first to be outlawed amongst the praying Indians in 1646.

Eliot, Shepard, Winslow, and Mayhew wrote constantly about the need to alter Indian behavior and cultural practices. Though not primarily describing what natives were like, these

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[68] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 24.

[69] John Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun: An Essay to bring the Indian Language into Rules, for the Help of such as desire to Learn the same, for the furtherance of the Gospel among them* (Marmaduke Johnson: Cambridge, 1666), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 6.

[70] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25.

[71] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 26-7; Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians*, 46-50.

[72] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 73.

[73] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 27.

men did write down how they wanted to change them, which often leaves gaps to understand native behaviors before the 1640s. English were not the only ones making sense of the other. Natives had to as well. Seen through their questions and their willingness to come to English towns and seek out the help of missionaries, they had to face uncertain futures. But with rapid epidemics decimating the population, their future was uncertain either way. Their adoption of new practices was not forced on them unless they chose to join mission towns. Once the English made sense of Indians, they then had to work towards cohabitation, a process that would be rough to start, and even more difficult to maintain.

JOINING THE OTHER

The initial creation of praying towns relied on many moving parts. The men and women coming together during the mid-seventeenth century had vastly different views of the world, and crises to contend with. Whether their country was at war or their people were dying faster than the bodies could be buried, Indians and English had to find a way to move forward with a shared future, despite their vastly different pasts and presents. Missionaries had to be willing to journey to the wilderness, learn a new language, leave their homes, face uncertain futures, beg for money, get legal help to create new jurisdictions, and find Englishmen willing to move into unknown areas to cohabitate with Indians in new towns. Indians had to forsake their gods, their villages, their leaders, cultures, and even their families to join the people they believed could help them. Natives did choose to join the English despite the language and cultural barriers that prevented them from understanding the missionaries' intentions.

Missionaries walked into a tense climate after the Pequot War; bloodshed made them distrust natives, and they had to "quench the fire kindled amongst the Indians these children of

strife breath out threatening, provocations and war against the English."[74] The natives, though not actively fighting the English by the 1640s, were still seen as a threat. The Pequot War added to tension amongst growing colonies such as Plymouth and Massachusetts and exacerbated tension between rival Indian tribes. All sides faced a bloody war that the English began with a defensive strike against the Pequots out of fear of uprisings like what had recently occurred in Virginia when the Powhatans attacked southern English settlements. The English either killed, sold, or enslaved what they thought was the entire Pequot people and used the Narragansetts to help.[75] It was after the mass bloodshed that missionaries went out into the wilderness to speak and live amongst the people who witnessed what the English would do to potential native uprisings. One of the first steps to joining the other had to be trusting the other enough to venture into their domain, while still keeping a wary eye. The next step was addressing the language barrier.

Language became the key to conversion; without knowledge of native language, or teaching natives English, conversion could not occur. Records dating back to early settlements in Plymouth in the 1620s show that some natives, such as Samoset and Squanto, already knew the English language by the time the Pilgrims arrived.[76] Exposure to Europeans had occurred long before the English arrived in New England, allowing some natives to learn new languages. This was useful in the initial stages of colonization, but it was clear to the missionaries that they would have to learn the native Algonquian dialects to preach. Though Roger Williams created his *Key into the Language of America* in 1643, its usefulness across New England was limited. Eliot, who worked on his own translations, argued that any native dialect was only spoken for

[74] Winthrop, *A Declaration of Former Passages*, 7.
[75] Kupperman, *Indians and English*, 229-231.
[76] "Modern History Sourcebook: William Bradford: History of Plymouth Plantation, c. 1650." *Fordham University*, accessed July 5, 2018, https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1650bradford.asp.

roughly 100 miles.[77] Each missionary worked on their own language skills, going to varying degrees in their usage of each. While assuring natives that "God [was] hearing the prayers of all men both, Indian as well as English," they worked to translate larger ecclesiastic concepts.[78]

Eliot quickly began focusing on his skills in Wampanoag.[79] His work caused other missionaries to say they "think we can never love nor honour [Eliot] enough."[80] His dedication, and the dependence on native translators, led to rapidly being able to preach in the native tongue to his growing number of converts, with witnesses attesting to his ability in 1652.[81] Over the span of nine years, Eliot obtained enough skills in language to translate the Bible, but he needed the funds to publish his guide to Indian grammar as well as any translations he performed. As will be discussed in the next chapter, funding the missions hindered the processes as much as other prevalent factors, at times more than language barriers.[82] Another issue Eliot encountered was lack of man power. Although many were willing to go to the New World, few English men were willing to join the missions. Those who did volunteer could barely speak in the native tongue, let alone preach in it and be able to explain foreign concepts to natives who often did not have words for said concepts. Eliot came to believe that it would be easier to train natives English and have them help propagate the faith amongst other natives.[83] He hoped that it "pleased Mr. Winthrop to advise me to send two discreet men to the greatest and most patient Sachem among the Narragansets, to answer such questions as they might propound, and to stirre

[77] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 17.
[78] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 3; Steffi Dippold, "The Wampanoag Word: John Eliot's "Indian Grammar", the Vernacular Rebellion, and the Elegancies of Native Speech," *Early American Literature* 48 no. 3 (2013): 544.
[79] John Eliot, *The Logick Primer* (Marmaduke Johnson: Cambridge, 1672), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 4.
[80] Shepherd, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 44.
[81] John Wilson, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 51.
[82] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 7.
[83] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 30.

them up to call on God."[84] He still stressed this concept in 1670, calling for Indians to teach each other faith, that there are not enough English men willing to do it.[85]

John Eliot began to focus on translations that went beyond the Bible to assist in the conversion process. His mind was on preaching to natives, teaching others to do as he did, and figuring out a way to make sure as many natives as possible heard the word of the gospel. In 1660, he created the *Christiane Oonoowae Sampoowaonk*, or A Christian Convening Confession, which gave a simplified verse in Wampanoag and English.[86] By 1666, he had completed *Indian Grammar*, hoping to teach Englishmen how to speak, read, and write in the Algonquian language. In it he showed phonetics, discussed how their words vary, how Indians compare in some ways to Spanish, being that they used different versions of words to show possession and gender. And like German, Algonquian dialects combined many single words to form one long word that could be a sentence.[87] His studies went against some of his contemporaries, such as Reverend Abraham Peirson, who believed that the English could not use proper grammar, let alone learn native syntax.[88] In addition to his lack of faith in the grammatical structure of Indian languages, Peirson went on to say that his own translations were approved by Thomas Stanton, who was the official Interpreter General to the United Colonies for the Indian Language.[89]

Teaching manners and customs was the primary goal of missionaries, and this was done through understanding language. One method was to focus language attempts on children rather

[84] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness,* 34.
[85] Eliot, *A Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel,* 6.
[86] John Eliot, *Christiane Oonoowae Sampoowaonk* (Cambridge, 1600), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans,* 1.
[87] Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun,* 11, 18.
[88] Peirson, *Some Help for the Indians Shewing,* 3.
[89] Peirson, *Some Help for the Indians Shewing,* 2.

than adults. [90] Mayhew preached in both English and Wampanoag but wanted to teach native children English as soon as possible, the younger the better. John Eliot, Thomas Shepard, and Edward Winslow all stressed that teaching children would better help them teach adults, and that it was better to prevent the children from committing future sins. Other language focuses rested on basic interpretation, a thing that Mayhew often did for visitors on Martha's Vineyard, especially when important guests arrived.[91] The daunting task rested on the shoulders of those who were willing to put in the effort, and seeing by the names listed, there were few people willing to use their time for such an endeavor. Those who did help were, as Edward Winslow believed, sent by God to do such a task.[92]

One large challenge remained beyond cultural and language barriers: creating the towns themselves. Eliot had spent roughly four years with natives and concluded that natives had to be civilized before they could be converted, but he needed somewhere for them to go. Ideally, he needed to find a place to start a town where natives could live among English, enjoy government, and be made ready for God. This led him to Natick, Massachusetts, where Algonquian natives went to him. In many instances, the English did not want Indians or praying towns close by, and unconverted natives did not want praying Indians amongst them, making isolated towns the best option. Three more towns followed Natick, but were scattered around Massachusetts.[93] Thomas Shepard was met with a similar experience. In his ventures into the wilderness, he encountered various villages that were willing to listen to him. He made repeated trips, each time finding more people at the village. Eventually the local inhabitants built special wigwams for religious

[90] Shephard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 8; Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 12.
[91] Whitfeld, *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day*, 8.
[92] Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 9.
[93] John Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England*, (London: M.S., 1655) *Gale Primary Sources*, 6-7.

meetings, established areas to congregate, and began expanding the village so that there were places for the natives who flocked from farther places to hear the word of God.[94] Shepard's experience was less methodical than Eliot's and was largely instigated by the natives themselves.

Despite early progress in Natick, John Eliot wanted to establish a school for natives to go to, rather than a town.[95] This view rapidly shifted as he realized the necessity of cohabitation. Writing to Winslow, he mentioned that there was no hope of natives becoming Christian unless they lived among English and learned their customs.[96] Local sachems also believed "if the Indians dwelt far from the English, that they would not so much care to pray."[97] Shepard compared Eliot's successes to the failures of the Spanish in their conquest and conversion, going on to state that success was "evident in the Cusco and Mexico Indians, more civill than any else in this vast continent that wee know of, who were reduced by the politick principles of the two great conquering Princes of those countries after their long and tedious wars, from these wild and wandering course of life."[98] Shepard feared that natives, even ones as advanced as those found in Mexico and Peru, would be decimated if they were not protected.

Natick became Eliot's primary town, where he worked on building homes for Indians in the English manner, as well as a school and a church. Despite this, some natives who joined chose to build wigwams within the towns in an effort to maintain some form of native culture, though many others could not afford to build an English style home if they wanted to.[99] Eliot and the inhabiting natives then built a fort, made a government, and then other natives came to the town and sent their children to school.[100] He then formed a series of other towns:

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[94] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 18.
[95] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 66.
[96] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 23.
[97] Shepard, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 24.
[98] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 24.
[99] Wilson, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 48-9.
[100] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 8.

Ponkipog/Pakeunit, Hassunnimesut, Monatunkaret, Ogquoinkongquamesut, Nashope, Wamesut, Magunkukquok, and Qanatusses.[101] Development of these towns led to continual struggles for money and power. Natives and English alike looked towards each other, attempting to make sense of what they had done, and where they were headed.

There were many factors that led Wabbakomets to ask John Eliot why the English waited so long to tell the natives of God. There had been decades of discouragement that undermined the peaceful cohabitation of natives and English. In the eyes of the missionaries, they not only had to live close together, but with each other in towns dedicated to the conversion of natives. Missionaries then faced a daunting task of teaching "the other" what being English entailed while working to modify native behaviors. This forced missionaries to look inward, and decide for themselves what defined their own culture. Englishmen in the New World had to wrap their identity around a nation that was at war with itself, while trying to put a unified front toward hostile cohabiters of New England. Missionaries had to decide who they supported in the war as well as what the government meant to them. This uncertainty directly impacted the way settlers and missionaries interacted with natives.

Natives also faced a daunting task. Without being separated from their homeland like the English, they had to face turning their back on their culture in their own land, amongst their own people while determining what was best for their future, and what it would take to survive. Natives had to choose between their old ways and the new, and for many the promise of western medicine made the choice of renouncing their old ways more attractive. They decided to trade their access to a pantheon for one god, cut their hair and abandon old gender and cultural norms because they had the potential to ensure survival. Though this process would not end their

[101] Eliot, *A Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel*, 6-11.

culture or erase Indian ways of life, it did make natives change their behavior if they chose to join a praying town.

During the 1640s, Indians were asked to abandon their ways and join mission towns with the promise of medicine and survival. Paired with English uncertainty, the early years of interaction did not place Indians and English on the path of cohabitation. Many years went into the development of praying towns like Martha's Vineyard and Natick, established in 1642 and 1652 respectively. As the oldest and most documented, these two locations are often the focus of historical intrigue. The letters and accounts missionaries sent to Europe allowed the world to closely study what was occurring in the small towns, with seventeenth-century readers skimming to see new developments, and new ideas being presented by the missionaries and by Indians. Englishmen across the ocean got to witness Eliot learning native dialects and Mayhew curing the sick. The continual publishing of documents allowed for Europeans to travel through the wilderness alongside the missionaries, and fostered an interest in the work being done. Missionaries and natives who chose to embark on this new form of cohabitation were met with laws aimed to restrain and control not only Indians but the towns themselves. Lacking support from local authorities and neighboring Indians, the inhabitants of praying towns had to face negative outcomes of their establishments during their short period of existence.

CHAPTER III

MAINTAINING CONTROL

"I am ashamed of myself, and broken is my heart, I hate, and am aware of all sin…I find my heart turned, I leave my stealing, lying, lust, and now my heart believeth in Jesus Christ…I confess I deserve to be damned."[1] On April 13, 1654 praying Narragansett Indians met at Roxbury, Massachusetts, and proceeded to answer questions about their faith and their knowledge of scripture.[2] Spoken both in English and with the help of interpreters, the session of questions and answers was one of the few that included any form of religious query. Recorded by William Walton and included in John Eliot's *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, this session implied the work being done by Eliot in nearby Natick was successful, and needed to be continued.[3] To Eliot and other Puritans, natives who could act English and understand scripture enough to have this discussion showed that not only had civilizing efforts taken root, but the gospel was being accepted amongst the natives as well. After having established Natick four years before, Eliot was seeing progress.

