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Introduction

The conventions that were employed in formal letters in the early modern period have been largely forgotten and ignored. Interpreting the surviving material has been blurred by the inclination inspired by bias to accept the stories recorded by the priests at face value, taking for unvarnished truth material shaped by the formulaic expectations of the day.¹ This paper aims to examine how far the available writings on Scottish Catholic missionary life in the Highlands should be discounted as representing not perfect truth but conventional fiction heavily influenced by the usage established for such writing by the bigger and more powerful Catholic world missions.

The Sources

Understanding Catholic Missionary activity in the period after 1500 in any part of the globe, in fact, raises an acute problem of interpretation of the texts that survive, the purposes for which they were written and the context that consciously and unconsciously shaped them. The archives of *Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith*, (hereafter referred to as *Propaganda*), the Jesuits, and other Orders have been plundered largely indiscriminately for information principally about the history of countries outside Europe such as India and China, South America, Canada and the South Seas. There is no shortage of material to work with either for Scotland² or the rest of the world but it must be treated cautiously. By the time of the Enlightenment, Thomas Innes's devotion to documents as sources, was becoming common but to assume they are an unchallengeable witness may be unwise.³

¹ See for example, Peter F. Anson, *Underground Catholicism in Scotland 1622-1878* (Montrose: Standard Press, 1970).

² Some Scottish letters have been used and re-used in various secondary sources. Odo Blundell, *Catholic Highlands of Scotland*, 2 Vols (Edinburgh: Sands, 1909-1917) has translated a certain amount of the material available. See also Rev. Cathaldus Giblin O.F.M. 'The "Acta" of Propaganda Archives and the Scottish Mission, 1623-1670' *Innes Review* vol. 5 (1954), pp. 39-76.

³ For some comparative history see John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). He sees similarities between their attitudes to the Enlightenment. So far as Missions are concerned, however, Naples as a Catholic state was very different from Scotland.

South American reports, for example, can be shown to embellish the bald narrative shedding more light on the circumstances, objectives and opinions of the writers than on the country. The reports sent back by the Portuguese from Asia present an image of virtue that the Roman *Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith* found ample evidence to dispute⁴ English Catholic reports differ substantially from perceptions provided by other sources.⁵ At a practical level, it would be naïve to suppose that an impartial and factual description of reality was intended by any of the parties even when letters did not need to appear innocuous if seized by hostile forces.⁶

Rules for Constructing Letters

The formulas for letters were introduced by Ignatius Loyola and were later in large part adopted by other Orders and the central Roman missionary institution when it was established in 1622.⁷ Ignatius, as early as 1549, demanded a yearly report from each mission but one that came in two parts an open part that could be shown to anyone and a private part. Even before this, many of the open parts were published in a variety of places in Europe so that the wonderful things the Jesuit missionaries (and others) were achieving could be widely known.⁸ A circular letter provided rules that writers were to follow about the order to be followed and this was eventually included in the constitution.⁹ As well as the letters themselves,

⁴ Donald Frederick Lach and Edwin J. Van Kely, *Asia in the Making of Europe Vol 3: Trade Missions Literature* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993).

⁵ See Michael Questier, 'Crypto-Catholicism, Anti-Calvinism and Conversion at the Jacobean Court: The Enigma of Benjamin Carier' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* vol. 47, no. 1 (1996), pp. 45-64.

⁶ Scottish Catholic Archives, Blairs Letters vol. 3, p. 183.

⁷ J Metzler, *Sacrae Congregationes de Propaganda Fidei Memoria Rerum 1622-1972*, 3 Vols (Rome, 1971-1976), Vol III, Appendix, pp. 675-677, gives the rules for behaviour, and letters on p. 676. They are to send information yearly about the state of religion the sort of people, the numbers of Catholics, heretics, schismatics and the remedy. On p. 677 the impediments to conversion are discussed.

⁸ At the time given the new and contentious status of the Order and the comparative shortage of professed priests this was a high risk strategy. See Alain Woodrow, *The Jesuits: A Study of Power* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1995), pp. 29, 32, 43, 49, 66.

⁹ John Correia Afonso, S.J. (ed.), *Jesuit Letters and Indian History 1542-1773* 2nd Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), Appendix C and D gives a tentative list of Archives in which material can be found and the published editions of the letters. They were originally printed at Paris,

Juan Polanco, secretary to the General of the Jesuits, wrote several letters a year to all members summarizing what was being done.¹⁰ They were clear about the reasons for this. They were to promote the internal good of the society, mutual love and encouragement and efficient disposition of the missionary forces. Externally this would promote new vocations and aid.¹¹ Composite works drawing on all the letters to give an overall picture of the missions at work supplemented them. These were probably read by missionaries-to-be as exemplars of what missionary behaviour ought to be.¹² At the same time there is material collected by the secular authorities and competing religions all of which had their own particular agendas.¹³

The missions at work had to appear to meet several criteria. These were reflected in the widely promoted lives of the missionaries. Fundamental to any self-presentation were the identifiers set out in the gospel. Pre-eminently, as in Mark 16: 17, 'these are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick who will recover'. Individual missionaries promoted to the faithful as worthy of veneration had to show some at least of these signs.

Overseas Missions

The Scottish missions had to compete with Missions, primarily run by various religious orders, notoriously the Jesuits, in the lands that were

Rome, Coimbra, Venice and elsewhere. Scholarly work on these letters and their bibliographical history is endless.

¹⁰ John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 10-11.

¹¹ Afonso, *Jesuit Letters*, pp. 3-6.

¹² For example Padre Fernão Guerreiro's Jesuit annual published in the first nine years of the seventeenth century under the title of *Relação Annual das Coisas que fizeram os Padres da Companhia de Jesus nas suas Missões... Nos Anos de 1600 a 1609*; This was republished in 1930 by C. H. Payne and has recently been reprinted under the title *Jahangir and the Jesuits, With an Account of the Benedict Goes and the Mission to Pegu From the Relations of Fernão Guerreiro* (London: Routledge, 2004). The only complete copy of the original work exists in the British Museum Library, in London.

