Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland, 1717–1838

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For my Aunt,
Marian Cashman
and for my friend,
Scott Brodeur, S.J.

Contents

Acknowledgments ix
Introduction xiii

CHAPTER ONE
Property and Religious Liberty: the Emergence of Jesuit Slaveholding 3

CHAPTER TWO
Real Poverty and Apparent Wealth on the Jesuit Farms 33

CHAPTER THREE
Doubt and Debate: Jesuit Questions about Slaveholding 63

CHAPTER FOUR
Preaching versus Practice: Jesuit Theory and Conduct of Slaveholding 91

CHAPTER FIVE
Brother Joseph Mobberly and the Intellectual Antecedents of Jesuit Anti-Abolitionism 129

CHAPTER SIX
To Serve the Slave or the Immigrant? 163

CHAPTER SEVEN
The End of Maryland Jesuit Slaveholding 187

EPILOGUE
A Slaveholding both Anglo-American and Catholic 215

Bibliography 225
Index 237

Introduction

On October 16, 1771, Father Joseph Mosley, S.J. made the following entry in the baptismal register of St. Joseph's Church, Talbot County, Maryland: "Matthew, negro of ours, Talbot. Godparents were Thom., Negro of ours, and Peg, Negro of Chas. Blake."[1]

Mosley's use of the phrase "negro of ours," referred to the slaves owned by the religious order to which he belonged, the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits. To this day, "ours" is a Jesuit expression referring to whatever things that this Roman Catholic religious order of men hold in common. It can refer to the membership which unites Jesuits into the Society—it is quite common for a Jesuit to refer to another Jesuit as "one of ours." The expression may also refer to material possessions, which the Society holds collectively rather than individually. For approximately the first two centuries of Jesuit presence in Maryland, those possessions included other human beings. By 1838, the year that they decided to hold a mass sale of their slaves, the Jesuits owned 272 slaves on six plantations totalling 11,607 acres in the state. This study is an attempt to measure the ties which bound the Jesuits to their slaves, as well as the events which finally led the Jesuits to loosen those ties.

Despite clear evidence that their management of plantations was a fiscal and economic failure, Jesuits remained entrenched slaveholders for political, theological, intellectual reasons and social reasons. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the twin shocks of the Church's temporary suppression of the Jesuit order and the American Revolution's achievement of religious liberty essentially ended the political motivation for Catholic clergymen to own slaves in what had become the United States, inducing some discussion among the priests of Maryland about ending the practice. However, no drastic change took place until the 1830's, when the Society of Jesus, now restored and antic-

ipating that American Catholicism would urbanize under the influence of massive European immigration, decided to sell its slaves in order to devote more energy to ministry in the cities. The expectation that large numbers of white Europeans would need priests triumphed over any thought that the Jesuits' slaves and plantations had a premier claim to their owners' ministry. Jesuits thus ignored Catholic abolitionists like the Irish politician Daniel O'Connell, opting instead to dispose of their slaves in a mass sale.

I began thinking about a dissertation on slaveholding by Jesuits in Maryland during my two years in Jesuit philosophy studies at Loyola University of Chicago (1989–1991). I was sent from my native Boston to study with some two dozen other young Jesuits drawn from several sections of the United States. The American Assistancy of the Society of Jesus is currently divided into ten provinces, and these provinces have all the distinct identities and friendly rivalries of the "several states" of the nation. It was not unusual for classmates to tease each other about the backgrounds of each other's provinces. When the target of a barb was a member of the Maryland Province, it was almost certain that the man would be joshed about the fact that his ancestors in the religious life had once owned slaves. It seemed like a perfect opportunity to portray a young Maryland Jesuit as the heir to a system of oppression and reaction. I myself participated in this ribbing; it seemed like a good way for a northerner to score some points against southerners. As time wore on and the jokes grew stale, however, I began to wonder about the real story of Maryland Jesuit slaveholding. By the time my religious superiors asked me to follow my philosophy studies with the pursuit of a doctorate in history, I knew what topic I wished to write about: What was the real story behind the stereotyping?