In the 1650s, missionaries began writing of the successes, and trials, of their adventures into the wilderness. Their continual success depended on moments like the one above to inspire Englishmen to continue supporting the cause, whether that be financially or spiritually. Without the support of locals, there would not be peace amongst the praying Indians and settlers. More importantly, without the support of locals and Puritans back in England there would be no

[1] John Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation* of the Progress of the Gospel among the Indians in New England, 1659, (New York: J. Sabin, 1865), *Gale Primary Sources*, 15.
[2] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 14.
[3] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 21.

funding for future endeavors. Though the discussion at Roxbury gave insight to what the natives were being taught, it did not detail who was speaking, only that church elders asked questions, and natives, who were referred to as Indians or children, were unnamed and unlisted in their discussion. This gives a vague understanding of the event, and lacked even the number of people, English or Indian, present. What it did allow for was a look into the process of civilizing and proselytizing. Public confessions were meant to monitor development during the 1650s, but ended up demonstrating the slow progress of the mission towns as they relied on constant funding which in turn took time away from educating natives. The 1650s and into the 1660s marked a period of uncertain growth that focused on teaching natives how to act like Englishmen while working to establish laws that controlled those who chose to live in mission towns and finding new ways to teach natives Christian concepts that were difficult to translate and understand.

For missionaries like Eliot, the process was complex. The entire goal of the adventure was to convert all natives and usher in a new age under an English Christian society, potentially saving the soul of England itself and bringing forth the apocalypse. The creation of towns for religious purposes conflicted with missionary's goals that went beyond saving native souls. For the Indians involved it marked a cataclysmic decision, one that meant either abandoning traditional practices, or at the most practicing them in private where no Englishman could see them. Faced with a choice between disease and the promise of English medicine and knowledge, as well as joining or fighting the growing number of settlers, those who chose to live in praying towns appeared to adopt English practices entirely. Effort on the part of the English and the natives to create praying towns made them successful in their initial establishment. But their creation was only part of the issue these towns faced. Because of conflicting and vastly different

reasons for coming together, the next step for the settlers, missionaries, and Indians was uncertain, and ultimately unsuccessful.

Despite challenges such as language barriers and funding, there were decades of progress in establishing a system aimed at converting as many natives as possible to an English and Puritan way of life. Detailed in letters between missionaries, councils, and commissioners, this process had many challenges. Religion and civility were met with questions of funding and the overall worry from missionaries that this may not be a sustainable venture unless the early stages were properly equipped, often with tools and items they could not afford. Natives spent this time focusing on sin and salvation. Many questioned both the civilizing and religious context; in their "confessions," natives expressed a fear that if they did one more thing wrong in their lives, they would not be saved. Missionaries continuously stressed fear and sin to teaching natives scripture.[4] The natives' focus on original sin, and their perceived obsession with it, allowed for people like John Eliot and Henry Whitfeld to show that what was being done was successful. By demonstrating native grasp on sin, missionaries told followers that they were keeping natives in line. The correlation between Indians, civility, religion, and laws as a mediating factor all show a complex web that was difficult to maintain, let alone fund. With that in mind, this chapter focuses on progress of and a series of questions surrounding the maintenance and advancement of praying towns: how were towns funded, what did it mean to be civilized, and what aspects of religion did Indians learn, if any? Despite the appearance of progress in the eyes of Puritan missionaries, during the 1650s and 1660s missionaries faced a series of issues involving funding and civilizing that kept the praying towns from being centers of cohabitation and conversion.

[4] J. Patrick Cesarini, "John Eliot's "A Brief History of the Mashepog Indians," 1666," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65 no. 1 (January 2008): 117.

FUNDING CONVERSION

Missionaries looked to a multitude of sources for funding, but often came up short. For missionaries like Thomas Mayhew, money was often the first item listed in a letter; thanks for previous monetary support came second. Mayhew addressed the concerns of donors, and recognized that they still needed more proof of success amongst the Indians. He called for more funding because he could not show his success without capital to continue his work.[5] Eliot also wrote to potential donors, often adding at the end a second note why he needed more money. Though there were justifications, the letters would often outright state that funds were low, despite receiving them from many people and sources.[6] A constant need for more money and lack of available funds meant that progress only occurred through funding, an issue continuously argued by missionaries who witnessed the inability of praying Indians to convert fully without money to start them on the path of an English lifestyle.

In theory, missionaries could draw on native inhabitants as a source of income. Laws created in the 1640s set up a system that fined natives for various reasons but forced the local leaders to use those fines to provide services to natives. Any fines taken from natives breaking a law would have been dealt with and paid in court. That money was then used to build meeting houses and to educate children. Any extra beyond that was be given to Eliot as a form of payment. It is unclear in the records how successful this was, and as Eliot was still asking for extra assistance into the 1670s, it is unknown if the fees were even substantial enough to warrant their detailed allocation system listed within Shepard's *Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*.[7]

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[5] Thomas Mayhew, in *Strength out of Weakness: A Glorious Manifestation of the Further Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England,* published by Henry Whitfeld, (London: M. Simmons, 1652), *Gale Primary Sources*, 63.

[6] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 24.

[7] Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the gospel breaking forth upon the Indians of New England* (New York: J. Sabin, 1648), *Gale Primary Sources*, 23.

Settlers also had influence on the amount of revenue available for missionaries. Donations and legal fees were two of the primary ways settlers raised money that went towards benefiting natives. Natives were allotted portions of land, often to the disdain of local settlers. Natives who needed money could in turn sell the land to Englishmen who could afford it. As Jean O'Brien argued, much of the land came cheap for the settlers, because they were also the ones surveying its value. Though natives did not receive the same amount of money for land that another Englishman would, they used the land sales to generate more revenue for their praying towns. Even though settlers could buy land from the Indians, they could not do so without legal permits from the courts, which regulated the process.[8] Although many illegal land sales were made, the extra step and licensing process added an additional element between natives and their access to English markets and currency.[9]

Other funds and resources came directly from individuals. Eliot, who thanked those who did give him money, still said it was not enough. The amount individuals could give was not nearly enough to sustain the praying towns.[10] And though he appreciated it, Eliot wrote that he felt like some people in his nearby congregation at Roxbury were giving money that they could not afford to give. Puritan congregations wanted to help, and wanted to use personal or public money to help further Eliot's mission.[11] Even with this help, the amount of charitable donations from congregations in Massachusetts did not amount to enough funding. Eliot and other missionaries relied on larger corporations and wealthy people from not only the colonies but

[8] Jean M. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2003) 108-117; and Jeffrey Glover, *Paper Sovereigns. Anglo-Native Treaties and the Law of Nations, 1604-1664* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014) 188.

[9] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes concerning the inhabitants of the Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Matthew Day, 1648), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 28.

[10] John Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England*, published by Edward Winslow, (London: Hannah Allen, 1649), *Gale Primary Sources*, 23.

[11] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 25.

from back in England as well. Part of the purpose of publishing series of letters, such as the source base for this research, was to make people in England understand the process of missionization and be willing to donate funds to it.

If missionaries could prove they were successful, more money would be given. That was certainly the case for Eliot, and is one of the ways the missions were able to survive. Though this would have been a major source of income for missionaries, there was only one mention of donation figures amongst the letters. Found in a letter from the Commissioners for the United Colonies of New England addressed to the Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England was a reference to a bill of exchange included in the letter. Along with details on the bill's donation was the mention that it was for 500 pounds.[12] In addition to this money was the promise for more in the future, noting that "gifts and contributions may be improved according to the pious minds of the Donors; for the promoting the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ amongst these poor natives."[13] This tantalizing promise was placed as the second letter in a series published by Eliot in 1659. It is unclear how exactly the money was used, or who received it, but its use in this letter shows that Eliot knew of its existence.

Donations from natives became a final source of revenue, though they could not provide the amount that settlers or corporations could. Reasons natives donated varied, as did the justification for asking for donations. Missionaries wrote under the assumption that one reason natives donated was because of the fear of sin and shame. Natives, who were taught through scripture and through law that their old ways were wrong, would repent any way they could, and

[12] John Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel among the Indians in New England* (London: J. Allen, 1670), *Gale Primary Sources,* 15-16.
[13] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 15.

if they could pay for their sins with money, they would.[14] Money that would make its way to the church through fines added an extra element of fear and sin to their list. Laws allowing natives to pay for their sins made sure that if they were unable that "where any are corporally punished, their fines shall be remitted."[15] Corporal punishment was thus established as the penalty for an inability to pay for fines that would go to the church. This fear was an additional concern the natives had to face. Despite "insufferable difficulties in this enterprise," Eliot found a way to profit from all sources.[16] Missionaries and advocates, like John Davenport, did their part by saying there would be great returns for this investment, because the work missionaries were doing provided a "golden mine in every work of God" and worth more than the "Gold and Silver of India."[17]

One of the biggest concerns held by investors was how the donated money would be used to further the process of converting natives. Indians and English alike gave as much as they could and had to do so on faith that the money would go towards a good cause which was something missionaries had to ensure. Many letters included some mention as to why the missionaries were asking for money, or how they used the donations in the past to assure those willing to give funds that the money was making its way to natives. Justifications were often as simple as needing the money to bring apples and tobacco to bring to towns as a sign of good will with natives.[18] Reciprocity and hospitality were a key feature in native culture, having gifts for men and children before dealing with missionary efforts meant playing into a necessary

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[14] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 51.

[15] Edward Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made at the General Courts in May 3. August 1. & October 11, 1665*, (Boston: General Court, 1665), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans,* 2.

[16] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 7.

[17] Davenport, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 29.

[18] Thomas Shepard, *The Day Breaking if not the Sun rising of the Gospel with the Indians in New England* (London: Rich, 1647), *Gale Primary Sources,* 7.

formality with the Indians.[19] Missionaries also needed funds to give natives English style clothing. In one particular story, Eliot was so moved by an Indian man who wanted to convert but had little means that Eliot invited him home, gave him clothes, and then gave clothing to the native's family. These moments meant building a bridge between the natives and the English, while working towards civilizing them.[20]

Reasons to fund praying towns were more complex and involved much more capital but were crucial to the civilizing project. Some donors wanted to provide small amounts of capital, but Eliot needed large quantities to buy supplies such as farm and spinning equipment. A main goal of Eliot was to work with the natives who showed the "women are desirous to learn to spin" and make items for the market.[21] Eliot wanted to urge natives to grow new crops, but he did not have the tools for planting, let alone the seeds for growing or the materials for harvesting.[22] The need for tools was a reoccurring issue within the missionary letters. Lack of tools was matched by a lack of knowledge, as Eliot, on multiple occasions, asked for English men and resources to be sent with him to provide the materials and skills to teach natives how to grow orchards and English crops. This desire to teach them how to be self-sufficient in English ways of farming was seen as crucial to the success of native conversion. Eliot feared that if natives did not have successful crop yields, they would turn back to old ways which contributed to his push for equipment.[23] Natives, who had previously cultivated crops such as corn and squash, did not fence in their lands and did not practice field or crop rotation as the English did. Missionaries

[19] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, ""Subjects…Unto the Same King": New England Indians and the Use of Royal Political Power," *Massachusetts Historical Review* 5 (2003): 32.
[20] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 37.
[21] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 62.
[22] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 62.
[23] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 22-24.

sought to teach natives to move to production rather than subsistence farming, and learn to cultivate private farms, rather than collective ones.

Money was also needed to advance literacy. Missionaries like Mayhew and Eliot hoped to teach natives to read and understand scripture and thus needed books to further their cause, with reading materials being in short supply to help teach natives English.[24] Eliot's main goal was to print a school primer and scripture in the Indian tongue, something he raised money for over the years.[25] This concern shifts into a need for money to print a Bible in the Indian tongue in later years.[26]

Money dictated missionaries' ability to carry out their task of civilizing Indians and their success rested on the willingness of New England colonists to give funds. Whether it was a donation at Sunday service, or a check for hundreds of pounds, each amount had to be justified and used by the men receiving it. Eliot noted that the "want of money is the only thing in view that doth retard a more full prosecution of this work," and that only so much can be done with so little money.[27] Missionaries used available funds to first civilize, by English definition, and then convert natives, resulting in a group of Indians that were unable to fit in any category other than praying Indian, as they were not fully English, but too far gone to be accepted back into native communities. In the towns that were established in early years, those who chose to convert and living in praying towns, known as praying Indians, worked with and responded to the efforts being done by missionaries and men.

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[24] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day, published by Henry Whitfield,* (London: John Bartlet, 1651), *Gale Primary Sources,* 31-2.
[25] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 24.
[26] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel,* 35.
[27] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 24.

BECOMING CIVILIZED

Every missionary defined civility differently in the European context, and a different reason for becoming a missionary. Efforts to civilize Indians brought in the many mindsets that drove Englishmen to become missionaries. The turmoil of war made missionaries cling to their distinct, Puritan religion. Because of this, missionaries had to think about what it meant to be English, and how to teach that to natives. Native behavior was seen as incompatible with English morality and faith, Indian culture had to be drastically altered before they would be able to understand and practice their new faith. Funding aside, missionaries had clear goals and plans to determine what markers of civility needed to be given to natives. Written discussions on the meaning of culture and the ways in which natives moved forward, often with their own understanding and take on English society, became a point of concern. This involved changes to native government, hunting, farming, and gender relations all under the term education.