¹³ For the other regular orders like the Franciscans and Dominicans which have published extensively see, for example, Fray Geronimo de Mendieta, *Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana A Franciscan's View of the Spanish Conquest of Mexico*, ed. Felix Jay (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997).

newly opening to the Europeans by the early sixteenth century. These Missions were from the start much affected by political issues back in Europe, especially disagreements between Spain, Portugal and the see of Rome. The monarchs claimed rights and privileges that encroached upon the spiritual domain within their dominions, rights that in Spain was called *Patronato* and in Portuguese *Padroada* which essentially consisted in the royal privilege of nominating a candidate for some ecclesiastical office and in effect gave the monarch complete control. For example, when the diocese of Goa was erected in 1534 the right of patronage that went with it extended to all the places discovered or yet to be discovered by the Portuguese. Missionaries that went out from these nations were seen as nationals first and religious second. Conversion had important political significance. When in the seventeenth century, *Propaganda* wanted to start an ecclesiastical unit under its full control in India the *Padroado* archbishop and priests of Goa totally opposed it and full-scale (if spiritual) warfare ensued with the local governor excluding papal writs and personnel from the territory.¹⁴

Conflict between Rome's missionary efforts and those of colonizing nations was inevitable. Msgr. Ingoli, the first secretary of the newly established *Propaganda*, made three strong critical reports in 1625, 1628 and 1644 on the existing state of missions and listed no fewer than twelve causes of disorder and abuse. *Propaganda* then harnessed the missionary energies of religious orders of nationalities other than Portugal and Spain for evangelization in various parts of the world which the Portuguese and Spanish missionaries were not covering and also gave faculties to secular priests who were not members of an Order under the leadership of Vicars-Apostolic (roughly a Titular Bishop), who answered directly to the Holy See. It hoped to promote indigenous vocations and to vest ecclesiastical power and responsibility in them in all parts of the world.¹⁵ The fortunes of

¹⁴ The vicariate of Idalcan or Bijapur. The Vicariate Apostolic of Bijapur was established by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (hence forth, "Propaganda") in 1637. The Vicariate of Bijapur increased rapidly in size, absorbing Golconda, and extended from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, from Madras-Mylapore to Calcutta. From the end of the 17th century, this Vicariate was served by the Carmelite Fathers, whose head quarters were at Surat, north of Bombay. Similar conflicts occurred in other jurisdictions such as the Canara vicariate (1674 onwards).

¹⁵ These are reported in various places; see Donald Frederick Lach and Edwin J. Van Kley, *Trade Missions Literature*, Vol III (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993), pp. 222-230. For a summary of the problems of the papacy with the Orders see, Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in*

the Scottish Mission were necessarily intertwined with the bigger global politics.

Oversight of the Missions

Before the establishment of the Roman *Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith* in 1622¹⁶ to which the pope delegated the responsibility of overseeing all missions, only the big Missionary Orders had adequate resources to support workers in the field. The Jesuits won the publicity war hands down.¹⁷ Missions outside Europe sold best, and even when European missions became a *fait accompli* local disputes between Regular and Secular missionaries remained a festering sore and the problem of how the latter were to be funded remained unresolved. The appointment of Vicars Apostolic, the standard way of organising a mission was the first step towards that end but such an appointment was often deferred. In 1622 Scotland was subsumed under England but Richard Bishop and his successor, Richard Smith ‘bishop of Chalcedon’ did little for Scotland.¹⁸ In the 1640s Scottish supporters like the elder Hugh Semple from the Scotch college at Madrid were unsuccessfully pressing Francis Ingoli of Propaganda to send a bishop to Scotland. On 15 October 1642 in response to a letter from Ingoli he wrote (in Latin) amongst other thing ‘For many years I have desired a Bishop for the Hebrides, to instruct and form the Priests, to settle disputes, to administer the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Confirmation, to outshine and govern the rest in the world, in life, morals, doctrine, and power, and with the same authority as the Bishops exercise in Ireland. The glory of God, the public good, the custom of the Church, and the propagation of the Faith demand this’.¹⁹ Unfortunately, circumstances

India: The Beginnings to AD 1707 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁶ Metzler, *Sacrae Congregationes*.

¹⁷ See for instance Thomas M. McCoog, S.J., *A Guide to Jesuit Archives* (St Louis and Rome: The Institute of Jesuit Sources and Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 2001). Archives that constitute “reports to headquarters” are most likely to be found in the Archivium Romanum Societatis Jesu in the Borgo Santo Spirito. These would include annual reports on the personnel and condition of individual provinces or missions within them, as well as the ‘annual letters’ which report the achievements of each unit within the organisation. In fact it would appear that copies of some of these “annual letters” are also at Farm Street.

¹⁸ Metzler, *Sacrae Congregationes*, Vol III, p. 490.

¹⁹ George Oliver, *Collections Towards Illustrating the Biographies of Scottish English and Irish Members of the Society of Jesus* (London: Charles Dolman, 1845). These volumes reproduced numbers of such

were against them.

Scottish and World Reporting Practices

As the Jesuit patterns of reporting became the measure of success it seems likely that the Jesuit template had become generally required usage throughout the Church so the structural similarities of the formal letters from Scottish secular priests to those from the Jesuits are not surprising. If one takes as an exemplar one of the Jesuit returns from the province of Paraguay, Chile and Tucuman one finds a standard return that lists the number of priests, brothers students, the houses they inhabit, the number of natives the size of the province and travel in it, geographical descriptions and descriptions of customs and local languages and any immediate local problems. To the general letter is appended letters from each of the houses.²⁰ Given the much smaller size of the Scottish mission the same information is conveyed in similar order in the earliest available Scottish letters. Father John Brady reporting to Propaganda in 1627, claimed 10,000 conversions, or more accurately 'reconciliations', in the Montana Scotiae, the term used in Rome for the Highlands and Islands. In 1633 Father Patrick Hegarty wrote that he had reconciled 2229 souls to the Church, baptized 1222, and solemnized 117 marriages in the Hebrides.²¹ Stephen Greenblatt

20 letters from the Jesuit archives
Documentos para la Historia Argentina Tome XIX Iglesia. *Cartas anuas de la provincia del Paraguay, Chile Tucuman de la Companie de Jesus (1609-1614)* (Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofia y Letras Instituto de Inestigaciones Historicas, 1927), pp. 41-49.