Early in my research, I discovered that the basic narrative of Jesuit slaveholding has already been reconstructed over the past generation by four fine historical studies. The first was "The Slaves of the Jesuits in Maryland," a master's thesis written at Georgetown University in 1974 by Peter C. Finn, S.J. in an effort to reconstruct the rise, daily proceedings, and termination of the slaveholding. Two other studies were written by Robert Emmett Curran, S.J. In an article published in 1983, "'Splendid Poverty:' The Slaves of the Jesuits in Maryland, 1805–1838," Curran concentrated on the decline of the Jesuit slave system during the decades just before their final, mass sale of slaves in 1838. A decade later, in *The Bicentennial History of Georgetown University: Volume I, from Academy to University 1789–1889*, Curran placed the continuation and eventual termination of the slave system within the context of the founding and solidification of that Jesuit school in Washington, D.C. Curran believed that the desire of the Jesuits to provide a sound financial foundation for that school and open further ones had a major role in the decision to sell the slaves.[2] Like Finn, Curran worked to recapture a tale that had been in some danger of being lost or ignored. Finally, in 1996, Edward F. Beckett, S.J. published "Listening to our History: Inculturation and Jesuit Slaveholding." Intended as an internal

reflection for members of the Jesuit order, Beckett's work argues that the facts of Jesuit slaveholding show that these men were overly influenced by the environment of British North America. Rather than challenge its ethos, the Jesuits succumbed to their eagerness to demonstrate that Catholics could be loyal Englishmen and embraced values they should have challenged.[3]

The facts uncovered by Finn, Curran and Beckett make several things clear. Jesuit slaveholding began subtly; the earliest documented record of its existence dates only to 1717.[4] It seems likely that the Jesuits, like other landowners in the Chesapeake colonies, turned to slaveholding as the supply of indentured servants immigrating from the British Isles grew smaller during the second half of the seventeenth century.[5] There is also the strong possibility that many, if not most, of their slaves came to them as gifts from lay people eager to serve as benefactors of the Church. If so, the fact that the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church condemned the African slave trade while presenting slave labor itself as a natural proceeding of human society would have allowed the recipients of these second-hand slaves to gloss the question of how the slaves had reached the United States. In any case, there is no record whatsoever of colonial Jesuits deliberating whether to turn to slaveholding; we simply know that they did.[6] It is also probable that the Jesuits of colonial Maryland worried about the possibility that the government might confiscate property belonging to Catholics, and so tended to avoid documentation of their possessions.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, however, there is evidence that, while still proceeding within the context of their Church's doctrinal and philosophical approbation of slavery, the Jesuits conducted a long and painful debate over whether and how to end their personal participation in slaveholding. Paradoxically, the quantities of Jesuit slaves grew even as the Society hesitated over the matter. There were 192 slaves in 1765, and 272 just before abandonment of the practice in 1838.

The reconstruction of the narrative of Jesuit slaveholding has not completed the story, however. What is needed still is a reconstruction of the moral universe of these Jesuits—the ideological paradigms and experiential biases through which they analyzed the world they lived in and through which they approached the moral decisions they had to make. It is impossible to complete the study of Jesuit acculturation in British North America and the United States without addressing this broader question. It is reasonably clear that there were three overriding patterns of thought that influenced the conduct of Jesuit slaveholding—a feeling that slaveholding was politically advantageous for Catholic planters whose civil liberties were insecure in a predominantly Protestant colony, a fear that profit and the acquisition of wealth were goals that would separate Christians from God, which led to consistent financial maladministration of the farms, and a theological conviction that members of the superior white race were called to exercise paternal care over members of the inferior black race. The Jesuits' decision to abandon the practice of slaveholding was

delayed by their insistence on reconciling any change with these traditional ideals. It was not inevitable, however, that these ideals should have become the principle means through which they analyzed their dilemma. How did those attitudes originate and strengthen in the Jesuit mind to the point of making it very difficult for these men to dispose of their slaves?

Furthermore, when the Jesuits did cease their slaveholding, they made the significant decision to sell their slaves en masse instead of setting them all free. How did their traditional attitudes influence this decision to sell rather than manumit? These questions can only be answered if we engage the Maryland Jesuits on their own terms, approaching their world through the eyes with which they themselves saw it.