Local colonial authorities attempted to dominate the missionaries and praying towns through legal means by putting laws in place to maintain order as missionaries worked to further their evangelizing efforts. In 1648, Massachusetts Bay Colony determined that future laws could be "made from time to time, to reduce them [Indians] to civilite of life shall be once in the year."[28] Changes made by the local government had no time limit or parameters beyond the stipulation that local government could make new laws every year that dealt with making natives civilized. This was done under the mindset that "the poor, naked, ignorant Indians who lately knew no civil order; now beg to be brought into Church order, to live under the Government."[29] Not only was it necessary, but the missionaries said that the natives asked for it.

[28] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes*, 28.
[29] Joseph Caryl, in *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 4.

Laws gave insight into English fear and native behavior. Government officials created laws to serve many purposes: one being a bridge between civility and faith in an attempt to regulate behavior so that natives acted in a Puritan manner under the threat of monetary repercussions if they failed; another was to regulate when and where natives could perform their religious duties. Thomas Shepard's *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel* included a list of such laws from 1646.[30] Filtered throughout this work, these laws are crucial to understanding not only English cultural practices, but the behaviors in which the English sought to control natives, and what behaviors they sought to modify. This gives insight into what native behaviors were, though some laws were created from English fear of potential native behavior.[31] Misunderstanding of native culture led the English to believe that New England natives were like the supposed cannibals and murderers found in Spanish colonies. Indians' ties with the devil meant that violent and sinful acts were likely and had to be prevented.[32] A list of laws was created in November of 1646 and introduced as "orders agreed on at Concord by the Indians, under the hand of two faithful witnesses," claiming that natives had some part in the creation of these laws.[33] The laws go from every day observances, such as no drinking or lying, to more extreme cases of spousal abuse, adultery, and bestiality. Over the course of three pages, twenty-nine laws were created for the natives. Many tell natives they should be part of the faith, that they should seek God and not the Devil, and more importantly, should not lie to each other, or the English.[34] Stealing seemed to be a concern amongst the law makers, with five laws centering around lying, stealing, and paying off debts. One concern in particular centered around the

[30] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25-7.
[31] Karen Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000) 113.
[32] Alfred Cave, "New England Puritan Misperceptions of Native American Shamanism," *International Social Science Review* 67, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 17-20
[33] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25.
[34] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25.

notion that natives were known to steal canoes from Englishmen, and the law explicitly forbade it.

English laws also regulated marriage and physical behavior. Colonial authorities focused on making sure that Indian men only had one wife and did not fornicate or commit adultery.[35] These laws dictated how the sexes interacted, and attempted to control the gender and kinship practices used by natives. Sachems used marriages to seal alliances with other clans, tribes, and villages, and limiting marriages took away one method of political networking held by local Indian leaders. Laws also created a rift between English and native views towards sexuality and marriage, limiting natives to one partner during their entire lifetimes. In New England and New France, women were able to find various partners in their lives until they found suitable ones to join with permanently.[36] Women had the power of choice with this element in their lives and was another native cultural practice altered within the English laws and civilizing process. Abuse was another concern and laws were created to address natives fighting each other and their spouses. These laws, which regulated down to the length of native's hair and the proper way to enter an Englishmen's home, were said to have been adopted immediately, with natives cutting their hair and wearing English clothes quickly after the laws were finalized.[37] In the eyes of the missionaries, Indians were becoming English and they were becoming civilized.

The next step in administering these laws was educating the natives, something that was done partially in tandem with their religious instruction, though their education focused on more than just faith. The remaining members of entire villages flocked to early attempts at conversion

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[35] "Conclusions and Orders" in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 25-7.

[36] See discussions on native marriage practices and female choice in Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint:Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Carol Devens, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); and Lisa Poirier, *Religion, Gender, and Kinship in Colonial New France* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2016).

[37] "Conclusions and Orders," in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 27.

and records as early as 1646 show chiefs giving their sons to the English to be educated and trained in religion as a survival strategy. Children being sent away to school or sent to live with the English was a method of education before official towns were established.[38] Once towns were introduced, children and adults could be educated in English customs and Christianity. Missionaries approached educating natives by treating natives as if "they are to make men" out of them before they can become Christians.[39] By doing so, natives would be taught "justice, prudence, valor, temperance, and righteousness" through modified behavior.[40]

English laws also tried to shape the relationship between natives and colonial government. Laws were created to teach and foster a new understanding of authority. One of the main goals of this endeavor was to make them subjects of the crown and God-fearing English Christians. To do so, the missionaries had to instill the belief that the government was God on earth.[41] By doing this, and bringing the Indians "under the laws of God, to civilize them," missionaries could "convince, bridle, restrain, and civilize them."[42] Civilizing the heathen was used as repeated justification for laws and methods established in the 1650s and 1660s. Eliot thought with this method that in forty years "some Indians would be all one English" and in one-hundred years "all Indians here about, would be" English.[43] By promising his readers that all natives in New England would be just like the English in a few generations, Eliot argued for the necessity of continuous support as well as the promise of advancement, even if it is not as readily seen in their generation.

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[38] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 1.
[39] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 11.
[40] Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 1.
[41] James Noyes, *A Short Catechism* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1661), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 6.
[42] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 44.
[43] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 44.

Local governments gave natives a chance to speak for themselves, but it was still impossible for natives to receive the same level of respect as their English neighbors. The act of subjugation came with a promise of equality, an issue that natives would push for in the 1660s and fight for in the 1670s. Joshua Miller argued that Puritan "theology was profoundly political," making the stress of government as God on earth a necessary task for the missionaries.[44] Religion was the key to power, and power meant participation and autonomy within small communities. Though Eliot encouraged natives to elect new leaders in missionary communities, Indians remained a lesser status to the English. Puritans believed in a strict hierarchy, one that would infringe on relationships with natives who saw themselves as equal subjects of the crown.[45] Laws were established to ensure that natives would not have a chance to reach equality.

Laws also mirrored the shame that missionaries stressed in sermons and discussions of faith. Missionaries used shame to convince natives that they were sinful and in need of help. Once natives embraced the concept of sin, the English could then promise that through their laws they would be fixed, and natives would no longer be sinful. All they had to do was follow the laws and do as they were told, praying morning and night while constantly living in fear of sin and shame.[46] By 1649, with the laws firmly in practice not just in Concord but in Massachusetts as a whole, Eliot was still working on establishing laws and churches of his own, while building a town that would modify behaviors. Towns were created with cohabitation in mind. Eliot believed that natives had to live with and model their behavior after the English. By fully

[44] Joshua Miller, "Direct Democracy and the Puritan Theory of Membership," *The Journal of Politics* 53, no. 1 (February 1991): 58.
[45] Miller, "Direct Democracy and the Puritan Theory of Membership," 61.
[46] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 14.

immersing themselves in English culture, natives had a better chance of grasping what it meant to be a Puritan and therefore would have a better transition into Christianity.[47]

Proper behavior varied by age and gender. By 1650, Eliot was working on educating fifty children in addition to the adult population of Natick. Although teaching children, Eliot focused on maintaining progress with adults, especially women, with a main "desire is that all women may be taught to read."[48] Despite advocating female literacy, Eliot noted that women were not initially allowed to speak at public meetings and had to relay their questions through their husbands, who would then ask them in front of large groups. It was not until the end of the 1640s that women began speaking in a public forum about civility and faith; one of the first witnessed and recorded took place in March of 1647 and was the unnamed wife of local leader Totherswamp.[49] Natives were also seen as incapable of properly raising children. Missionaries argued that Indian parents doted on children to the extreme, with some children never crying they were so spoiled.[50] Lust was seen as the hardest sin for natives to deny in their daily lives, and men and women were subsequently watched to make sure they were not straying sexually from their new path.[51]

Laws also controlled native material culture. In addition to the adoption of English hairstyles, natives were told they had to wear English style clothing. Clothing became a symbol of faith and prosperity, and Eliot believed it represented mercy and fortune.[52] Through laws, gifts, and forced modifications, Indians in the praying towns began to outwardly look like the English. The next step was to teach them to work like English as well. One of the biggest

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[47] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 30.
[48] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 49.
[49] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 29.
[50] Todd R. Romero, "Totherswamp's Lament: Christian Indian Fathers and Sons in Early Massachusetts," *Journal of Family History* 33, no 1 (January 2008): 5.
[51] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 48.
[52] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 38.

concerns, financially and practically, was the ability to afford necessary tools and people to teach natives how to grow orchards. This fear lead Eliot to believe that "our work in civilizing them will go on the more slowly for want of tools."[53] Without proper tools and farm equipment, missionaries feared they would run out of food in the future. The increased disparity between Indians and their English neighbors generated fear in missionaries that natives would go back to their old communities to survive.[54]

In addition to farming, missionaries sought to teach natives new forms of animal husbandry. A main goal was to teach natives to fence in their land to protect themselves from English animals.[55] This went against native belief in communal ownership of land, and forced them into shifting into modes of private property. Local settlers were warned that their animals could not trample on Indian's food, stating that the English must keep their "cattle from destroying the Indian's corn," but that natives forfeited all rights to the price of damages if they had refused to fence in their own land.[56] In an effort to keep the natives and settlers at peace, missionaries wanted to teach them to fence in their fields. A declining deer population and limited access to safe hunting grounds forced natives to show an interest in adopting European animal husbandry.[57]

Although the continual goal in the praying towns was cohabitation with English, Eliot believed the only way successful towns could be established would be to create them far away from colonists. This was largely due to the encroachment and impact local animals had on Indian crops and that English colonists were not willing to keep their animals from grazing on Indian

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[53] Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 49.
[54] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 26.
[55] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 66.
[56] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes,* 28-9.
[57] David J. Silverman, "'We Chuse to be Bounded': Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 522.

land and in Indian towns. Eliot's goal was that the newly established towns would be a haven for praying Indians where they could learn "letters, trades, and labors, as building, fishing, flax, and hemp dressings, planting orchards" in peace.[58] As settlers rapidly found their way around Massachusetts, surrounding and encroaching on native villages, this desire seemed out of reach.

Natives responded to the expansion of white settlement in many ways. Initially, for instance, Indians in Concord created laws for themselves that adopted English practices. The implementation of these laws altered Indian behaviors and outlawed elements of traditional native culture.[59] Natives showed "great willingness to conform themselves" by cutting their hair and changing their clothes.[60] Missionaries saw great promise in native progress and took it as a sign that initial stages were working well. The correlation between outward appearance and inward piety seemed to be a conclusive symbol that the work and word of God was successful, leading Eliot to state that "I will say this solemnly, not suddenly, nor lightly, but before the Lord, as I apprehend in my conscience, were they but in a settled way of civility and government cohabiting together, and I called to live among them, I (?) freely joyne into church-fellowship amongst them."[61] To him, the natives were so sure and so steadfast in their work that their churches were worthy of Englishmen joining.

Natives found ways to resist changes created by the English. One instance was particularly provoking to Thomas Shepard, and he included it in one of his many letters to fellow missionaries. In 1647, Shepard, Eliot, and a Mr. Wilson went to Cape Cod to speak to the natives. Through great difficulty, Eliot tried to work among the natives there, and an agreement was made to meet together and further their discussion. When the time came to arrive, the

[58] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 15.
[59] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 22.
[60] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 27.
[61] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 21.

natives were out to sea, and as Shepard described, pretended to fish. The natives then made the missionaries wait and watch until they came back to shore. After joining the English, the local Indians proceeded to act like they did not understand Eliot, though the same natives had previously demonstrated that they understood the missionaries. The hostility was blamed on the French; Shepard and Eliot were fearful that Catholic missionaries had already arrived in the area and tainted the minds of the local natives.[62] Though many natives found their own way to choose their path, whether that be with or without the English, many Indians in New England chose to join praying towns and change their ways to reflect an English manner.[63] Those who began the English civilizing process also had to begin steps towards conversion, a more difficult and strenuous task for the missionaries as they sought to change minds as well as bodies.

UNDERSTANDING SIN

Missionaries used civilizing efforts to teach natives religion, but their main concern quickly became finding ways to translate religious concepts that had no native equivalent. In 1651, William Steel preached an apocalyptic motif common in Europe that showed Christ coming on a red horse to destroy his enemies. When Christ returned, he came on a white horse, set on converting lost souls. Steele used this biblical message to signify a new era of England, one that had to include the Indians found in the New World.[64] He interpreted the white and red horses as the coming of a new day, symbolizing that Indians were teachable and the English had time to redeem themselves by showing natives the true faith. By doing so, the English would also show Indians what could be achieved if they converted to Christianity. This joint venture was

[62] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 32-3.
[63] David J. Silverman, "Indians, Missionaries, and Religious Translation: Creating Wampanoag Christianity in Seventeenth-Century Martha's Vineyard," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (April 2005): 144.
[64] William Steele, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 12-3.

stressed in the sermons and lessons being given to Indians and whites alike. Educating natives proved difficult and ultimately failed because complex biblical concepts could not be translated into native languages and were subsequently adapted by the natives who created altered versions of what missionaries were trying to teach to match native understandings.