21 Originally from C. Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland 1619-1646* (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1964), which is based on the Vatican Archives pp. 118-119; a number of the letters sent in the 17th and 18th century still organised on these lines are included in William Forbes-Leith, *Memoirs of Scottish Catholics during the XVII and XVIII centuries selected from hitherto inedited MS Now first printed from the original manuscripts in the secret archives of the Vatican and other collections*, Vol 2 (now available as an ebook on line); The Scottish material in the Archives of Propaganda much of which seems to be in the volumes called *Lettere volgare* collected under years but some of which will be in the separate volumes for Montana Scotland has not been systematically transcribed as it has been for other countries such as the USA and Canada for example, Finbar Kenneally, comp. *Propaganda Fidei Calendar*, Vol. 1. (Washington: Publications of the Academy of American Franciscan History, First Series, 1966), pp. xvi-259 (and many later additions) for one or two letters see Blundell, *Catholic Highlands of Scotland*, Vol 2, pp. 70-71; and 'Catholic Faith Maintained: Rome and the Islands' *Clan Chisholm*

appears to condemn such ‘copying’ as virtual plagiarism that undermines the reliability of the material²² but this might be to mistake the bureaucratic nature of communication with Rome at the time.

The priests also wrote privately to one another about matters temporal and spiritual and some of these have survived in Archives not part of the formal Roman or religious orders. Some Scottish letters were preserved at Blairs and have subsequently come to the Scottish Catholic Archives as have some of the Scottish Mission letters. Most of these were written in English, which is at first sight surprising, since their fluency in Gaelic was a primary qualification for the post, and may indicate that written Gaelic was another matter. The private letters had different needs for concealing their true purpose and can be deciphered.²³

A letter from Paris written in English in 1733 to James Carnegie, one of the Highland priests, for example, illustrates some of these simpler problems of deciphering. It appears to be a merchant’s letter but this is only partially so. ‘I was honoured with yours of the fifteenth last and got payment long ago from Seigneur Vasura of £1,105 value of 200 crowns and sent it off immediately so that I hope Mr Hugh has got payment of it long ago but I am afraid he be displeased, the exchange is low therefore I beg you’ll send no more money by me but as they desire by bills payable at London to Mr Robert Gordon... for the ordinary subsidy we must take it when it comes but I am sorry the merchants at Hamburg could not pay before the end of 1733. The Exchange is slow at present and the old gentleman cannot be moved. The company makes shift as it can and must watch for the shop and the apprentices... The customers will need to wait.’²⁴

Journal, vol. 42 (1999), pp. 65-69.

²² Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions the Wonders of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 122.

²³ For accounts of the missions in Scotland see A. S. MacWilliam ‘A Highland Mission in Strathglass 1671-1777’ *Innes Review*, vol. 24 (1973); D. Szechi ‘Defending the True Faith: Kirk, State and Missionaries in Scotland 1653-1755’ *Catholic Historical Journal*, vol. 82 (1996) pp. 397-411; Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith: The Highland Church 1690-1900* (Edinburgh: Acair, 1998).

²⁴ Scottish Catholic Archives, Blairs Letters. Generally these terms are widely scattered and well known. Specifically Vol. 3, p. 183. They and material from Rome are used in John Watts, *Hugh MacDonald Highlander, Jacobite and Bishop* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2002).

Those involved moved around under false names and used code words. For example, Hugh MacDonald, the bishop was usually Scott. In George Hay's letters with Mr Geddes, a secret code was used: Rome and the Pope were 'Hilltown' and 'The old gentleman'. More generally, *Propaganda* was the Exchange, the Mission was the company, the bishop was 'the physician', students were apprentices, colleges or schools were the shop and communicants were 'the customers' and trade was the ordinary conduct of the liturgy. The merchants at Hamburg were the cardinals in Rome. Occasionally the letters say that hidden names of people or places are not presently necessary but letters are usually directed to friends who are not suspicious. At a symbolic level one may reflect on the practice of treating the Mission as a business and the image of its function that the participants had. Have spiritual matters been transmuted into commercial business?

Missionary Practice in Highland Scotland

The Gaelic speaking area of Scotland was not a priority of the reformed Kirk in the years immediately following 1559 and it is generally assumed that the area was neglected for half a century or more. The Jesuits took only as sporadic interest and in line with their standard approach concentrated on conversion of the upper ranks.²⁵ Recently, Jane Dawson has asserted that a fully articulated Calvinist hierarchy in the 16th and 17th centuries creatively adapted itself to Gaelic ways and even wrote Gaelic poetry²⁶ but the evidence for this is patchy although for those patches, persuasive. Otherwise it has been taken as a given that the area was primarily Catholic by default and that a shortage of Gaelic speakers made the task of the Presbyterians daunting. As the gift of tongues was rarely bestowed on Scots and Gaelic was acquired either by birth or by study outside missionaries were disadvantaged. It is well known that at the turn of the sixteenth century, Highland Scotland was largely dependent on Irish Franciscan monks for its

²⁵ Thomas M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland and England 1541-1588* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 178-180. The work is more interested in the intrigues to restore Catholicism to the whole of Britain and not on ground roots missionary work however. A number of letters and other reports to Acquiviva and other leaders of the Jesuit order from Scots have been printed in William Forbes Leith, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics under Mary Stuart and James I* (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1885) and *Memoirs of Scottish Catholics*. They are mainly concerned with the Lowlands.

²⁶ Jane Dawson, 'Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland' in A. Pettegree, A. Duke and G. Lewis (eds), *Calvinism in Europe 1540-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 231-253.

Catholic services.²⁷ They were credited with securing the Catholic faith in areas like Moidart, Arisaig South Uist and Barra.²⁸ These men spoke Erse, which was more or less intelligible to the Western Highlanders although possibly less so to the more Eastern Highlanders whose Gaelic was distinct from that of the West.²⁹

This gradually became less necessary as Scottish families who remained faithful to Rome sent a number of their younger sons to be taught on the Continent at Scottish colleges in Paris, Rome Madrid and elsewhere. Here they were in touch with the latest ideas and expectations of the wider Church. When and if they returned (and some, seduced by the Jesuits, went on to work in other parts of the world) they found themselves in considerable isolation, which they had to accept as part of their sacrifice for the service of God. Such missionaries in training inside secular colleges probably read some of the printed texts about missionary work and imbibed its philosophy,³⁰ as well as the wider intellectual movements of the time such as Jansenism.