Furthermore, the tone of general American Catholic historiography suggests a prodigious need for greater objectivity in evaluating the slave question. Before the decrees of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) urged Catholic scholars to undertake a more impartial study of Church history, the tone of Catholic historiography, on almost any topic, was usually apologetic. An occasional historian like Theodore Maynard (*The Story of American Catholicism*, 1941) attempted to be more objective, only to be ostracized by opposition from powerful bishops.[7] More typically, if errors and embarrassments could not be hidden, they were glossed over. An example of that style was the article "The Survival of the Catholic Faith in Southern Maryland, " by John LaFarge, S.J., which appeared in 1935 during the tricentennial celebrations of the founding of the colony. Lafarge openly regretted that Jesuits had owned slaves in the United States, but argued that at least they had a benevolent style of governing which set a humane example for other slaveholders. Lafarge felt that while they failed to change the system, the Jesuits at least showed the least offensive means of proceeding within it.[8]

The Council's call for less defensiveness in the Church's interactions with the rest of the world created a greater openness to critical analysis of the Catholic past by Catholics themselves. A new tendency to look unabashedly at problematic aspects of the Church's past meant that Jesuit slaveholding received due mention in two general histories of the American Church which appeared during the 1980's. These were *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (1981), by James Hennesey, S.J., and *The American Catholic Experience: From Colonial Times to the Present* (1985), by Jay Dolan. Both were objective scholars who focused on narrative reconstruction, and their impartiality was a departure from the apologetic LaFarge approach. The nature of their comprehensive studies prevented Hennesey and Dolan from giving slavery more than passing attention in their books, however. Ultimately, when it comes to their treatment of Jesuit slaveholding, Hennesey and Dolan must be identified with the Finn-Curran approach of reconstructing the basics of a long glossed over narrative as evenhandedly as possible. They did not treat thoroughly the moral paradigms that determined the manner in which the Jesuits functioned as slaveholders.

Other pressures than historiographical objectivity were exerting themselves on Catholic scholarship concerning slavery, however. The Council's call for greater objectivity coincided with the height of the civil rights movement in the United States—-the year of the Council's close, 1965, was the same year that saw Martin Luther King's march on Selma, Alabama, and the enactment of the Voting Rights Act. Many Catholics reacted to this combination of events by making a collective examination of conscience on the race question. It was natural that when some Catholic historians considered their Church's slaveholding, they showed a direct moral outrage that reacted sharply against the LaFarge approach. A typical expression of this righteous anger may be found in Cyprian Davis' book *The History of Black Catholics in the United States* (1990). Davis' theme was not so much an objective study of African American Catholics as it was a celebration of the faith of a community who never ceased claiming as their own a Church which historically treated them with a mixture of outright injustice and unthinking neglect, both before and after abolition. Davis concluded that

> The story of African American Catholicism is the story of a people who obstinately clung to a faith that gave them sustenance, even when it did not always make them welcome. Like many others, blacks had to fight for their faith; but their fight was often with members of their own household. Too long have black Catholics been anonymous. It is now clear that they can be identified, that their presence has made an impact, and that their contributions have made Catholicism a unique and stronger religious body.9

There is a major theological place for such a meditation within the Church, but Davis' approach has serious historiographical limits. Is it fair to evaluate the moral decisions of the antebellum Jesuits according to the ethical standards of the late twentieth century, when slavery is universally condemned? There is a clear need to try to see the world as these men themselves saw it at the time they made their decisions.

The moral outrage epitomized by Davis has been accompanied by the rise of still another method of pondering Catholic slaveholding, the effort to use the Church's eventual turnabout on the issue as a historical precedent for those seeking reform in today's Catholic Church. The issue of whether and how the Church can change its doctrines has been a great preoccupation of the post-Counciliar Church, which has been marked by a tension between great demands for vast reforms and vast institutional resistance to further reform. One key query that has emerged has been this: how can an institution that proclaims itself incapable of error adapt itself to social and doctrinal change? Slaveholding, one issue on which the Church clearly changed its teaching late in the nineteenth century after hundreds of years of defending the practice, has attracted attention from theologians who wonder whether and how the Church

can accommodate its moral theology to such matters as changing views on human sexuality, the status of women, and the structure of the priesthood.