Efforts at conversion came quickly, even before fully developed notions of civilization and praying towns were applied to the region. In the aftermath of the Pequot War, 1636-38, natives flocked to populated areas in Massachusetts. Indians who were not involved in the war did so because they wanted protection. In exchange, they promised to live and worship like the English.[65] Although language barriers were present in early years, men like Thomas Shepard would still go to natives and preach for hours. Many could not understand each other, but natives were still taught about heaven and hell, as well as God and Christ. From the beginning, natives asked questions about every bit of faith, about the nature of God and the meaning of the world around them. Questions were complex, and hard to answer in a language that lacked the translatable words and concepts. This would proceed for hours, and would occur over the span of months and years until formal churches were established.[66]

When missionaries established formal churches amongst the natives, Indians responded by building special wigwams to house missionaries and travelers. A major concern held by the missionaries was the fear that French Jesuits would find their way into Massachusetts, and work on converting native souls that lived there. Missionaries wanted access to as many natives as possible to combat their concern over nonbelievers and the influence of other religious denominations.[67] An additional goal was to attempt to convert sachems first. If the English could

[65] John Winthrop, *A Declaration of Former Passages and Proceedings betwixt the English and Narrowgansets*, (Boston: Commissioners, 1645) *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 7.
[66] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 2-3.
[67] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 33.

convince a sachem to convert, such as Shawanon, sachem of the Nashawog, a majority of the people would likely follow.[68]

Missionaries worked to create patterns and routines for educating Indians. Mayhew, Eliot, and Shepard all faced the task of introducing and teaching natives complex and often conflicting concepts like sin and salvation. Missionaries also had to teach intangible concepts like the holy spirit; a task that was difficult.[69] Eliot addressed this by praying all day with the Indians, while teaching and making them observe the sabbath through his guidance.[70] Leading by example, Eliot wanted to establish a routine that natives could follow when he was no longer there to monitor the natives' behavior. He then set forth to create schools separate from the church, that would allow for extra education of children and adults, while instituting daily prayer. Schools gave him the opportunity to teach natives to read, write, and spell. While doing so, he also worked on his own translations, something he believed was necessary for the advancement of the gospel.[71] Eliot wanted English and natives to be able to spread the gospel together, and be able to do so without the other's help if need be.

Missionaries relied on native assistance to convert others. Natives were taught to be new religious leaders in their own communities, such as Hiacooms on Martha's Vineyard. He became a teacher, and a much more important person than he was before conversion, in both communities.[72] By creating jobs and positions for natives within the church, new opportunities for natives to advance their status within their communities developed. Access to new paths of advancement was something men like Hiacooms could not have done before. Authority in native

[68] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 15.
[69] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 6.
[70] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 47-8.
[71] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 33.
[72] Mayhew, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 13.

communities traditionally rested in kinship ties, and who each person was related to on their mothers' side. If a man was not part of a leading family, he could not become a leader in the community. With Christianity, men found ways to rise above their station and challenge traditional sources of authority. The use of natives in the conversion process was successful because of the available translations being created by men like Peirson, Eliot, and Williams. Translations of Genesis, the commandments, and other elements of the Bible made conversion possible.[73] Other documents, such as the *Logick Primer*, were crucial to Eliot's work; his front-page warned that "the use of this Iron Key is to open the rich treasury of the holy scripture."[74] It showed translations of English and Wampanoag together, showing that "logick the mile, where by everything, every speech is composed or opened to be known."[75] The primer itself had three parts to teach natives. It contained the beginnings of the world, origin stories, and the struggle of good versus evil. It contained basic debates of faith in both languages, until reaching a portion entirely in Wampanoag.[76]

Natives questioned what was being taught to them and their concerns rested in issues that impacted their daily lives. Indians reportedly wondered about complex issues the Bible presented: if bad men could be made good; did man create the devil; should a father be held accountable for his son's behavior; how to tell if someone is wicked; why did God not make all men good and so forth.[77] Their questions, which also looked at familial relations and the status of

[73] See full translations in Abraham Peirson, *Some Help for the Indians shewing them how to improve their natural reason, to know the true God, and the true Christian religion* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1659), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*; John Eliot, "Christiane Oonoowae Sampoowaonk, a Christian Covenanting Canfession, 1660," *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*; John Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun* (Cambridge: Marmaduke Johnson, 1665), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*; and John Eliot, *The Logick Primer,* (Cambridge: Marmaduke Johnson, 1672), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*.

[74] Eliot, *The Logick Primer,* 2.

[75] Eliot, *The Logick Primer,* 4.

[76] Eliot, *The Logick Primer,* 5-30.

[77] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 39.

women, showed native values and their concerns for their people and families in particular. Questions centered around understanding sin were directly impacted by John Eliot's teaching that Indians were a greater distance from God than the English were because of the sin they had been part of before the Europeans arrived.[78] Natives were taught they should live in constant fear of committing sins, which was fully engrained by the notion that Indians were more prone to sinful behavior than their European counterparts.[79]

In Natick, Eliot realized he needed to stress original sin above all else, and show the natives that everyone was guilty at their core but could work to be good. He also taught them that people were redeemable, because of their actions and confessions, and also because Jesus died for their sins.[80] The stress on redemption needed to be added because the natives Eliot portrayed in his letters became obsessed with sin. They learned so much about sin that many feared they were more sinful after being introduced to Christianity, because they were now aware of the sins themselves. For example, Cutshamaquin was confused, even fearful, over the idea that his life was nothing but sin, and afraid the future meant he "will be as bad againe as it was before, and therefore I sometime wish I might die before I be so bad again as I have been."[81] The association of monetary and physical punishment that correlated with the praying towns added to this fear and revealed exploitation of missionaries.

Sacrifice was another key element to the religious education natives received. Missionaries used stories such as Abraham and Isaac in their sermons to emphasize the meaning of sacrifice and what Christians must be willing to do. In response, natives questioned what kind

[78] Cesarini, "John Eliot's "A Brief History of the Mashepog Indians," 1666," 117.
[79] Jacqueline M. Henkel, "Represented Authenticity: Native Voices in Seventeenth-Century Conversion Narratives," *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (March 2014): 33.
[80] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 56.
[81] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 55.

of sacrifices they would be asked to make in an effort to prove their faith. Eliot assured them the ways of old, such as killing another person, were not asked of them. Instead, natives were told to eradicate their unnatural sins, and their leaning toward earthly pleasures of drink and flesh.[82] Missionaries further emphasized that natives had to constantly prove they were not being sinful, physically or mentally. Eliot taught natives to believe they were the "most poor, feeble, despicable in the world…then we are in the way to be made truly rich." Supposedly said by a native named Piumbubbon, this confession demonstrated the goal of missionaries to teach them compliance, subservience, Englishness, and Christian guilt. Natives were taught that the only way they were redeemable was through the help of missionaries, and their full embrace of the Puritan faith.[83]

Natives responded to missionary attempts to instill shame and fear by compliance and question. Old men would ask if their souls were savable, or if it was too late now that they were old and had committed countless sins.[84] Others were still more concerned with tangible problems and ones they would see in their everyday life, such as how to better serve God, how to seek forgiveness, and how to repent. Some simply wanted to know English explanations for environmental occurrences such as the difference and reasoning behind the existence of salt and fresh water.[85] Questions about physical phenomena resulted in frustration by the missionaries, but also allowed for a natural shift in focus from what natives could see to what could not be seen. Another concern was if God could hear Indian's thoughts, and if so, could God hear if natives prayed in their heads, rather than out loud.[86] One Indian was worried about what

[82] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 25.
[83] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, 32.
[84] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 9.
[85] Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising*, 11.
[86] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 29.

constituted work on the Sabbath and if women's work was sinful behavior on the day of rest.[87] Small questions showed Indian's concern for basic principles, but did not demonstrate their understanding, adoption, or adaption of Christianity itself.

While some natives began to obsess over sin, others challenged the notion of original sin. Sagamore Papussasonnaway had clever responses for ideas that other natives took literally. Though he converted with Eliot, he still questioned why natives were punished for past behaviors if they were working to be better in the present. For example, he told Eliot that he could not see sin and did not worry that he had never prayed to God before, since he had not known what sins were and did not know anything about God before the arrival of the English. Included within a discussion of faith, it showed the Indian's grasp on the complex notions of sin and salvation, and challenged English beliefs about natives.[88]

Other natives rapidly adopted Christianity and even claimed to have begun the process without the English. Beyond tangible questions and subtle challenges some natives took the gospel to heart, stating that they had foreseen the English arrival. After a conversation with a local native, Thomas Shepard detailed an account important enough to include in his writing. A man he met watched many of his people die and was worried that he or his family was next. One night he went to sleep and dreamt he saw a man, dressed like the English, and a man in all black. Both tried to speak to him, and told him about a great spirit that he had to follow. After working with the English, his family was saved and he knew that great spirit was God.[89] Native connections to the divine, through dreams or through visions, were not taken lightly by

[87] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 21.
[88] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 16.
[89] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 34.

missionaries. Some even spoke of connections with God at death, which became a new point of obsession with missionaries.[90]

Deathbed scenes and dying speeches became events that missionaries could prove the conversion process worked. Historian Erik Seeman argued that both Protestant and Catholic missionaries used dying natives as physiological manipulation to create hopeful optimism towards conversion, and to convince indigenous peoples that their dying family members wanted the unconverted to embrace Christianity.[91] Missionaries used dying speeches to place native voice into their narrations to convince not only Indians but Puritan supporters that natives renounced their old ways to the very end and often had moments of divine revelation before passing. This was done with discussions of natives who wanted their children to come back to the mission towns after they died. One record showed a woman asking her children to return and receive the faith, begging them as she died to not return back to their old village. Another man supposedly used his last words to tell his children "I now shall dye, but Jesus Christ calleth you that live to goe to Natick, that there the Lord might rule over you, that you might make a church."[92] These words, whether actually spoken or not, showed that the missionaries were striving to keep children in their communities and under their influence. It also showed those who were willing to donate to the cause that it was so successful parents did not want their children to return back to their homes.

Public confessions, Indian or English, were recorded during the mid-seventeenth century. The ideas of sin, sacrifice, and unworthiness were seen repeatedly in a discussion held in 1654 in

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[90] Ann Marie Plane, "Falling "Into a Dreame:" Native Americans, Colonization, and Consciousness in Early New England," in *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, ed. Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 86.

[91] Erik Seeman, "Reading Indian's deathbed scenes: Ethnohistorical and Representational Approaches," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 1 (June 2001): 18, 22, 38.

[92] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 28.

Roxbury.[93] Missionaries periodically held public confessions to show local settlers, leaders, and visitors the progress being made. Used as a tool, and often with white interpreters, the stories being told were to the advantage of the English missionaries.[94] Words could get lost in translation if the natives did not speak in English, making the witnesses rely on translations by people involved in the process of missionization. Facilitating confessional events were just as much propaganda as the published letters reaching their way to Europe. Their inclusion in said documents allowed for a further step in the funding process as well.

Missionaries used education, reported confessions, and new ways to translate biblical concepts to maintain mission towns during the 1650s and into the early 1660s. Missionaries hosted events in their own churches, amongst their English congregation, and invited native guests and traveling strangers. They would be publicly announced so that the news was spread far enough for anyone to come see, if they wished. It was then essentially a show put on by the natives for the English. Joshua Bellin has argued that natives were acting out their responses, and that their identities were a performance to meet local needs for funding.[95] Bellin's argument that their word choice and dialogues were not authentic neglects to factor in the difficult task of translation, and that much of what natives said had to be repeated through translators and then transcribed. Each of these elements impacted the records. They played the part of confused, questioning, stupid, but converted native.[96] Their questions allowed the viewer to understand what was happening in the far-off praying towns. Those who could not attend had the benefit of later reading the published letters that were carefully curated to serve a basic need: fundraising.

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[93] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 14-20.

[94] Craig White, "The Praying Indians' Speeches as Texts of Massachusett Oral Culture," *Early American Literature* 38, no. 3 (2003): 438, 453.

[95] Joshua Bellin, "John Eliot's Playing Indian," *Early American Literature* 42, no. 1 (2007), 2, 21-24.

[96] Henkel, "Represented Authenticity," 27.

Missionaries hoped to attract willing donors and this became a driving force for speeches and meetings held for the general public. Though there were legitimate concerns of saving the souls of native people, these spectacles were entertainment for the local settlers to show the harmless nature of newly God-fearing natives who deserved more funding. The missionaries used them to spread the word that the money already given was being put to good use, but more would be necessary to bring them from their supposed "childlike" understanding to a fully knowledgeable convert.[97]

Funding dictated what missionaries were capable of achieving, and controlled what they taught. Events such as the question forum made sure that the missionaries could afford the necessary tools and materials for educating the natives and to modify their behaviors with new skills and actions. Without funds, the missionaries could not teach natives how to grow crops in the English manner, or how to maintain an orchard. Without the funds their schools could not be built, and clothing could not be given to those who were willing to convert. The entire process needed spectacles and shows like the one in Roxbury, whether or not the natives understood what they were saying.