Since the resources to continue their work largely depended on the impression their communications left, the missionaries early learned the importance of presentation and equally what was best omitted from the narrative. The central authority, whether a religious Order or Propaganda,

²⁷ Patrick Conlan, *The Missionary Work of the Irish Franciscans* (Dublin: Veritas, 1996). Chapter 2 is devoted to Scotland; An earlier work by Benignus Millett, *The Irish Franciscans 1651-1665* (Rome: Georgian University Press, 1964) gives a more detailed account of the position vis a vis Propaganda. Millett then went on to edit the Fons de Vienna in the Propaganda Archives which has a good deal of Irish material. For the political implications see Brendan Fitzpatrick, *Seventeenth-Century Ireland: The Wars of Religions* (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1989), pp. 69-80.

²⁸ Wilson McLeod, *Divided Gaels: Gaelic Identities in Scotland and Ireland 1200-1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 201-203.

²⁹ The problems High MacDonald had with eastern Gaelic is remarked on in John Watts, *Hugh MacDonald: Highlander, Jacobite and Bishop* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2002), pp. 35, 41.

³⁰ To indicate the number and range of these – some examples that they may have seen include Jesuit Letters: *Diversi Avisi...Four 16th-Century Jesuit Letters From Brazil, Asia, And Africa* (Venice: Michele Tramezzino, 1559-1565). Another volume is *Diversi Avisi Particolari Dall' Indie Di Portogallo Riceuuti, Dall' Anno 1551* (Sino Al, 1558). *Dalli Reverendi Padri Della Compagnia Di Giesu...Tradotti Nuovamente Dalla Lingua Spagnuola Nella Italiana* (Venice: Michele Tramezzino, 1559), [8], 294 leaves.

required annual letters or reports from each Missioner. While for various good and sufficient reasons this was often not practicable, quite a number do survive — formal letters in Latin.³¹ There are also the letters from the Bishops and from the occasional visitor sent to the area. There are letters to the Cardinal Protectors, letters to the Agents in Rome, letters to the various colleges in Rome, Paris, Douai and Madrid and elsewhere.³² The volume of the resulting documentation is impressive.

The Missionaries Needs

One can safely assume, therefore, that in writing their formal letters the Missioners, wherever they were situated, had a number of different purposes. The most basic was to persuade the recipient — the head of their Order, or the State within whose boundaries they were operating, or in other cases *Propaganda*, or the Cardinal Protectors or other supporters to send as much as they could in the way of assistance and resources. In order to do this the priests needed to serve the purposes of these patrons who needed material that would demonstrate such things as the potential for dramatic success in the area, the returns on previous assistance, the political and other leverage that continuing assistance might produce and so on. To do this, the letters had to be carefully couched in a way that fitted existing saintly models, patterns or templates so that those to whom they were shown would see them as shining examples of true Christian life. Thus, the language of the letters itself presents us with a problem. What philosophers happily call a normative vocabulary does not, in the records written by these people, necessarily mean what even their contemporaries meant. Our ability to identify the allusions and the suppressed sub-text may be limited.

Problems Particular to the European Missions

The Scots were disadvantaged by being in an area where the Church was long established. While the idea of a Mission to pagan parts of the world was not an ideological problem for catholic Christians, in the sixteenth century the Popes, Cardinals and other rulers found it hard to adjust to the idea that control of churches in some European states had been lost for the foreseeable future and that what we might call a ‘Home Mission’ that is a Mission inside Europe was required. Thinking out a structure for it took time. Even the leaders of committed Missionary Orders like the Jesuits found the absence of hierarchical arrangements in these places potentially

³¹ Metzler, *Sacrae Congregationes*, Vol I, p. 503.

³² Letters from England in English from James I reign were sent as Newsletters and have recently been published by Michael Questier (ed.), *Newsletters from the Archpresbyteriate of George Birkhead*, Cambridge: Royal Historical Society, 1998).

dangerous.

Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85) established a congregation to oversee the needs of Christians in areas subject to heretical or non-Christian rulers (that is within Europe) but it had problems, not least with financing because the Missions to Foreign parts attracted most of the funds. The home missions were at a further disadvantage compared to those overseas. The wonders of the jungles of the Amazon, the strange Gods of the Incas or the Aztecs, the mysteries of the ideas of Hindus or Buddhists and the marvels of the Chinese imperial courts were likely to win hands down over the poverty of the outer reaches of Europe itself. The wild Highlands did not have the exotic appeal of the Americas, India and China.³³

Even after *Propaganda* was established in 1622 Secular Missions internal to Europe had to compete for resources with the foreign missions.³⁴ Scotland was not alone in this. Missions in Protestant parts of Germany had similar problems.³⁵ It is this that apparently dominates the way in which the Scottish Missions came to represent themselves — exaggeratedly no doubt. The Scottish Mission had to appear at least as deserving as the overseas Missions, to appear to have overcome ‘famine, fire and sword’ and to have faced, and sometimes suffered, martyrdom. They had to obtain support in a competitive context that we might describe as the first example of globalization. Papal diplomacy both locally and in distant areas (especially ones that came under the control of Protestant countries like the Low Countries or Britain) might dictate its short-term policy towards Missions in

³³ I do not want to get caught up in the debates about Orientalism that were initialled by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* first published in 1978 but 16th and 17th century images in accounts of the east and south America make the appeal of the unfamiliar unquestionable.

³⁴ There are many, too many, missionary texts from the period. Just a couple may be mentioned as illustrations; Ernest J. Burrus and Félix Zubillaga (eds), *Misiones mexicanas de la Compañía de Jesús, 1618[-]1745: cartas e informes conservados en la Colección Mateu* [Mexican Missions of the Society of Jesus, 1618[-]1745: Letters and Reports from the Mateu Collection], 1982; For historical use see Allan Greer (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America* (Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 2000); Edna Kenton (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in North America (1610-1791)*, with an introduction by Reuben Gold Thwaites (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1925).