Two examples of this use of the slaveholding issue may be found in the article "Development in Moral Doctrine," by John T. Noonan, Jr. (1993) once presented as part of the Warren Lecture Series on Catholic Studies at the University of Oklahoma, and the book *Infallibility on Trial: Church, Conciliarity and Communion* by Luis M. Bermejo (1992). These types of studies collect much historical information of great value, taking great care to trace the legislation of popes and councils, but do so primarily to make a broader theological point. The objective reconstruction of the past is not their priority; they are more interested in the fact of that the theology of slaveholding was destroyed by a Church of reform than they are in what that theology actually said to a Church of tradition. Ultimately, therefore, these studies also do not fill the gap in our objective understanding of the moral universe of the Jesuit slaveholders.

Ironically, the increased attention to Catholic slaveholding within the Church itself has not been paralled by all that much interest in Catholic slaveholding by mainstream historians. That is regrettable, for the record of the Maryland Jesuits as slaveholders shows that they were exceptions to many of the general theses about the typical motives and conduct of American slaveholders that historians have offered recently.

Just as there has been a revolution in Catholic historiography since the 1950's, so there has also been a revolution in the general historiography of slaveholding. Furthermore, in comparing these two subsets of the historiographical discipline, the similarities of transition from apologetic to critical to moralistic approaches has been striking. Eric Foner has described the old apologetic approach to slaveholding, with its thesis that it was a civilizing masters devised a benevolent institution to deal with the natural backwardness of the enslaved. Apologists argued that plantation life was marked by good standards of living for the slaves, gentle punishments, and true reciprocity between masters and slaves.[10] This thesis is a good description of the ideals that the Jesuits, at least, said they had for their slaves. Neither in the case of the Jesuits or any other masters, however, did it fit reality.

Revision began in 1956, when Kenneth Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* reconstructed plantations as places of persistent conflict between masters and slaves, a conflict caused by the clash between the master's desire to earn the greatest possible income and the slaves' constant efforts to undermine the slaveholding institution through both direct and passive aggression.[11]

Whatever the general accuracy of Stampp's thesis, it does not fit the Jesuit picture very neatly. The accurate model of a Jesuit plantation is a place where there was a clash between masters ambivalent about profit and slaves eager to undermine the institution through direct and passive aggression. So, the

Stampp thesis only half fits the Jesuit situation. The slave resistance on the Jesuit plantations may have been as motivated as much by resistance to the control the masters tried to exert over the religious lives of the slaves as it was by resistance to efforts to get the slaves to work harder.

Stampp's thought began a discussion which eventuall produced a thesis of slavery as a ruthless engine of economic prosperity that was practiced with capitalistic efficiency and prodigious profit. This analysis reached its culmination with the work of Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engermann, first writing together in *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (1974) and later by Fogel writing alone in *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* (1989).

In their joint work, Fogel and Engermann focused in a provocative way on the accomplishments that slaves themselves were able to make during their bondage, to the point where some critics wondered whether their thesis to left room to question why slavery had ever been abolished. They responded:

> We have attacked the traditional interpretation of the economics of slavery not in order to resurrect a defunct system, but in order to correct the perversion of the history of blacks—in order to strike down the view that black Americans were without culture, without achievement, and without development

for their first two hundred and fifty years on American soil. . . . One of the worst consequences of the traditional interpretation of slavery is that is has diverted attention from the attack on the material conditions of black people that took place during the decades following the end of the Civil War. By exaggerating the severity of slavery, all that has come after it has been made to appear as an improvement over previous conditions.[12]

The view that the slaves made an indispensable contribution to the early American economy through their work for the welfare of their masters would have startled the Jesuits, who constantly stressed in their writings the burden of governing and caring for these resistant people. Furthermore, the Jesuit record modifies the idea that the living standards of slaves should only be measured materially. For example, living conditions for the Jesuits' slaves declined sharply once they were sold to new masters in Louisiana in 1838, and this decline was spiritual as well as material.

Jesuits were self-consciously moral men, well versed in centuries of theology and ethics, who attempted to conduct slaveholding in a manner which they hoped would be pleasing to God. They were, however, resistant to the abolitionist agenda.