Recorded statements give insight to native thoughts during conversion and the amount of progress missionaries were making. Statements like those of the unnamed native and his personal shame was matched by other confessions, that he sees "true love, that our great sachems have not, and that maketh me think that God is the true God."[98] Missionaries constant discussion of sin, shame, and possible but nearly unobtainable salvation in religion and everyday life was a controlling factor, meant to keep people in line and unquestioning of their laws and government.

[97] Kristina Bross, "Dying Saints, Vanishing Savages: "Dying Indian Speeches" in Colonial New England Literature," *Early American Literature* 36, no. 3 (2001): 333.

[98] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 15.

By instilling that, though people cannot see God, the government is God on earth, the missionaries reinforced the idea that natives had to abide by the rulers who created laws to control not only Indians but settlers as well.

Issues of funding, education, and proof of progress caused moments of contention for missionaries, settlers, and natives alike as they moved forward towards the latter half of the seventeenth century. The rapid establishment of praying towns were built on uncertain ground, with mismatched purposes and unclear futures, for both Indians and English. Although funding controlled the possibility of future success, missionaries took time they needed to work with natives and used it instead to ask for more money. That time could have been spent actually propagating the gospel, rather than making a show of it. Meanwhile, natives used what missionaries were teaching and made sense of it in their own way, often radically changing elements of Christianity, or only focusing on one element. What came out of the period of maintenance in the 1650s and into the 1660s was a warped sense of religion that missionaries had to work with, otherwise their venture was a complete failure and they would lose out on future funding. To maintain what little progress was made, the praying towns had to focus more on outward progress rather than inward faith, making the years at Natick and other towns an experiment of cross-cultural contamination rather than one of religious and cultural education and adoption. The foundation that the missions were built upon did not create a sustainable model for future growth. Rather, the praying towns that were established around New England were still close enough to English settlements that they competed for land and resources. And though natives were said to be subjects under the crown, the legal system created for them did not allow for movement or personal gain. They could not challenge the English in court, could

not defend themselves, and could not protect their towns, people, or faith from the encroaching settlers.

The next chapter will focus on the transition from a hopeful beginning to years of decline. Faced with drought, crop failures, angry settlers and increasing cases of backsliding and alcoholism, the missions shifted into a new era of decay. The men involved in sustaining the mission towns began questioning the government as well. Missionaries published letters and documents criticizing government and its relationship with the church. This struggle between all groups and at all levels impacted the growth of the praying towns and the length to which the missionaries would go to ensure the survival of their progress.

CHAPTER IV

DISMANTLING PROGRESS

On the tenth of July, 1651, John Eliot planned a meeting with local natives and English travelers to discuss faith and progress in the town of Natick.[1] Natives, who were tasked with picking their own leaders, had to send representatives to the discussion. Eliot had agreed that further instruction on the leadership and politics between the English and the Indians would be discussed with newly appointed sachems. This talk was meant to spread word of Puritan successes but was interrupted by a drunk sachem named Cutshamoquin. The sachem, who Eliot believed was on a journey with "some of those bad Indians," and had purchased "some strong water at Gortons Plantation, and had a great drinking, from which the wiser sort did withdraw themselves."[2] Cutshamoquin, not being one of the wiser sorts, began acting scandalous with drink. After discussions with John Cotton, Eliot was reminded that Puritan "forefathers have a long time been lost in our sins," meaning the English were just as likely to get drunk, and it takes time for a culture to learn how to distance themselves from such a thing.[3] With a quick confession of his sins and admitting that "Satan acted in his heart," the sachem was forgiven.[4]

Cutshamoquin was like the growing number of natives drawn towards alcohol. The mid-seventeenth-century saw a rise in drinking amongst both natives and settlers. The peace and promised prosperity of the 1640s had not arrived and the usefulness of mission towns was starting to run its course. By the 1660s, the praying towns and the people within them were

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[1] John Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness,* published by Henry Whitfield, (London: M. Simmons, 1652), *Gale Primary Sources*, 39.
[2] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 39-40.
[3] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 41.
[4] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 41.

starting to waver and turn from Christianity, showing the unstable foundations on which the missions were built. Concern over the soul of England and the necessity of converting Indian souls in number, rather than spirit, was allowing natives to slip through the cracks. With a constant need to assure investors and donors that the process was worth contributing to, the struggle for converts led to a slip of morality, and the question of actual conversion. Natives who outwardly acted as the English did were seen as a symbol for success, and that the mission towns were working how the missionaries wanted. With vague numbers and unclear events, the missionaries were assuring those who read their published letters that yes, many people were joining and asking questions and doing what they were told; but they failed to detail how many came exactly, how many left the praying towns after their arrival, and how many challenged the gospel.[5] One of the larger neglected elements was the growing unrest between English settlers and the natives who joined mission towns: praying Indians.

Major issues began to occur surrounding native crops, English animals, gun ownership, new waves of epidemics, and the nature of authority within and without the praying towns. Paired with the growing number of laws aimed at addressing native and English cohabitation, it is clear that the placement and establishment of the praying towns neglected to factor in the ecological and legal implications of forcing two dissimilar cultures to live together in close proximity. An uncertain future impacted all levels of society, and natives and English alike turned towards their own coping mechanisms, leading to rampant alcoholism and various other sins. Cutshamoquin's sin was as quickly forgiven as it had begun. The lack of repercussions, especially amongst leaders, lowered the morale of natives and English alike.[6] With trade between

[5] Linford Fisher, "Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640-1730," *The Harvard Theological Review* 102, no. 1 (January 2009): 113-4.

[6] Jacqueline M. Henkel, "Represented Authenticity: Native Voices in Seventeenth-Century Conversion Narratives," *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (March 2014): 33.

sides questioned, legal authority uncertain, and the ability for English and Indians to face one another in court near impossible, the ability for the two groups to cohabitate was faulty at the very core. The legal system's favor over church members and Englishmen brought in a new wave of published texts from the missionaries, who were no longer discussing native conversion but the role of the government and the placement of people within it. Growing unrest between natives, missionaries, colonial authority, and the local English created a rift that was apparent in the later years of the missions in the 1660s as "both used and were used by colonists in their own power struggles."[7] This chapter focuses on the decline of praying towns, including struggles between natives and settlers, what the English perceived as religious and cultural backsliding, as well as the growing question of the role of colonial authorities in the missionary process. By the 1660s, New England communities experienced growing tension over land disputes, representation, and control over domesticated animals that resulted in King Philip's War, or Metacom's War, in 1675. Those living in and around the mission towns felt the tension building until it burst.

LAND DISPUTES

Disagreements over land ownership between English settlers and praying town Indians in Massachusetts became a greater concern than Indians' religious education. The English claimed ownership of New England as a right of conquest, which was solidified by actions taken during the Pequot War.[8] This mentality led the English to believe that whatever they could take was rightly theirs. Native land was claimed by conquest, and by the right of stewardship, a

[7] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, ""Subjects…Unto the Same King": New England Indians and the Use of Royal Political Power," *Massachusetts Historical Review* 5 (2003): 30.

[8] John Winthrop, *A Declaration of Former Passages and Proceedings betwixt the English and Narrowgansets* (Boston: Commissioners, 1645), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 2.

justification for the English that claimed Indians were too uncivilized to fully utilize the land they lived on.[9] By arguing native misuse, the English had to teach Indians proper behavior before allowing them to control their own lands again. Laws institutionalized conquest and stewardship mindsets as colonial authorities continuously found ways to push natives into a racially and socially inferior status. As early as 1647 the courts passed laws that dealt with any disputes between natives, hoping to mediate their issues and resolve them in a beneficial manner. In 1665, two decades later and even when the legal system supported Indians' right to own land, English settlers often refused to accept native ownership.[10] English settlers and natives reacted to increased governmental control over land by exploiting illegal trades despite growing measures to control land, fur, alcohol, and gun trade. Reactions, within and without legal parameters, increased growing tension over land as mass migration to New England continued through the 1660s, hastening the decline of uneasy peace between allied natives and colonial powers.

Natives quickly found that they had no right to take English people to court, but Englishmen could take natives to court when they pleased. As fights over land and trade multiplied, inequality between natives and English settlers became more apparent.[11] Laws were created to facilitate and manage trade between natives and settlers, with a focus on land, pelts, and animal products. Native hunters were relied on for animal products to be brought to traders or directly to the market, a legacy that would forever alter the animal and native populations in the region.[12] Taxes were put in place in an attempt to regulate trade, though the English found a

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[9] David J. Silverman, "'We Chuse to be Bounded': Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 513.

[10] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 76.

[11] Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel breaking forth upon the Indians of New England* (New York: J. Sabin, 1648), *Gale Primary Sources*, 42.

[12] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians (of New England), 1637," *Fordham University*, accessed May 19, 2018, https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1637morton.asp.

way around both laws and taxes. The laws were created to ensure that the English were not taking advantage of Indian traders; rather than help natives find new avenues for trade and income, it created more channels of illegal trade that Englishmen established to avoid taxes. Although rarely regulated, additional laws were created to make it illegal for those who cheated either the courts or the Indians to trade with natives in the future.[13]

From 1665 to 1672, colonial government continuously created laws to monitor and control trade between English and Indians. The illegal trade that came out of attempts to increase control made trading more dangerous and less lucrative for natives while increasing potential revenue for the English. Boston created strict port laws to make sure trade was tracked based on location; in addition to the fines already associated with shipping pelts, a new tax was placed on hides bought from outside of Massachusetts.[14] In 1668, trade laws were regulated to limit English access to illegal trades by labeling native tribes as either hostile or non-hostile. Trade could only occur with tribes and peoples the colony deemed appropriate. The 1668 laws also indicated a fear of enemy tribes gaining access to English trade goods, specifically weapons.[15]

Native Americans often did not understand laws because of language barriers. Though laws were continuously being created, it was not until 1672 that a legal document indicated it would be translated and published in the native tongue.[16] Those who could read in English would have benefited from knowing the laws, but without translations being provided it is uncertain if Indians would have known the multitude of laws being created that related to them. The lack of translations shows a vast difference and lack of respect between the English and Indians in

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[13] Edward Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made at the General Courts of Election Held at Boston in New England the 29th of April 1668* (Boston: General Court, 1668), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 2.

[14] Edward Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made at the General Courts Holden at Boston the 15th of May 1672* (Boston: General Court, 1672), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 5.

[15] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…29th of April 1668*, 3.

[16] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…15th of May 1672*, 6.

Massachusetts. Natives had to rely on settlers and missionaries to tell them what laws they had to follow, putting Indians at the mercy of whomever they dealt with and meant that they would have to trust those they worked with to tell them trade laws.

Laws that went beyond trade furthered tensions between the English and the natives. A subordinate relationship was established to keep natives lower than the English, which in turn created segregated towns rather than cohabitated ones. The influx of English colonists to Massachusetts generated a wave of migration into Indian territory and around established praying towns. As natives and English felt the impact of being unable to manage their own trade, they increasingly had to deal with the influx of more settlers into the colony.[17] Natick and the other praying towns were in the way of English expansion, which pushed its way into Nipmuc land. Though the Great Migration took place in the 1630s, there were still continuous waves of Englishmen coming to New England. Puritans, religious dissenters, radicals, and those fleeing the English Civil War all escaped to the New World with promise of fruitful land. English migrants added to the vast number of settlers already established on native land. In response, natives joined small praying towns in an effort to ensure their survival in the face of an English horde.[18] Natives who continued to rely on hunting and trade for subsistence were not the ones choosing to stay in praying towns. [19] Those who did stay felt the impact of land and hunting disputes; with rapid expansion came crop failure and dead cattle. More land had to be cultivated for the English to survive, and that land came directly from Indians who lived in New England.

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[17] J. Patrick. Cesarini, "John Eliot's "A Brief History of the Mashepog Indians," 1666," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (January 2008): 106-7.

[18] Katherine A. Grandjean, "New World Tempests: Environment, Scarcity, and the Coming of the Pequot War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (January 2011): 77-78, 81, 92.

[19] Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "Chickwallop and the Beast: Indian Responses to European Animals in Early New England," In *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, ed. Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 43.

Reactionary laws being created placed praying Indians in the middle of the growing tension between settlers and natives outside of the established towns.