³⁵ See for example *Acta Sacrae Congregationis De Propaganda Fide Res Gestas Bohemicas Illustrantia* collected by Ignattii Kollman (Prague: Sumptibus Comitiorum Bohemiae Deputationis, 1939).

the home countries. The fate of Chinese, Indian or Japanese Catholics (and potential converts) might have to be set off against that of the Europeans under protestant rule.³⁶ Significantly, it was only after Bombay had become British that negotiations between Rome and London in 1716 resulted in the transfer of the jurisdiction over Bombay churches from the archbishop of Goa to the Vicar Apostolic and this, as well as the failure of the '15, may explain a downturn in help to the Scottish Catholics at the time.³⁷

Finding Missioners for the Highlands

The Highlands had the advantage of seeming barbaric to some of the greatest minds in 16th century Europe. Erasmus in his preface to his Greek New Testament of 1516 wrote:

I totally disagree with those who are unwilling that the Scriptures, translated into the common tongue, should be read by the unlearned. ... I would that they were translated into all the languages of all Christian people, that they might be read and known not merely by the Scots and the Irish but even by the Turks and the Saracens.

Clearly to the man who had travelled from his native Low Countries to many of the countries of the world including England, the Scots and Irish were as near to barbarism as made no difference. The priests who visited Scotland also did their best to make the area seem one as strange and so as worthy of support as more fabulous foreign parts. In 1652 father Dermot Duggan, one of three Lazarist monks who were sent at the instance of *Propaganda*, wrote eloquently in terms of the terrible conditions they endured the shortage or absence of food, the wretched roads and the urgent need for 'good apostolic workers acquainted with the language and prepared to bear with hunger, and thirst and sleeping on the ground.' Many Orders, seeing better prospect in other areas were unwilling to go to Scotland because of the wildness of the area — *impervius, inops, incultus, remotus, asperus, and barbarus*.³⁸ The state of the area despite its scarcity of priests

³⁶ For these political considerations see Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward T. Corp (eds), *The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites* (London: Hambledon Press, 1995), especially pp. 118-125.

³⁷ Lach and Van Kely, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, p. 288-290.

³⁸ Wilson McLeod, *Divided Gaels: Gaelic Identities in Scotland and Ireland 1200-1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 209; S. Mac Guaire 'Ireland and the Catholic Hebrides' *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 5th series, vol. 42 (1933), pp. 359-362; Cathaldus Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. 47-50.

was, nevertheless, occasionally subject to criticism from Propaganda itself. In 1669 the Propaganda archive contains the following report from Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi, who was about to be elected pope Clement IX:

The natives of the islands adjacent to Scotland can, as a general rule, be properly called neither Catholics nor heretics. They abhor heresy by nature, but they listen to the preachers by necessity. They go wrong in matters of faith through ignorance, caused by the want of priests to instruct them in their religion. If a Catholic priest comes to their island, they call him by the name of the tonsured one, and show much greater veneration and affection for him than for the preachers. They sign their foreheads with the sign of the holy cross. They invoke the saints, recite litanies, and use holy water. They themselves baptize their own children when the ministers make any difficulty as to administering that sacrament, on the pretence that it is not essential for eternal salvation. They are... of excellent disposition, quick of intellect and taking a special delight in the pursuit of knowledge. They are desirous of novelties and have an unbounded passion for ingenious inventions. No greater favour can be conferred on them than to educate their children and render them suited to become priests or ecclesiastics Rescriptum: The Most Holy Father directs the appointment, as superior of that mission, of the present Archbishop of Armagh, who is to send labourers to these islands, and is hereby instructed to apply to the Holy Office for the extension of his faculties.³⁹

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Robert A Dodgshon 'West Highland Chiefdoms, 1500-1745: A Study in Redistributive Exchange' in R.Mitchison and P. Roebuck (eds), *Economy and Society in Scotland and Ireland 1500-1939* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1988), pp. 27-37 and "Pretence of Blude" and "Place of Thair Dwelling": The Nature of Scottish Clans 1500-1745' in R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte (eds) *Scottish Society 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); A. I. MacInnes, 'Crown, Clan and Fine: the Civilizing of Scottish Gaeldom 1587-1638' *Northern Scotland*, vol. 13 (1994), pp. 31-55; and A. I. MacInnes, 'Gaelic Culture in the Seventeenth Century: Polarization and Assimilation' in S. Barber and S. Ellis (eds), *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State 1485-1725* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 162-194.

Their conversion was also presented as easily (and therefore cheaply) achieved as their desire was to “imitate their ancestors who were so zealous in the cause of religion” was given as one reason why almost all the families were disposed to receive the Catholic Faith, an argument maintained even when many pressures were pushing the clan leaders towards adopting the Lowland values.⁴⁰

The problem for the Scottish Missioners was thus to present their hardship, suffering and serving as equivalent to and as important as the work of missionaries in India, China and South American countries. As a result one may be wise not to take all the claims at face value. Scottish martyrs were thin on the ground although one or two priests who died in prison were put forward for the martyr’s crown. Nevertheless, in the formal letters the stress is on the hardships and imprisonment the Highland priests suffered. It was a vital part of the creation of a martyrological tradition that would help prevent their numbers being depleted for service elsewhere. Death after release from prison, or as a result of hardships endured while evading capture, as the result of their privations, was a standard topos. Actual deaths in prison after the 45 were an invaluable lever.

Possible Models for the Scottish Missioners

The lives of saints and martyrs were widely disseminated in Catholic Europe as inspiration for the faithful and the most desirable characteristics of those who were venerated were also imitated. The Scottish priests were likely to seek to match these successful popular images of well-known missionaries and present themselves as suffering similar difficulties and disasters.