In addition, major writers on the connection between slaveholding and organized religion have had little to say about the Jesuits. Albert J. Raboteau and Eugene Genovese both overlooked the slaveholding experiences of the

Jesuits in their books. Raboteau's *Slave Religion: The 'Invisible Institution' in the Antebellum South* (1978) focused almost exclusively on the experience of Protestant slaves.[13] His more recent study, *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African American Religious History* (1995) does contain a chapter on black Catholics, but the emphasis is on the experience and reflection of slaves rather than their masters, despite a passing reference to the Jesuits.[14] While Raboteau's approach is in laudable accordance with the recent historiographical trend of concentrating on the experiences of "outsider" groups whose perspectives have traditionally been neglected in mainstream American historiography, it leaves a gap in our understanding of how Jesuit slaveholders justified their practice to themselves.

Genovese had little to say about American Catholic slaveowners or slaves in *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (1974), despite his strong interest in how slaveholders tried to manipulate religion to hold slaves in obedience, in how slaves, in their turn, tried to manipulate religion as a tool in their struggle for freedom, and in how slaveholding in Protestant North America compared with the more Catholic derivatives in Latin America.[15] His more recent study of slaveholders' religion, *The Slaveholder's Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820–1860* (1992) focused on what Protestant slaveholders thought about medieval Catholicism rather than on what they thought of the Catholic Church in their own time in the South.[16] Genovese thus missed an opportunity to study some key differences between other slaveholders and Jesuits, most notably the fact that when Jesuits defended slavery, they tended to regarded it as a necessary evil rather than a positive good.

While zeal for profit may have characterized the general class of American slaveholders, the Jesuits were too ambivalent about profit to fit into such a category. Their unease about wealth had direct consequences: their farms were disastrously unproductive until the sale of their last slaves. Moreover, far from having an uncomplicated determination to wring as much sweat out of their slaves as they could, the Jesuits seem to have come to regard slaveholding as a cross they had to endure for the sake of the religious salvation of their slaves. They persisted in a belief that the slaves constituted a trust given to them by God, and that the success of their supervision of them would be measured by whether or not the slaves were received into Heaven. At the very least, Jesuit slaveholders were an exception to the general rule of slaveholding in the United States. It is just possible that their experience bids us to revise our analysis of that general rule.

Jesuits in Maryland may also have been the exception to the general manner with which slaveholding was conducted within the Roman Catholic Church. When Stanley Elkins wrote *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (1959), he believed that slavery in the United States was a far more rigid, racist and inhumane institution than its counterpart in Latin America. Elkins credited this difference, in part, to the Roman

Catholicism of the Latin Americans, which he saw as leading to a more benevolent approach to slaves and slaveholding than the British Protestantism that dominated slaveholders in North America. Elkins found a flexibility in Latin American practices that led to quick and flexible manumissions as well as social mobility for freed slaves.[17] The Jesuits of Maryland may have been Catholic, but their lives and those of their slaves unfolded in a vastly different way from Elkins' scenario, showing that Catholicism itself could produce pluralistic methods of slaveholding.

Maryland Jesuits departed from Elkins' reconstruction in almost every particular. They were cautious about manumissions, often changing their minds after deciding to carry them out. They did little to challenge the inhospitable reception generally given to free blacks in Maryland, in fact keeping blacks in bondage rather than sending them forth as small businessmen in a prophetic challenge to the Maryland marginalization of the free African American. In *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century*, Barbara Jeanne Fields described this hostility of Maryland society to manumission.[18] Comparison of her findings with the reluctance of the Maryland Jesuits to manumit their slaves helps to confirm her perspective that Maryland was not a place where a freed slave could easily prosper. Their record shows that the Maryland Jesuits did little to challenge that moral climate of opposition to freed blacks. Interestingly, Fields never mentioned the Jesuit slaveholders in her book, despite its exclusive focus on a state where they owned so many, and where their record had so much to add to her thesis.

Finally, a study of the thought of the Maryland Jesuits offers a chance to expand our understanding of why Catholics in the United States generally resented the abolitionist movement. Various explanations have been advanced for this hostility. In *American Catholics*, James Hennesey emphasized how white Catholic immigrants feared competing for bottom-level jobs with freed slaves. Also, Hennesey stressed how much those immigrants saw the concern of abolitionists for Blacks in the distant South as hypocritical, given that such reformers were simultaneously exploiting and discriminating against the white poor in their own Northern cities while proclaiming a nativist hostility to Catholicism.[19]