Indians in praying towns faced conflict over English livestock. When the praying towns were initially established in the 1640s, many natives refused to fence their land in when asked.[20] Other Indians wanted to fence their fields entirely, but did not have the money to do so. Free range livestock repeatedly trampled on crops and ate native food, and became the enemy of native food stores and fields. Despite this, the English created laws in 1648 that protected native fields from English livestock, but only if the natives could prove they fenced in their land. This was one of the very few ways a native could take an Englishman to court.[21] Despite that effort, English animals still damaged their crops. The English had their own laws stating they had to fence in their land, and were responsible for any damages that may occur, but the reality was most natives could not take the English to court, even if their crops were destroyed.[22]

John Eliot argued that the issue of fencing in land was not as simple as native refusal but centered around native inability to afford fencing. Natives wanted to fence their fields, and were willing to work with Eliot, but he did not have the necessary resources or materials to build fencing. Eliot blamed the English for holding natives to a standard they could not live up to, and for creating laws that were only possible in a society that existed after successful conversion and civilizing efforts. While arguing against Massachusetts law, Eliot witnessed the destruction of Indian corn fields in Natick by English cattle after a very successful planting season. Their crops were destroyed and completely spoiled by the cattle. The repeated destruction of crops set the

[20] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 66.
[21] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes concerning the inhabitants of the Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Matthew Day, 1648), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 28.
[22] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes*, 29.

natives and missions back financially and spiritually.[23] In addition to the destruction of crops, Indians lacked recourse to seek retribution for lost capital and resources. The only definitive law that would protect natives required them to fence in their own land and animals, whether or not the English had done the same. Measures were added to ensure that natives would not receive repayment, as the language of English law indicated that Indians could now only bring the English to court if their fence had been destroyed, not their crops.[24]

Natives, who were not allowed to harm English animals no matter the damage done to their property, began fighting back in small ways. Based on a 1672 law, natives began killing English animals and selling them back to the English, which led to a law that stated "no Indian within this jurisdiction shall hark any swine upon the ears, and that al Indians who bring pork unto the English to sell, are required to bring with them the swine's ears," meaning natives had to prove they did not kill English animals.[25] Natives attempted to get some money back for what was done to their crops, and were in turn further scrutinized under the constant assumption that they were lying. Accusations, tension, and distrust between settlers and praying Indians infringed on the safety of each side, something the laws also attempted to regulate.[26]

Safety and defense were crucial to the struggles developing between natives, settlers, and praying Indians as each vied for weapons and control. Early laws stated guns could not be given to natives under any circumstance. English were also not allowed to give natives ammunition, and fines were levied for fixing guns for any native that happened to own one. English were also fined for the trade and sale of weapons to natives. If settlers failed to pay their fine, they faced

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[23] John Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England,* published by Edward Winslow, (London: Hannah Allen, 1649), *Gale Primary Sources*, 15.

[24] Edward Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made at Severall General Courts in the Years 1661, 1662, 1664* (Boston: General Court, 1664), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 2.

[25] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…15th of May 1672,* 6.

[26] Silverman, "We Chuse to be Bounded," 518.

jail time or corporal punishment.[27] Because of the growing tension, John Eliot wanted to protect Christian natives, but the legal system prevented him from arming them. Despite this, Eliot had a desire to have weapons available in case of attack but knew that if the time came, allowing Indians to use guns in self-defense could mean the end of praying towns.[28] This meant that the natives had no modern weapons or legal methods to fight English encroachment.

Over time the laws did change in favor of native defense. More than a decade after Eliot wrote about defending natives from the English, laws allowed for the exchange of guns in the native fur trade. In 1668, Massachusetts law stated that if a native was seen as non-hostile, the English were allowed to trade furs for powder, shot, lead, hand guns, rapier, swords, and blades. Increased ammunition in native communities coincided with increased regulations of the fur trade. Englishmen doing business with natives were required to detail trade deals with greater care than before. With every trade conducted between the English and the Indians, the English had to report back every item traded, the name of the native they were trading with, and when the trade occurred.[29] Regulations allowed for an increase in legal weapon trades amongst both Christian and unconverted natives, but this did not work in the natives' favor. As animal populations were depleted, hunting supplies dwindled, and natives relying on either subsistence hunting or farming faced increased hunger and uncertainty in their towns and villages.

Natives reacted to hunger and uncertainty by turning to alcoholism and backsliding. Blaming the English for their inability to control livestock, praying natives had to face the destruction of their land and question if joining the praying towns and converting to a new God was the right path. Though trade changed over the years, native reliance on English crops and

[27] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes,* 28.
[28] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness,* 36.
[29] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…29th of April 1668,* 3.

medicine as a symbol for God and their new faith placed their beliefs in a precarious position, one that was at the whim of the environment and English neighbors.[30] With the English encroaching on native land and their crops failing years in a row, praying Indians began to lose faith, and question the motives and uses of the missionaries amongst them. This, a fear held by the missionaries from the start, placed praying Indians in a situation that only worsened the tensions between settlers, missionaries, and unconverted natives.

DRUNK ON GOSPEL

Various situations led to unrest within native communities during the 1650s and 1660s. Much of the unrest came from native disappointment that the English God did not better their lives. In fact, the colonists and missionaries who promised to help allowed their cattle to roam and destroy native crops, further trying their faith.[31] Natives had to find a way to explain how and why crop failure and continued diseases happened. According to John Speene, a Nipmuc sachem and citizen of Natick, Christ had become angry with those in praying towns. In 1659, Natick had experienced so much rain that crops were failing and their cattle were sick. The mission could not go on if failure continued, and natives were losing money in addition to their food source. This caused natives to believe that Christ was angry with them and that they had sinned. Natives became increasingly frustrated because the system was not working out, and they could not figure out what sins they had committed.[32] Drunk, diseased, and starving, natives who chose to join praying towns saw that their choice did not save them from the negative impact of

[30] Silverman, "We Chuse to be Bounded," 524.
[31] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel,* 15.
[32] John Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the progress of the gospel among the Indians in New England, 1659* (New York: J. Sabin, 1865*), Gale Primary Sources,* 29.

life among the English, and backsliding became an increasing concern of missionaries as they failed to keep natives in praying towns alive and protected.[33]

Backsliding shifted from a feared outcome to a direct reaction to crop and cohabitation failure. Natives were encouraged to have a firm belief that "god doth chastise us with raine and spoylth our corn, and hay, but let us take heed that in our hearts we be not angry at God, for God is righteous, and we are sinners, let us be angry at our sins, and repent this day, and go to Christ as this man did and then he will bless us;" natives could only repent for sins they were unaware of for so long.[34] More natives became sick after unseasonal rain and repeated crop failure. One of the main reasons natives joined the English in the first place was because of medicine.[35] From early on, Eliot wrote that he needed more Englishmen to assist with the large numbers of sick natives joining mission towns. Indians were still getting sick and he could not heal everyone. Powwows had been the traditional source of medicine, but many had left and those who stayed had renounced their alleged ties with the devil that allowed them to heal people. Towns and natives needed doctors, but the missionaries could not afford them. This left missionaries and natives to wonder what the future held if natives continued to get sick.[36]

In 1658, outbreaks of disease swept native towns despite prayers and natives turned to traditional practices for help. Natives were unsure of what to do or how to handle the situation, and those who did not revert back to old ways were led to believe they were being punished for sins, ones they had no idea they had committed. Without knowing what they were being punished for, praying Indians had no hope of redeeming themselves and stopping the sickness

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[33] Fisher, "Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice," 120-4.
[34] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 34.
[35] Kristinia Bross, "Dying Saints, Vanishing Savages: "Dying Indian Speeches" in Colonial New England Literature," *Early American Literature* 36, no. 3 (2001): 328.
[36] Eliot, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 18.

among them.[37] Some turned once more to Powwaws outside of the praying communities for relief.[38] As the years went by, more natives admitted to witnessing powwows being used once more.[39] Harold Van Lonkhuyzen argued that due to the competitive nature between the Nipmuc members who joined Natick and the surrounding Indians that did not, the importance of Powwows did not diminish amongst the praying Indians, and the local tribal bands that were under other leadership continued to practice shamanism in a way that easily allowed for natives to pick and choose if they wanted to utilize English or traditional practices. The existence of unconverted natives in close proximity to praying towns meant that natives had access to whatever method they thought was best, and could utilize both if it put their mind at ease.[40]

For missionaries, native backsliding correlated with the use of alcohol and a return to traditional practices. Natives, seen as children who were "slaves to the devil from their birth," confessed many sins over the years in praying towns.[41] As Indian converts struggled to learn and renounce their sins, events out of their control like crop failures and fights with settlers continued to threaten their weak ties to faith.[42] Violence continued to grow, with Englishmen as well as within native communities. Spousal abuse was witnessed and recorded throughout the years of mission towns, and missionaries tended to link the behavior with alcoholism and paganism.[43] Instances of abuse were included in confessionals and recorded by the missionaries.[44] Both

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[37] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 30.

[38] John Eliot, in *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day*, published by Henry Whitfield, (London: John Bartlet, 1651), *Gale Primary Sources*, 39.

[39] Whitfeld, *Strength out of Weakness*, 16.

[40] Harold W. Van Lonkhuyzen, "A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730," *The New England Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (September 1990): 400-5.

[41] Mayhew, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 65.

[42] Thomas Shepard, *The Day Breaking and the Sun Rising of the Gospel with the Indians in New England* (London: Rich, 1647), *Gale Primary Sources*, 20.

[43] Peter Bayers, ""We unman ourselves": Colonial and Mohegan Manhood in the Writings of Samson Occom," *MELUS* 39, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 177.

[44] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 30

missionaries and converted women feared husbands causing physical harm to their wives.[45] Natives tied masculinity to daily practices such as hunting and sports, which were not tolerated within the praying towns. Todd Romero argued that native men had to find new ways to assert masculinity, which led to violence as Indian men were denied the possibility of traditional assertions of manhood.[46]

Missionaries saw a correlation between the increase in backsliding, sin, and domestic abuse with an increase in the consumption of alcohol within native communities. Stories made their way to Europe that Indians would kill themselves by drinking too much if given the chance.[47] Alcohol became a vice that missionaries and colonial authorities sought to address as alcoholism in native communities grew over the years. This problem was not limited to adults within the praying communities. Native children and teenagers were likely to drink as well, with instances of unruly children coming up in public confessions. Cutshamaquin, who showed up drunk to a meeting with John Eliot in 1651, confessed that his son was troubled with the same reliance and abuse of alcohol. His child, who acted drunk and disobedient, was brought to court and told to confess his sins. Refusing, he said that all he did was disobey his mother, which broke no rules or commandments. Cutshamaquin was forced to take on and confess for his child's sins, something that would create a model for future confessions, whether or not they dealt with alcohol. Cutshamaquin was forced to pay the price for his son's insolence, as Indian fathers were increasingly held accountable for their children's behavior.[48] This was an extreme

[45] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 50.
[46] Todd R. Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians: Masculinity, Religion, and Colonialism in Early New England* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011) 74.
[47] "Modern History Sourcebook: Thomas Morton: Manners and Customs of the Indians."
[48] Eliot, in *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 51.

departure from traditional practices, where native fathers had little to do with their child's upbringing and where male relatives on their mother's side had a greater influence.

Even when natives were not drunk or drinking, missionaries complained that they were just as scandalous. Indians, inside and outside praying towns, would get together and drink for social and spiritual reasons. And as Cutshamaquin would later do, natives continued to drink only to later repent and beg for forgiveness, erasing the bad behavior to only do it again at a later date.[49] Eliot and other missionaries witnessed this behavior grow within their communities, and blamed native temperament and the environment. It became a serious issue among the people of Natick, with an increasing number of good men drinking themselves sick on a regular basis.[50] Massachusetts passed laws to limit the transportation of alcohol, as well as to limit the number of casks that could be moved from one location to another in certain areas, but it was still being brought past and to the natives.[51] These laws did little to hinder the amount of alcohol being consumed in New England. In spite of laws aimed at helping reduce the amount of alcohol in native communities, the "sin of drunkenness amongst the Indians doth much increase." Possession of alcohol in the missions was a finable offence, and witnesses could be punished if they did not turn natives in. When natives were turned in for drinking, they would be forced into a correction or work house to pay off their crime of indecency.[52] This process allowed the English to round up any rowdy native under the assumption or accusation that they were drunk.

New laws against the sale of alcohol allowed natives to take Englishmen to court. If an Indian was found guilty of being drunk, they could accuse a settler of providing them with

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[49] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 41.

[50] John Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation of the progress of the gospel among the Indians in New England* (London: M.S., 1655), *Gale Primary Sources*, 10.

[51] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…1661, 1662, 1664*, 1.

[52] Edward Rawson, *Severall Laws and Orders Made at the General Court Held at Boston, the 23rd of May, 1666* (Cambridge: Rawson, 1666), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 2.

alcohol. The trader would then be taken to court, and the native's accusation would be considered valid until proven otherwise. Indians who could not find an Englishmen to blame for their drunkenness were whipped. Commissioners were allowed to judge if a native was guilty or not, or if the accusations rang true. Accusing an Englishman could prove dangerous, however, since many towns were too small to have a commissioner, and therefore justice was in the hands of the townsmen.[53]

Alcoholism and unrest occurred among the English as well. Heavy rains followed by droughts affected the English as much as the natives, creating anxiety and unrest in settler communities. Drunkenness in the 1660s became an epidemic that impacted natives and English alike. Thomas Shepard, who died before the fall of the mission towns, published sermons that discussed alcoholism in English communities. He created and wrote a sermon that was later published posthumously in 1668 that dealt with the drunkenness of people, and their relationship with other sins.[54] *Wine for Gospel Wantons* warned against the use of alcohol. To him, no one could be reasoned with once they were drunk, and those who were drunk were incapable of peace or truth which left the security of New England open for the taking.[55] This referenced back to the days in which early missionaries called for the conversion of natives to save the soul of England. The decay and rot that Englishmen found in the Old World was becoming an issue in the New World as well, and had to be addressed. The sermon accused the country and its people of being adulterous fornicators. Wine made them fall from grace, and their status had to be restored otherwise the cause of conversion was lost. He then went to say that the Lord did not

[53] Rawson, *Severall Laws and Orders…23rd of May, 1666*, 2.
[54] Thomas Shepard, *Wine for Gospel Wantons* (Cambridge: Charles Chauncy, 1668), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 1.
[55] Shepard, *Wine for Gospel Wantons*, 7-8, 11.

make people drunk, but in the act of drinking they did turn away from God. What they had to do then was return back to him, and drink only in moderation until their sins were past them.[56]

Missionaries and colonial authorities had to find ways to address alcoholism, and new laws attempted to regulate both the Indians and English. English business owners were barred from giving alcohol to workers. If they were caught giving any form of spirits, cider, or wine to their workers, they would be fined. This was created under the belief that some people only needed one taste of wine to get hooked, and then they would need it forever and either refuse to work, or rely on it for work until the end of their days.[57] Laws, which were used to encourage civilizing efforts, now solely regulated interactions between English and Indians. Whether they addressed their concerns about morality, business, animal husbandry, or any other concern, colonial authorities were placing themselves above the efforts of missionaries in controlling the lives of natives within their respective jurisdictions. This played into and caused further tension between natives and Englishmen and forced missionaries to publicly question the meaning and role of the government.