[1] The perfect saint

In the sixteenth century the aristocratic Spaniard Francisco Solano (1549-1610), a Franciscan Observant known as the Thaumaturgus — wonder worker — of the New World was credited with special Missionary virtue for his power of conversion and was rapidly made a saint. On a ship from Panama that carried slaves Francis worked to evangelize them. When

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For an interesting anthropological analysis see Robert A. Dodgshon, ‘Modelling Chiefdoms in the Scottish Highlands and Islands Prior to the ‘45’ Part IV’ in Bettina Arnold and D Blair Gibson (eds), *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State: The Evolution of Complex Social Systems in Prehistoric Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 99-109; Dodgshon ‘West Highland Chiefdoms’, pp. 27-37 and “‘Pretence of Blude’”; Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, c. 1493-1820* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

the ship ran aground, the captain abandoned it and its slave cargo to the rocks, but Francis stayed, baptizing them just before the ship broke apart and keeping his new converts safe for three days until help arrived. He spent the rest of his life as a missionary in South America especially around Lima. He learned many native languages and dialects quickly, and it is said that he had the gift of tongues (glossolalia) as he preached to tribes of different tongues in one language and was understood by all. He was reputed to have converted 9,000 natives during a single sermon. He could play the lute, and was known to play and sing before the altar (like King David) and was revered as a healer. There was also a story of his taming a ferocious bull that was attacking the villagers. Shipwreck stories have a complex biblical origin especially when connected to the three days before the resurrection.⁴¹

The Scottish mission could not match these achievements although like Solano were for the most part men of good birth. As they explained in 1730 humble origins would lead to contempt for the office itself.⁴² They were occasionally shipwrecked — which they piously claimed did not deter them.⁴³ They stressed their language skills and their perseverance in an area where they were constantly under threat of imprisonment claiming that the Highlands were more mercilessly ravaged by the Reformation than any in Europe. Father Brady, for example, was attacked by fourteen (Presbyterian) ministers, thrown from his horse, and severely wounded. One of the lacuna in the Scottish case was the absence of indisputable miracles. Leslie makes the best of what he has. ‘it has often pleased the Most High to restore to their health those who visited these ruins or drank at these springs invoking the aid of these saints.’⁴⁴

[2] The perfect bishop

A second model for the missionary was the devoted bishop. Saint Toribio de Mogrovejo (1538-1606), second Bishop of Lima, was an example of missionary care (as well as an opponent of the Jesuits). Having learned the Quichua language in order to find out for himself the real condition and actual wants of the Indians, he protected and promoted their interests. He held fourteen synods and three councils, and instituted many

⁴¹ See Josiah Blackmore, *Manifest Perdition Shipwreck Narrative and the Disruption of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), pp. xvii, 6, 9, 20.

⁴² John Thomson, ‘Some Account of the State of Religion and of the Mission in Scotland’ (Edinburgh: Scottish Catholic Archives).

⁴³ Patrick Conlon, *The Missionary Work of the Irish Franciscans* (Dublin: Veritas, 1996), p. 12.

⁴⁴ Marjorie G. J. Kinloch, *Studies in Scottish Ecclesiastical History* (Bibliobazaar reproduction, 2009), pp. 210-202.

beneficial reforms; and he personally visited twice the whole territory under his jurisdiction. He made these tours of inspection on foot and accompanied only by two of his secretaries and died at the outset of a third in 1606. As Spain had rapidly established a standard hierarchy of bishop and diocese in South America the only obstacles to conversion were the purely physical and the culture of the natives.⁴⁵

The first Scottish bishop did his best to equal the tours of inspection Toribio undertook. James Gordon's diaries show him making several tours of the Highlands in a similar vein although he may have considered wistfully the clerical resources available to Toribio.⁴⁶ When Hugh MacDonald took over responsibility for the Highlands, he pressed his suit to *Propaganda* in terms common to most of the letters sent to them. He wrote of the deprivation of pastoral care suffered by the faithful in the area not to mention the potential converts.

'In the place of certain deceased priests, necessity has compelled the appointment of others from districts further south; and these, although of Highland family, want of practice has rendered almost useless at our mountain language, which they lost when studying at the colleges abroad. The faithful grievously deplore this scarcity of pastors; and while others enjoy in abundance every convenience for their spiritual welfare, they constantly complain that their souls are starving, by reason, not of the negligence, but of the fewness, of labourers in the vineyard. A great number of the heretics lament, in presence of the bishop or priest, with groans, tears, and words that might move stones, over their own unhappy errors and blindness; and having at length discovered the impiety, avarice, and carelessness of their ministers, and had their eyes opened to certain enormous errors, implore the help of Holy Mother Church, and ask with continual and unspeakable eagerness for Catholic pastors. Hence the greatest sorrow is enkindled in my heart, seeing as I do

⁴⁵ Alexandre Coello de la Rosas, *Espacios de exclusión, espacios de poder: el mercado de Lima colonial 1568-1606* (Lima: X IEP Instituto de Estudios Peruanos; Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2006), pp. 21-25, 124-127, 148-151, 167, 202, 240.

⁴⁶ John Watts, *Hugh MacDonald: Highlander, Jacobite and Bishop* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2002), pp. 20-21, 24f6, 40-42.

that the number of labourers amongst us who are versed in the Highland tongue is so scanty, that they are not only insufficient to assist Protestants of the kind I have described, but even the very Catholics themselves'.⁴⁷

The dangers of hostile European states, however, could hardly compare with South American states where it was claimed the natives were cannibals who, at times, even ate their own dead. Nor could they claim to defend their flock from the slave traders who took advantage of the prohibition on Indians owning firearms to take them into captivity.⁴⁸ Compared to the South American Missions which were huge — a minimum of 2,000 individuals — and the missionaries account of Mission life that suggested suggests that it was the nearest thing to a Christian Utopia, the small scale of Highland work was small beer.

[3] Conversion from above

Another model comes from China. Here the classical and preferred means of conversion in a 'pagan' state was pursued — influence from the top down. The earliest missionary was a Jesuit, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610). Other learned Jesuits followed him, all of whom brought western science and mathematics to China and were accepted at the court. Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666) was a German. He became the trusted counsellor of the Shunzhi emperor of the Qing dynasty, was created a mandarin, and held an important post in connection with the mathematical school. His position enabled him to procure from the emperor permission for the Jesuits to build churches and to preach throughout the country with

⁴⁷ Watts, *Hugh MacDonald*, passim.