The Maryland Jesuits were resistant to abolitionism, however, long before immigration and nativism became vivid issues in the 1830's. Their opposition was based on abolitionism's origins in Protestantism, which Jesuits saw as a heresy, all of whose manifestations and derivatives must be resisted. The writings of Brother Joseph Mobberly, S.J. (1783–1827), the most prolific Jesuit author on the slavery issue, show a resistance to private interpretation of the Bible and the idea that anyone other than pope, bishops and priests could exercise authority in the Church. Mobberly saw abolitionism as both a consequence and a proponent of these two heresies, either of which he feared would lead to religious and social anarchy. Slavery became for him a necessary, pater-

nalistic evil for the preservation of order: he said he regretted that it had been introduced into the United States, but he knew not how Americans, let alone Jesuits, could rid themselves of that institution.[20]

How the Jesuits of Maryland came by, treated and finally disposed of the "Negroes of Ours" is the topic of this book. The first question, how they originally acquired slaves, is addressed in Chapter One, "Property and Religious Liberty: The Emergence of Jesuit Slaveholding," which demonstrates why Jesuits found the owning of chattel to be indispensable to the Catholic struggle for civil liberty under English rule. These political factors overruled even the compelling economic and social forces which pushed Maryland as a whole to become a slaveholding society during those years.

Chapter Two is entitled "Real Poverty and Apparent Wealth on the Jesuit Farms," and argues that the fragmentary and chaotic nature of the surviving financial records indicates that the Maryland Jesuits had an ingrained financial carelessness which resulted in a chronic indebtedness to their London superiors of the English Province of the Society of Jesus. This disregard was partly due to the Jesuits' greater professional interest in ministry than farm management, but it was also made possible by the generosity of lay Catholic planters in Maryland, whose benefactions to the Jesuits allowed the order to escape the worst consequences of their fiscal mismanagement. Another matter that was given priority over the general administration of the plantations was the pastoral care which the Jesuits felt they owed their slaves, which was caught up in the ineradicable mixture of social paternalism and racism with which the Jesuits regarded their chattel.

Chapter Three, "Doubt and Debate: Jesuit Questions about Slaveholding," demonstrates how events such as the suppression of the Jesuit order by the Church between 1773 and 1814, the American Revolution, the emergence of the early American republic, and the arrival of refugee priests from the French Revolution stimulated some argument among clergy in Maryland as to whether slaveholding by priests should continue. These discussions actually led to the adoption of a gradual manumission policy in 1814, but it was repealed six years later without having been implemented. Chapter Four, "Preaching versus Practice: Jesuit Theory and Conduct of Slaveholding" offers an explanation for this failure to change, showing that even while talking of about ideals of mildly conducted slaveholding and possible manumission the Jesuits continued to govern their slaves harshly even amid changing times.

A major cause of the impulse to retain slaveholding is traced in Chapter Five, "Brother Joseph Mobberly and the Intellectual Antecedents of Jesuit Antiabolitionism." The Jesuits' conviction that abolitionism was a derivative of Protestant heresy blinded them to the valid arguments of the anti-slavery movements of the early nineteenth century. A counterweight to this bias toward keeping the slaves is explored in Chapter Six, "To Serve the Slave or the Immigrant?" As the Jesuits foresaw the coming massive migration of white European Catholics into the seaports of the East Coast, some grew increasingly inclined to view their black slaves as an impediment to ministry with Catholics of sounder moral character, greater religious promise, and white race.

Chapter Seven, "The End of Jesuit Slaveholding, 1838," ponders the climactic events that brought the Jesuits' to their decision finally to sell all their chattel. In context, the decision to sell rather than free the slaves can be seen as a compromise among the various positions that Jesuits took on the question of slaveholding in general. By selling instead of freeing their slaves, the Jesuits remained consistent with their heritage of antiabolitionism and their sense of official Church teaching. That they disposed of their personal slaves, however, gave the Jesuits their desired availability to the white urban Catholic immigrant. An epilogue, "A Slaveholding Both Anglo-American and Catholic," assesses the lessons of the Jesuit experience.

Underlying all these chapters is a broad thesis that the Jesuits always had their unique motives for slaveholding. It is tempting to classify them as typical Maryland slaveholders. They began the practice around the same time as it generally emerged in the colony, and they abandoned it as it was in overall decline throughout the state. All the social and economic factors that influenced other slaveholders influenced them. However, the Jesuits always had their own reasons, springing from their status as professional, Catholic men of God and participants in the Anglo-American culture that produced the United States.