GOD ON EARTH

As pointed out in James Noyes's *A Short Catechism,* natives were being taught that the colonial government represented God on earth.[58] While asserting holy dominion over Massachusetts, colonial leaders raised a question of allegiance: who did the natives pledge themselves to, the missionaries or the government, and who was in charge of them? Governments created in praying towns reflected political uncertainty. Sachems were supposed to

[56] Shepard, *Wine for Gospel Wantons*, 13-14.
[57] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders…15th of May 1672*, 2.
[58] James Noyes, *A Short Catechism*, (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1661), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 6.

be able to appoint native officers, who would then be in charge of local government. These officers would be the ones in court who dealt with fines and charges.[59] Two native ministers were then chosen by elders of the church, which aimed to bridge the gap between white missionaries and native leaders. The same law that established this method also stated that official interpreters had to be used at gatherings, so that English speakers could witness and stipulated that any conversations about God held in a public forum had to be transcribed. The final stipulation stated that any Englishman had to freely give faith and assist in making sure willing natives had access to missionaries and the church.[60] A contest for power between Puritans, missionaries, settlers, and Indians developed within the mission towns. Those who had authority in mission towns added to the uncertainty in missions as they continued to lack real conversions to both English religion and culture.[61]

The government's role in mission churches reflected a power struggle between colonial authorities in New England. Massachusetts created laws to encourage native allegiance while keeping them in line. From the end of the 1660s and into the 1670s, Massachusetts's control over the settlers within its borders began to weaken. Dissenters from the Puritan faith were migrating to new colonies, and warring native tribes were being used by neighboring colonies to exacerbate tensions within Massachusetts as well. Jenny Hale Pulsipher argued that Massachusetts authorities felt a lack of control amongst white settlers and reasserted their authority on native populations. The only regulated Indians were those who lived in mission towns scattered throughout the colonies.[62] By taking control over these people, and in the process overstepping

[59] Shepard, *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, 43.
[60] Massachusetts Bay Colony, *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes,* 29.
[61] Cesarini, "John Eliot's "A Brief History of the Mashepog Indians," 106-107.
[62] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King,* 251-60.

missionaries' authority, local and colonial governments further exacerbated tensions amongst settlers, natives, and missionaries.

Still, missionaries expected natives to choose their own leaders, or sachems. They did so under Eliot's leadership, or at least to his knowledge.[63] By 1652 sachems were supposed to be elected. Missionaries aimed to create a government within the missions that would put forth the best Christian Indian and elections were held in the hope that the tribesmen would elect converted natives. Eliot was growing old as he attempted to set up small local governments amongst the natives that looked as close to an English government as possible. By 1659, he felt weary in his work and knew that there were too many factors out of his control for his vision to be complete in his lifetime. The daunting task Eliot brought upon himself proved too arduous a task to end, and he realized he would die in the work. He assured readers that his soul did not waver, but the future was uncertain.[64]

John Eliot's weariness towards the current government was met with an increasingly militarized Massachusetts Bay Colony. Several cities were placed under military control and regiments were sent to live amongst the settlers in places like Dover and Portsmouth.[65] This increased tension amongst those living in the towns, especially those who had dealings with natives. The increased militarization in Massachusetts occurred in the years after 1664 and the placement of Charles II on the English throne. Massachusetts Puritans, who had vocally disagreed with recent politics in England, did not support the new regime. The crown sought to reestablish control in the Bay Colony by placing its own royal commissioners. These commissioners quickly became a point of concern between natives and local authority, and

[63] Eliot, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 36.
[64] Eliot, *A Further Manifestation of the Gospel*, 22.
[65] Rawson, *Severall Laws and Orders…23rd of May, 1666*, 2.

Indians would go around Massachusetts government and directly to the royal commissioner to settle disputes.[66] Other leaders began to question the treatment of natives by the government, rather than the leaders themselves. In 1668, Daniel Gookin was made treasurer and was in charge of any trade that pertained to wine, furs, natives, alcohol, and the selling of ammunition to natives. Under Gookin's control there was a greater shift in liberty to trade with and sell to natives. Indians were once again allowed to deal in ammunition and the fur trade facilitated an increased number of weapons in the possession of non-praying Indians.[67] This was done, in part, because Gookin was and would remain a strong advocate of praying Indians, and was one of the few defenders of them after King Philips War.[68] Gookin questioned the treatment of natives while other missionaries questioned those in charge.

Missionaries questioned colonial leadership, but had to do so in a way that did not anger donors. Missionaries, who were in a precarious position both financially and politically, were at the mercy of their donors and the colonies where they resided. Those who did not agree with the strict control under Puritan leadership within Massachusetts Bay Colony became religious dissenters. Those who were not tried for their dissent fled the colony, either to join or create a neighboring colony. Some who stayed still raised questions about the local government. Though publishing some opinions were dangerous, it could be done outside of the colony in neighboring locations.

Those who could publish outside of Massachusetts questioned the control exerted by colonial powers, as well as abuses towards the legal system and what should be done moving forward. John Cotton Jr., son of Puritan and religious leader John Cotton of Massachusetts Bay

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[66] Pulsipher, ""Subjects…Unto the Same King"" 40-44.

[67] Rawson, *Several Laws and Orders Made… 29th of April 1668,* 4.

[68] J. Patrick Cesarini, ""What has become of your Praying to God?" Daniel Gookin's Troubled History of King Philip's War," *Early American Literature* 44, no. 3 (2009): 501.

Colony, was one of the few missionaries who were vocal about their views towards the government.[69] Cotton made sure his beliefs on politics were known, but did so as he fled from Massachusetts for immoral behavior in 1665.[70] He believed that the government and the church were vastly different, and should not be considered one and the same, as he argued his contemporaries did. Cotton was concerned about who was allowed to vote for leaders, not just in mission towns but in the colony as a whole. He stated that the church allowed slaves and women to voice opinions, but the government did not.[71] Cotton's *A Discourse about Civil Government* was written in a decade of increased control where religious and political leaders were often the same.

Cotton thought that government should be divided into two administrations, one ecclesiastical and one civil. Each would rely on the other to determine the good of the commonwealth, and neither could act in offense of the other.[72] The church was God's steward, and ruled over internal justice, punishing and controlling sin. The government was then outward justice, and relied on laws to maintain order.[73] Sin was akin to crimes, though there was no division between punishments of the two, and no clear message of where natives fell between regulation of church or under the laws of the state. Laws often regulated behaviors that were seen as sinful, therefore natives were under the jurisdiction of the church and the government. Even though missionaries were in charge of the collection and conversion of native souls, their actions and bodies were still controlled and monitored by colonial authorities as long as they lived within the colony.

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[69] John Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1663), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*.

[70] David J. Silverman, "Indians, Missionaries, and Religious Translation: Creating Wampanoag Christianity in Seventeenth-Century Martha's Vineyard," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (April 2005): 141.

[71] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 5.

[72] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 5.

[73] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 6.

In theory, Cotton's idea meant that civil power ruled over the body, not the soul, and therefore each realm needed a separate power.[74] His discussion lacked an inclusion of natives and how they fit within the uncertain governmental hierarchy. The next step in establishing order would be to look at the way leaders were elected. In his mind, the way the current government was picked, with only certain church members being able to elect other members of the same church, was the same system that created the tyranny of the Roman Catholic Church.[75] For him, leaders should be of the church, any church, but not picked exclusively by the church.[76] Though he did not want to exclude those who were not part of any main established church, he also did not want a heathen, churchless leadership.[77] This fell in line with Puritan political thought towards small, local government that aligned closely with the church, but was not entirely controlled by the church.[78]

Cotton's experiences and writing showed the government needed to protect mission towns, but should not encroach on the authority of the churches any more than the church should control the government. Based on his brief experience working in and around missions, and his expulsion from Massachusetts itself, Cotton knew that the existence of missions, churches, and the colonial authorities was an entirely codependent cycle, where people of all faiths needed to pick good leaders who would, in return, support others of the faith to help them continue with their endeavors. Additionally, he believed an entirely civil state would be just as dangerous as a theocracy.[79] His writing reflected the concerns found in the records of other missionaries, who were looking for government support as well as the support of regular people. The fine balance

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[74] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 7.
[75] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 8.
[76] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 9.
[77] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 11-13.
[78] Joshua Miller, "Direct Democracy and the Puritan Theory of Membership," *The Journal of Politics* 53, no. 1 (February 1991): 60.
[79] Cotton, *A Discourse about Civil Government*, 23.

of needing support, funds, and protection meant that all sides had to benefit from the missionary process in some way. If the government was based off what he proposed, the missions would have support at all levels. Cotton's discussion of control and his question of power reflected the uncertainties present in mission communities. Authority was contested as local governments asserted their control over people within their jurisdiction, even to their detriment. The missionaries and governments were creating rules for natives that hindered their ability to thrive within praying towns.

John Eliot had a more extreme, if not dangerous, view towards English and colonial government. In favor of a theocracy, his writing in the 1660s showed a belief that "a church of believers, is a company of visible saints combined together," and that "a church is a society."[80] Published two years after Cotton, he listed different laws that should be created as people and the church joined together to create one ruling, Christian faction. This was noted through his emphasis on changing elements of all human behavior, not just natives'. After years of unrest between settlers and natives, he questioned the behavior of people in general. All people, not just the heathen, were full of sin. Relying on Puritan fear of an unredeemable motherland, Eliot called for a new society where everyone was Christian and they followed the same faith and had a government based on religious principles.[81] His radical writing suggested that people needed to rest and rely on the thoughts of elders, and that God balanced all factions of life, including knowledge, fraternity, and democracy.[82] By doing so, he argued that religious leaders were

[80] John Eliot, *Communion of Churches* (Cambridge: Marmaduke Johnson, 1665), *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, 1.
[81] Norman Earl Tanis, "Education in John Eliot's Indian Utopias, 1646-1675," *History of Education Quarterly* 10 no. 3 (Autumn 1970): 312-314.
[82] Eliot, *Communion of Churches*, 5.

guided by God, and could be trusted to ensure Puritan values of democracy while guiding the country into a Christian future.[83]

Eliot's thoughts towards leadership and the government rested on what he called the sacred number twelve, which was the foundation of his ideal religious government. With twelve tribes, gates, apostles, and foundations, there should be an established council of twelve members, and twenty-four elders. He then went into detail on the ways in which the future would be expanded by multiples of twelve.[84] Through these means, a government based on the church would be created. Though the church would lead, Eliot still believed in the basic principle of democracy, where people could choose their leader. The only limit was that the leader chosen had to be a member of the church. Eliot used the same principles with local native governments. He hoped natives could be trusted to choose good leaders that would maintain the progress being done within the missions.

Eliot's *Communion of Churches* addressed international religion, politics, orders, and the relationship not only between England and the church, but New England and the government. Those who did not follow the new world he envisioned would face extreme consequences. The range of punishments included excommunication, getting cut off from the church, saints, and spirits, being cast out of paradise and civil communion, and potentially being delivered to hell.[85] The same man who believed converting natives would bring on the apocalypse also pushed for a world where the church was in control of all politics, money, and future endeavors. Whether or not this was influenced by his experiences dealing with the civil government during this time as a

[83] Zubeda Jalalzai, "Race and the Puritan Body Politic" *MELUS* 29, no. ¾ (Autumn-Winter 2004): 266.
[84] Eliot, *Communion of Churches*, 7-9.
[85] Eliot, *Communion of Churches*, 3.

missionary and native advocate is unclear. What is clear is the vastly different ideas towards the government that he held in comparison with other missionaries like Cotton.

By the 1660s, settlers also began questioning their government and by doing so, the nature of missions, the church, and the ways in which donated money was being used by missionaries. One big concern was the use of funds in the churches and praying towns. Missionaries wrote defensively that funds were not mismanaged and local congregations' charity was not being abused.[86] Word was also spread of fear that the gospel was being propagated incorrectly, and that the "gospel is perverted, being made another gospel, by strange interpretations."[87] The English were growing increasingly opposed to mission work, as settlers and leaders vocally condemned what was being done, and missionaries feared a decline in donations. Missionaries, who attempted to deflect the negative accusations, still noted that "tis very strange to see what a multitude of objections are darted against this pure piece of Christianity."[88] As years went by, people gave less, accused more, and questioned entirely as to the nature of the praying towns and the missions themselves. Missionaries used their pamphlets and letters to address these concerns while still pleading for local settlers to continue donating. The question of church leadership from the settlers impacted the money donated, and added to the difficulties faced in the conversion process.