⁴⁸ Fathers Cataldino and Marcerata backed by royal authority created the first mission, Loreto, in 1610. and twelve more missions soon sprang up, with 40,000 Indians altogether. These missions ran well until wild tribes came along, murdered the priests, and burned the missions but the slave traders persisted in attacking the missions and seizing the natives. Finally, in 1638, Father Montoya and Father Diaz Taño got a letter from Pope Urban VIII forbidding the enslavement of the mission Indians. They also got permission from King Philip IV to be supplied with firearms to defend themselves and the missions, and to get training from veteran soldiers who had become Jesuits. In 1648 however, Portugal was encouraging another Paulista attempt, this time to wipe out all twenty-nine missions. Even before the government troops reached the frontiers, the priests led the Guarani against the Paulistas and defeated them. The Guarani built up an army of 7,000 men to protect the missions, and with this well-equipped army, many victories were won.

the result that half a million converts were made. After the death of the Shunzhi emperor, in 1661, however, Schall was imprisoned and condemned to death. The sentence was not carried out, but he died after his release “owing to the privations he had endured.” Father Ferdinand Verbies, SJ effectively his successor was able to impress the new emperor Kangxi in turn and with Philippe Couplet to persuade Europe of the possibilities of conversion in China if large numbers of missionaries were diverted there.⁴⁹ Again, the Scottish missions could hardly compete even though they too needed to maintain influence at the top if they were to survive and they were successful in doing so. Here as in China it was the Jesuits who took the route of serving the leading aristocrats in the Highlands as (concealed) chaplains.

While the Jesuits in Scotland followed the Chinese pattern of concentrating on the rich and powerful and not accepting a settled parish and its limitations on their activities, this left the grass roots faithful without care. The Secular clergy were needed to undertake fixed parish work although the shortage of priests required them to travel long distances and they complained that they were so isolated that they sometimes did not know the proper date of Easter.

[4]The humble cleric

Fr. Joseph Vaz,⁵⁰ a humble Goan native Priest, not highly thought of by his Portuguese *padroada* superiors perhaps is most like the Scottish clergy. Despite the difficulties he was determined to go to the rescue of the Catholics in Ceylon who were threatened by Dutch Calvinism. He made the classic religious journey through unknown lands guided only by the light of faith and making no provision for the journey because he wanted to be detached ‘as befits the poor in spirit.’ His boy, John, was his sole companion and he took only a bag in which there were his religious vestments and Mass kit. After various adventures at sea he got to Tope where the Jesuits received him with great hospitality and advised him to wear the garb of a very low class worker, and put aside his soutane, as there would be no other way to enter Ceylon than in the guise of a ‘coolie’. On the Malabar Coast he studied Tamil. After fear of apprehension by Dutch officials in Tuticorin, they got on a ship as poor beggars seeking a livelihood in Ceylon. The ship was delayed by tempests, food ran out and they arrived at Mannar virtual skeletons but this was described as Divine

⁴⁹ J. Metzler, *Die Synoden in China, Japan und Korea, 1570-1931* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1980).

⁵⁰ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415-1825* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 244.

Providence for they would have been caught had they arrived directly at Jaffna.

He suffered hunger and thirst, abandonment, disease, but he disregarded it because of the magnitude of his hope to aid the persecuted Church of Ceylon. He had no assistance from Church or Colonial authority and had to beg from door to door for his survival, under constant threat of detection by the Dutch. He finally identified the Catholics and under the supervision and guidance of the local catechist, he penetrated the whole area. A miracle in which he brought rain by his prayer when the priests of the other faiths failed earned him permission to get more priests from Goa. He is commonly portrayed in a simple surplice with a bishop's mitre and crozier which he had refused beside him.

The missionaries to Scotland presented themselves as people who faced similar trials. Living in a country ruled by Protestants, ministering in hidden oratories to a flock of 12,000 that could rapidly increase as there were many willing to join but afraid of retribution they shaped their case by stressing their direct descent from the first missionaries to the area like St Kentigern. The Highlanders lived in places access to which required just as long, difficult and dangerous journeys as the one that Vaz undertook.⁵¹ The difficulties and hardships they had to overcome were drawn in a similar fashion to those of Vaz. They had scant food and poor shelter. They were isolated from their peers. They were constantly under threat from the secular authorities and had to take to the hills with nothing but their precious mass equipment. Often, for safety despite Rome's disapproval, they had to go about in various disguises.⁵² They were raided by the secular authorities while administering the sacraments and their sacred vessels destroyed. Nevertheless, some of them stressed that their chief dependence was on prayer, mortification, vigilance and 'a deportment suitable to our sacred character.'⁵³

Selling the Scottish Image

Constructing an image of the Highlands that could compete with cannibals who worshipped strange Gods without destroying their claims to assistance, however, was therefore a delicate balancing act. Some superstitions might

⁵¹ W. Doran, 'Bishop Thomas Nicolson: First Vicar-Apostolic 1695-1718' *Innes Review*, vol. 39 (1988), pp. 109-132.

⁵² See S. M. Jack 'Keeping the Faith: The Catholic Missions in the Highlands' *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, vol. 11 (2007), pp. 40-64.

⁵³ Thomson, 'Some Account of the State of Religion', p. 182.

be acceptable as evidence of enduring Catholicism but not the second sight, reported on Barra even though the Presbyterians put up with this.

Winster for instance in 1669 wrote 'they moreover retain many Catholic usages, such as making the sign of the Cross, the invocation of Saints and sprinkling themselves with Holy Water; which they anxiously ask from their Catholic neighbours. In sickness they make pilgrimages to the ruins of the old churches and chapels which yet remain, as of the most noble monastery of Iona, where St Columba was Abbot: also of the chapels of Ghierlock and Applecrosse and Glengarry which were once dedicated to the saints. They also visit the holy springs which yet retain the names of the saints to whom they were dedicated.'

The main elements of the reports are repeated from generation to generation. William Leslie wrote in 1679 in the same terms as Winster of the joy shown on Barra and the willingness of the locals to retain the service of a priest by force if necessary. Again, he had to write in a way that matched the equally difficult conditions that obtained in other mission field such as Ceylon under the Calvinist Dutch and the number of souls already turning to God, which could be saved by a small amount of assistance.