Historiography has passed through several phases in evaluating slaveholding: championing it, measuring its efficiency, condemning it, reconstructing its narrative and using its example to shed light on pressing issues of today. Slaveholding has received enough attention that we are no longer shocked by its existence or its extent. It is timely, therefore, to look beyond the basic tale of Jesuit slaveholding and study the moral assumptions upon which its conduct and termination were based. A belief system which was initally based upon the political expediency of holding black Catholics in bondage so that all Catholics might have religious liberty combined with ambivalence about profit and a theological justification of moral, social, and racial paternalism of betters toward their lessers to create the network of Jesuit slaveholdings. In the later decades of the eighteenth century, this practice survived ecclesiastical suppression and political revolution to endure a climate of antiabolitionism in the early nineteenth century. Finally, however, it gave way to the demands of immigration. In reconstructing how the moral sensibility of the Jesuits gave meaning to these events, this dissertation proposes to offer a greater understanding of the elaborate historical experience of Jesuit slaveholding in the colony and state of Maryland.

NOTES

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2. Robert Emmett Curran, S.J., *The Bicentennial History of Georgetown University, I: From Academy to University, 1789–1889* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1993), p.119.

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4. "Deed of the chattel of Newtown from Father William Hunter, S.J. to Thomas Jameson, Senior, January 30, 1717," in Thomas Hughes, S.J., *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal, Documents: I, Part I, 1605–1838* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908), #40, p. 222.

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6. See "Part One: The Catholic Tradition on Slavery," in Kenneth J. Zanca, editor, *American Catholics and Slavery, 1789–1866: An Anthology of Primary Documents* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1994), pp. xxvii-29.

7. John Tracy Ellis, *Catholic Bishops: A Memoir* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983), p. 70.

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11. Kenneth Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Antebellum South* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books Edition, 1989), p. 399.

12. Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (New York: W. W. Norton edition, 1989), p. 258, p. 260.

13. Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The 'Invisible Institution' in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 381. This index reference to Roman Catholicism shows that only eleven pages in a text of 321 pages was devoted to that Church.

14. Albert J. Raboteau, "Minority within a Minority: The History of Black Catholics in America," in his book, *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African American Religious History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), pp. 117–137.

15. Eugene D. Genovese, "Slave Religion in Hemispheric Perspective," in his book *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books Edition, 1976), pp. 168–183.

16. Eugene D. Genovese, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Thought, 1820–1860* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992), p. 6.

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CHAPTER ONE

Property and Religious Liberty: The Emergence of Jesuit Slaveholding

As overseer of St. Inigoe's Plantation between 1806 and 1820, Brother Joseph Mobberly, S.J. often visited the nearby hamlet of Centreville, Maryland on business. Centreville was a Methodist stronghold, and the Roman Catholic Mobberly often found himself drawn into theological debate during his visits there. One prominent figure, whom Mobberly did not name in his diary but recorded as simultaneously holding the roles of magistrate, storekeeper and minister, "pretended to be a man of very extensive reading." He frequently challenged Mobberly's beliefs.

One day, sometime between 1815 and 1817, the storekeeper and Mobberly quarreled about whether Saint Augustine of Hippo had been a Calvinist. The storekeeper insisted that Augustine was indeed a Calvinist, probably attempting to communicate that this patristic father of the Church had at least been an intellectual forbear of John Calvin's doctrine of predestination. Mobberly relied strictly on the chronological facts for his rebuttal: "that is impossible, because Saint Augustine lived several centuries before Calvin was born." Mobberly recorded that each proponent repeated his position several times, neither yielding at all. Finally, the frustrated Jesuit turned his back and strode out of the store, chiding himself "for having indulged so long in conversation with a Methodistic Ninnyhammer."[1]

The doctrinal affinity of Augustine and Calvin is a matter for theologians to resolve. It is possible for a historian, however, to discern more subtle supporting evidence for Mobberly's claim. Jesuits had embraced enough of Augustine's social philosophy to be justified in claiming him as one of their own. Augustine's specific views on slavery influenced the Jesuit's everyday treatment of their slaves, as Chapter Three of this study will discuss more fully. However, Augustine's broader philosophy of the relationship between the church and sec-

ular society was of even greater importance in disposing Jesuits toward slaveholding in the first place. His portrayal of history as the faithful's struggle to attain the righteous "city of God" while living within the sinful "city of man" rang true for Jesuits as they tried to build the Roman Catholic Church in the unfriendly climate of predominantly Protestant Maryland. In the pursuit of their difficult task, Jesuits discerned that the possession of slaves was another means by which they could protect their Church from its enemies.