Missionaries had to increasingly defend themselves and their publications switched from merely proving their success to gather more funds to a method of defending their work, honor, and word. For example, in *Strength out of Weakness,* John Endecott noted "it seems that some of late have been impudently bold as to report and publicly affirm, that there was no such thing as

[86] Whitfeld, *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,* 39.
[87] Whitfeld, *Strength out of Weakness,* 15.
[88] Whitfeld, *Strength out of Weakness,* 22.

the preaching and differing of the gospel amongst the natives in New England…I do believe that the devil himself would not, yea dearest not have uttered such a notorious untruth."[89] Missionaries like Eliot, Cotton, and Mayhew had to face the world around them and make sense of the growing accusations against them in the face of their work. One reason was seen as jealousy towards their advancement, and that Englishmen could not handle the direction their work was going. Eliot felt "a great dampening and discouragement upon us by a jealousy too deeply apprehended," one that was felt by other countries, settlers, men, and natives trying to get in the way of progress.[90]

Indians reacted to the constant play for control in colonial governments and praying towns by questioning traditional power structures. Lower ranking natives were able to use the church and Christianity to obtain positions of authority that were previously unobtainable for them. This struck a chord with the existing structural and generational issues within the tribes at the time of the mission towns. Younger natives began to invite missionaries, or seek the missions out themselves, to challenge the authority of their elders. They did so by telling the missionaries that it had been a long time, if not generations, since real, wise elders existed. Young Indians warned that they simply had men with grey hair that did not know what they were doing.[91] By doing this, the young natives invited a shift in power by asking missionaries to speak with their communities. Young and outlying natives used the missionaries to alter the existing tribal structure, and by doing so invited elements into their communities that would have irreversible consequences.[92] Others natives went to extreme lengths to make sure that their tribes did not fall into the hands of the missionaries. One in particular, found on Martha's Vineyard went to the

[89] John Endecott, in *Strength out of Weakness*, 78.
[90] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 8.
[91] Mayhew, in *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel*, 12.
[92] Pulsipher, *Subjects Unto the Same King*, 150-9.

length of attacking and attempting to kill the local sachem that had chosen to convert.[93] As many villages would follow the direction of their sachem, this desperate act was done in an attempt to keep the rest of the village from joining with those already established in the Vineyard mission.

Other questions and issues with authority rested in the notion of punishment and discipline. Natives, who were seen as too easy and lax with their children, were controlled and regulated by new laws being placed on their communities. The question rested on if parents could handle the sins of their children or should the church. An additional question was should the government control discipline, over the church and the family. This created an uncertain, unknown hierarchy within their society, where parents wanted to deal with issues in their own way, but native parents were forced to take their punishment to higher levels within the church and the local community.[94]

Symptoms of decline in the praying towns were apparent in the 1660s. Natives and English settlers questioned the authority of local governments and missionaries as they looked to control the same areas of land. Though not problems in the missions themselves, the issue over land between settlers and natives created many other problems that would greatly change the relationship between missionaries, settlers, and natives. Everyday struggles were a direct result of political actions in Europe, which caused migration and thus encroachment on native lands and established praying towns. This led to continual exposure to diseases and access to alcohol as European domesticated animals ruined crops season after season. Struggles between colonists and praying towns only heightened the tensions between Christian and non-Christian natives as well. Unwelcome in both native and English communities, the natives in praying towns found themselves in a precarious position. Natives outside of the missions no longer trusted those who

[93] Whitfeld, *The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day*, 15.
[94] Eliot, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, 11.

converted and abandoned the old ways, and the English believed natives who converted were less trustworthy than those who did not. Natives who could maintain a foothold in either an English, mission, or native village were then further challenged by the fact that they could not defend themselves physically or legally from increasingly violent English settlers.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Tension in and around praying towns erupted into war in 1675; the end of most praying towns came three decades after they began. Metacom, chief of the Wampanoags and son of Massasoit who was chief when the first Puritans arrived, had been challenging the authority of colonial powers since 1665 when he went directly to royal commissioners to confirm his authority over his people as well as his status as an Englishman.[1] Also known as Philip, Metacom's power play angered colonial authorities, who in turn responded by increased laws dealing with both praying and unconverted natives. Continuously asserting that he was equal to the English, Philip became involved in a number of conflicts with English settlers. By 1671, he was forced to sign an agreement that he was a subject of the King, and that his people would give up their weapons.[2] Doing so did not put settlers at ease and a war over political power, land, religion, culture, and animals began in 1675 as natives fought for some shred of power in increasingly white lands. The final trigger for war came from the increased legal control the English had over natives, and the inability for Indians to handle their own affairs in court. After months of attacks, Philip was killed and quartered in 1676. He died before he had a chance to see the failure of his war.[3] Though it raged on for three years, the war ended with increased punishment of Indians, further mistreatment of praying natives, unrest and distrust of any Indian, and the end of all but five praying towns.[4]

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[1] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) 70.

[2] Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King*, 99-100.

[3] James Drake, "Restraining Atrocity: The Conduct of King Philip's War," *The New England Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (March 1997): 40.

[4] Jenny Hale Pulsipher, "Massacre at Hurtleberry Hill: Christian Indians and English Authority in Metacom's War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (July 1996): 467.

The cause of King Philip's War directly relates with the failure of the praying towns. Native Americans and English lacked deep understandings of the other and their goal of cohabitation was not developed enough to sustain continuous growth. The inability on the part of missionaries to move beyond their own cultural mindsets to see that natives joined praying towns for many reasons, such as access to promised medicine and as a way to maintain land as more settlers arrived, meant they were not prepared to react to backsliding natives. If they did not know why natives joined the towns in the first place, they could not see how the towns had failed and why natives would want to go back to their traditional practices. Puritans saw praying towns as an opportunity to redeem the lost soul of England and sought to redefine what it meant to be English. Puritan fear of corruption in the English monarchy and the Christian faith reflected concerns towards the pompous nature of the official church of England. Fleeing not only England but host countries in Europe, Puritans used New England as a fresh start, and natives were the key to achieving salvation that the English had nearly lost. By emphasizing Indians were the descendants of the ten Lost Tribes of Israel, missionaries justified native conversion in a millennialism fervor as well, which still denied native agency in the process.

Natives had their own reason for joining praying towns. They wanted to know why the English were not dying from diseases as they were, and thought the missionaries and settlers would help them, which the English used to their advantage. Indians sought refuge from a rapidly depleting population and looked to stop the continuous, inexplicable death. The English misunderstood many native motives, and neglected to understand much of Indian culture. What they did understand were recorded as basic observations that told little of their thoughts towards native practices. Settlers, missionaries, and colonial authorities all had their own understanding of natives, and brought that understanding to every moment of contact. Joining the other then

became an act, and sometimes a performance entirely, aimed at teaching natives an English way of life. This was met with continuous barriers as language and finances dictated much of what could be accomplished.

Missionaries and natives worked together to grow praying towns despite increased regulations from colonial authorities and lack of funds. By King Philip's War, there were fourteen in Massachusetts. Funding was the biggest concern of praying towns, and the methods and means for continual revenue slowed potential progress. Missionaries had to dedicate a significant amount of time and energy campaigning for resources, time they could have spent educating and understanding natives. The money they received was never enough and missionaries could only accomplish as much as they could afford. Translations, conversions, buildings, education, and maintaining towns all cost significant funds. Every letter and pamphlet published addressed this issue, but none of the missionaries would outright beg for money. They listed why they needed it and in turn put on Indian shows where natives acted out confessional scenes to show the public missionaries' progress. The public was invited to witness conversations amongst natives who had rehearsed questions and answers about faith. Their conversations would give the public reason to believe in the successes of conversion, when in reality natives were having a difficult time grasping Christian concepts.

Missionaries and natives could translate the Bible, but they could not translate centuries of meaning imbued into concepts such as sin. Original sin was used as a controlling factor through laws that were created to subdue natives. Missionaries went beyond the colonial laws to tell natives they could only be forgiven and saved with their help. Faith itself was not a concern. Controlling native bodies and behaviors dictated the actions of missionaries as they sought to govern natives, and religious concerns were secondary to the desire to make Indians behave like

the English. The goal was to have full conversions after they understood the culture behind Puritanism. Those who still strove for conversion had to face opposition from settlers and leaders who wanted native land.

The English never saw natives as equals during the seventeenth century, even when they converted and moved to mission towns. Laws were created that made it nearly impossible for natives to bring Englishmen to court, an issue that would be the final trigger for war in 1675. During the 1660s, Indians struggled to maintain sovereignty within and outside the mission towns. English cattle destroyed native crops and land after successful growing seasons. Like in the Pequot War, hunger caused Indians and English to react in ways they may not have otherwise. An influx of English migrants from the Great Migration in the 1630s destabilized towns with little possibility for food production, causing English settlers to want to expand and move farther out in New England. As more Englishmen surrounded praying towns and native villages, natives pushed back. What should have been legal disputes easily solved in courts became fights between settlers and natives. Any laws established to protect natives were then subverted by the English settlers and trade as well as travel became dangerous for natives who relied on it. Overhunting caused indigenous species and native food sources to disappear, and natives either had to expand hunting grounds or turn to mission towns to ensure their food source. Increased numbers of land poor natives coming to mission towns found their fields trampled by English pigs or cattle and no way to take those responsible to court. After Indians began killing animals responsible, English enacted more laws to make sure natives did not retaliate.

Starving, diseased, and detached from their culture, some praying natives turned to alcohol for solace. Others went back to their old ways. Many missionaries failed to see that many

old ways never disappeared from native culture. Those who lived in praying towns had merely chosen to take on English cultural practices for the time being. As missionaries feared for the natives in their care as well as the changing political structure of the colonies, English political authority pushed its way into the fray as well. With the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, colonial powers were under pressure to swear loyalty and distance themselves from actions taken under Cromwell. Massachusetts in particular was challenged for its assertion of authority over its subjects. The play for power between royal and local authority pushed natives into an even more precarious position. The natives who chose to stay in praying towns were caught between each power, and between settlers and unconverted natives.

Unaccepted at every turn, praying natives were punished and placed at the center of mistrust in the eyes of the English. The constant fear and tension between settlers and natives could not be contained. Natives had tried to live amongst the English, for their own gain, and were punished for it. Because natives and English failed to see or understand initial reasons for the creation of praying towns, politically, physically, and spiritually, the process failed. Too many people lived in too small an area, and rapid migration led to haphazard towns that barely sustained the people living in them. What little land natives had in the mission towns were either ruined by English livestock, or were sold to English speculators out of want for food and resources. Missionaries and natives had to constantly fight for money to ensure survival, not simply conversion. Want of food and resources pushed religion aside as missionaries sought to keep the townspeople alive and keep praying Indians from returning to their villages.

The precarious peace after the Pequot War, 1636-38, was reflected in the missionaries' uncertain control over their native charges and the eventual failure of the mission towns. The praying towns failed for many reasons: missionaries did not factor in why the natives joined; the

English were attempting to understand a civil war that made them question their understanding of their government and culture; they did not properly decide a funding method beyond donations, which were dependent on economic successes in settler communities which frequently fluctuated; there was not a unified front coming from the English, and in reality missionaries, settlers, and authorities were working in opposition of one another as they vied for power and resources; and most importantly, Indians were reduced to a factor in a system that was controlled by men too blinded by their own concerns to fully understand the people they were working with which led them to challenge what was being done over the course of four decades and ultimately to a war to fight for equal treatment in Massachusetts.

Natives in praying towns felt the impact of war at all levels, and were forced to choose between unconverted Natives and the English they had joined while war raged through the colony. Philip never saw what his uprising resulted in, but the natives in praying towns did and had to face the repercussions. Those involved in the war were tried for treason and treated as traitors to the crown. Praying towns were then reduced by more than half, and natives in the towns were forced to stay within them, unable to leave or hunt. Those who strayed too far from the towns' limits would be shot on sight.[5] Natives were forced to stay in towns they chose to live in decades before, towns they hoped would help them survive in the wake of English migration. The missionaries who began in the late 1630s and early 1640s had either passed away, or were close to it. Those they sought to protect, educate, and convert were left for the colony to monitor. No records indicate if natives actually converted, and historians have argued that they either did on the surface while practicing traditionally in private, or went through the motions of conversion but to Englishness, rather than Christianity.[6] Englishness and Christianity are vastly

[5] Pulsipher, "Massacre at Hurtleberry Hill," 467.
[6] Joshua Bellin, "John Eliot's Playing Indian," *Early American Literature* 42, no. 1 (2007), 2.

different concepts, but the Puritans saw them as the same, and that one could not exist without the other. By stressing cultural concerns over religion, the missionaries failed to create a coexisting Christian community that they argued for.

King Philip's War was the outcome of people refusing to address issues at hand while allowing oppressed natives to fester amongst themselves after repeated displays of power against them. The same can be said about the failure of praying towns. Colonial authorities and their quest for dominion over the inhabitants of New England, both Indian and English, forced settlers and natives to find new ways to maintain control of their own people and families. The mistrust between settlers, Indians, and colonial authorities were placed in missions that had no clear plan for sustainability beyond their initial establishment. It was because of these misunderstandings and relationships that praying towns failed so quickly and so brutally.

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