Differencing the Claims

One difference that the Scottish Missioners stressed was that their parishioners show highly desirable characteristics, particularly for those seeking fodder for the church or the endless maw of the Army. The endurance, skills and loyalty of the ordinary Highland man and woman are qualities that have a useful rhetorical function in a variety of circumstances.⁵⁴ 'They still retain the language and costume of their earliest forefathers,' a Scottish priest wrote to Propaganda in 1669, 'so that their dress is not very dissimilar from that of the ancient statues in Rome, loosely covered from the waist to the knee and they wear a bonnet on the head.' They ate sparingly of food unfamiliar in Rome: 'only one meal a day, consisting of oatmeal and cheese.' In the formal letters the stress is on the hardships and imprisonment the Highland priests suffered. It was a vital part of the creation of a martyrological tradition that would help prevent their numbers being depleted for service elsewhere. Death after release from prison, or as a result of hardships endured while evading capture, as the result of their privations, was a standard topos. Actual deaths in prison after the 45 were an invaluable lever of barley bread or oaten bread with some cheese or salt butter.' All the men were equipped for war.

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William James Anderson 'William Ballentine, Prefect of the Scottish Mission, 1653-1661' *Innes Review*, vol. 8 (1957), pp. 19-20.

Although mostly educated in Europe, the catholic clergy could not claim to persuade the mighty by their arcane knowledge like the Jesuits in China but they could promote the potential of the Highlanders. In 1669 Winster wrote to Propaganda that ‘The Highlanders are of excellent disposition, quick of intellect and taking a special delight in the pursuit of knowledge. They are desirous of novelties and have an unbounded passion for ingenious inventions.’

Some of the issues were presumably included because the writers already knew that what they were suggesting fitted what the intended audience wanted. When Oliver Plunkett, archbishop of Armagh in 1671, wrote of the Hebrides, which he had just been asked to oversee. ‘The best method of propagating the Faith in these Islands is, first to send there missionaries knowing the Gaelic language, ‘well grounded in virtue and inflamed with zeal for souls’ he must have been aware that Propaganda was pressing for ‘native priests’ in a lot of different lands.

The Scottish flock might be in need of education but were presented as a potential source of clerical material ‘No greater favour can be conferred on them than to educate their children and render them suited to become priests or ecclesiastics’, that is they were as able as any European and shared European concepts of duty and responsibility.

Some things were prudently omitted. One thing the superiors suppressed was the tendency, formally forbidden by Rome, of the priests to join in local fighting. Munro had become involved with Lord McDonnell’s fight against the earl of Argyll despite the written instruction to the contrary from the prefect of the Scottish mission.⁵⁵

One thing they rarely touch on is the competition from Calvinism. It is as if there were no presbyterians in the Highlands. James Kirk has recently contradicted the accepted idea that in much of the Highlands the reformed Kirk made little headway in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries arguing that the Jacobean ministry ensured that there were few areas totally deserted, that ministers could expect support from the elders, that they were used for baptism, marriage and the occasional communion

⁵⁵ See G. Fitzgibbon, ‘Robert Munro: Secular Priest in the highlands (1645-1704) *Innes Review* vol. 48, no. 2 (1997), pp. 165-173. Alphonse Bellesheim, *History of the Catholic Church in Scotland: From the Introduction of Christianity to the Present* (USA: Clarke Press, 2008 [1898]) has snippets from the letters of various priests and visitors.

and as far as possible were Gaelic speaking.⁵⁶ He ignores the Catholic presence as the Catholics ignore them. There is no suggestion that the Gaels are successfully embedded in a different Christian tradition and that that tradition also used Gaelic poetry.⁵⁷

Conclusion

No-one would, of course, suggest that hardship and imprisonment did not occur in the Highlands, but perhaps the unrelieved gloom that some letters picture should be taken with a pinch of salt. In the struggle to obtain a share of missionary funding, the Scottish Highland clergy had learned to stress their virtue in terms of universal expectations of what Missionaries should be like and what they should be able to achieve in terms of numbers and benefits for the Church and its important lay supporters. This shaped the way in which they presented themselves. They had no chance of emerging at the top of the League tables for missionary endeavour but they could make a respectable showing.

Even *Propaganda* was doubtful about some of the numbers they claimed and many of the stories were probably *ben trovato*. Can we be sure that Father Cornelius, noted as a Gaelic poet, used his poetry to convert Campbell of Cawdor?⁵⁸ When we are told that the Abbe Macpherson, missionary at Shenvale, called to assist a dying person in the middle of winter, was ‘warned by his guide against falling down a chimney as the path along which they were walking led them over the top’,⁵⁹ was there a touch of exaggeration? It seems that except in time of political trouble where they lived was an open secret.⁶⁰ The priest’s own house, which they often built themselves, was probably very similar to those of the local farmers built of wickerwork or turf although they claimed that Alexander Cameron spent his

⁵⁶ James Kirk, *Patterns of Reform and Continuity: Change and the Reformation Kirk* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), pp. 449, 478; George Robb, ‘Popular Religion and the Christianization of the Scottish Highlands in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’ *Journal of Religious History*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1990), pp. 18-34 is more concerned with the type of Protestant church that eventually triumphed there.

⁵⁷ Conlan, *The Missionary Work of the Irish Franciscans*, p. 11 says that Fr Cornelius went to Argyle and used his poetry to convert Campbell of Calder.

⁵⁸ This story is repeatedly retold for example in Conlan *The Missionary Work of the Irish Franciscans*, p11.

⁵⁹ Blundell, *Catholic Highlands of Scotland*, Vol 1, pp. 5, 45-46.

⁶⁰ Nathaniel Hooke wrote in 1707 that the bishop had a house three miles from Gordon castle, quoted in Blundell, *Catholic Highlands of Scotland* Vol 1, pp. 5-6.

first winter in a shieling hut and nearly died of exposure.⁶¹ The establishment in the eighteenth century of the college at Scalán and another upon Eilean Ban,⁶² where Hugh MacDonald was able to train home-grown priests through the medium of Gaelic,⁶³ were known to the authorities and suggests some tolerance usually existed by then.⁶⁴ Too much acknowledgement of this fact however might well have cut funding. The material was designed to maximise support at the time, and later historians should avoid being misled.

⁶¹ Watts, *Hugh MacDonald*, p. 98.

⁶² Watts, *Hugh MacDonald*, p 76-77 and John Watts *Scalan: The Forbidden College 1746-1799* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 1999), p. 163.

⁶³ Watts, *Hugh MacDonald*, p78-79

⁶⁴ Watts, *Scalan*.