Throughout the colonial period, the Jesuits dealt with a hostile culture by establishing little "cities of God"—their own plantations—throughout Maryland's "city of man." Within these private enclaves, the exercise of the Catholic religion could proceed in relative harmony. This land had to be developed, however, for sufficient income was necessary in order to keep the plantations in Catholic hands. Jesuits could themselves not farm fulltime without neglecting their priestly duties. Therefore, servants were an important support to the Jesuit plantation apostolate from the earliest years. Eventually, the possession of slaves came to serve a wider goal, the Jesuits' assertion of their own right and the right of Catholic laymen in the colony to be accorded the full rights of English subjects.

This situation endured until the American Revolution, making it unlikely that the Jesuits would seriously consider the abandonment of their slaveholding before that time. Their struggle throughout the colonial period for religious liberty and property rights is well-known, but the utility of slaveholding in their struggle has not received adequate attention. There is a need to reexamine Jesuit colonial political philosophy in the light of its implication for the possession of slaves. So far reconstructions of the Jesuit propositions about Catholic rights to worship and property ownership have ignored the implications of these propositions for this issue.[2]

The evolution of their political philosophy took place within a context of sectarian struggle, which the Jesuits interpreted mystically, as the manifestation of a deeper conflict between good and evil. They regarded the good forces of the Catholic Church as arrayed against worldly Protestant heretics. In an effort to imbibe the mystery of this struggle, Jesuits turned to Augustine, particularly to *The City of God,* his book responding to the sack of Rome in the year 410 C.E.

To Augustine, the misfortune of Rome was another act in the constant drama of sin's mysterious power to thwart the progress of the reign of God. "I must speak also of the earthly city—of that city which lusts to dominate the world. . . . From this earthly city issue the enemies against whom the City of God must be defended."[3] He went on to speak of the spiritual challenges that faced Christians as they struggled to maintain their fidelity to God and community with one another amid the pressures of daily life. The danger was that until the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Christian would be forced to live simultaneously under the influence of both cities. The believer's challenge was

to avoid overshadowing by the human dimension. Translated to the Maryland situation, this theological formula guaranteed that political imperatives would rank with spiritual, theological and intellectual influences in encouraging Jesuits to persist in slaveholding throughout the colonial era.

Study of the connection between the struggle for political liberty of Catholic colonists and their slaveholding is important, for it can augment study of a possible connection between the emergence of political liberty for all white male freeholders of the Chesapeake and the evolution of a slaveholding system. Lower class Protestant colonists did not have to deal with the burden of religious minority in pressing their case for liberty, but the upper class Catholics of Maryland, including the Jesuits, did.

According to one reconstruction, the liberties of white planters in late seventeenth century Virginia were secured through the emergence of an elaborate system of African slave labor. Social and economic tensions increased as the population of Tidewater Virginia grew; many white settlers finished their term of indenture but had little prospect of obtaining land. Bacon's Rebellion of 1676, in which planters on the western edge of the Virginia colony rose up against the largerscale owners to their east, was a symptom of this problem. The eventual replacement of a white indentured laboring force by an enslaved black labor force contributed to conditions which finally allowed poor whites to develop modest prosperity they might not otherwise have obtained, to own small amounts of land, and to share a modicum of the social prestige enjoyed by largescale, slaveholding planters. The result was to secure for all white male freeholders a right of participation in a republican government and a superior social status simply by the fact of their whiteness. These factors, this reconstruction concludes, greatly defused the potential for class conflict in the Chesapeake.[4]

The problem faced by the first Jesuit planters of Maryland, however, was not the pursuit of upward mobility. Most of them were of high English birth, "Popish Gentlemen of good families," according to a commentary of Peter Atwood, S.J. in 1718.[5] Indeed, in early seventeenth century England, on the eve of Maryland's colonization, only the sons of the gentry could afford to travel to the mainland of Europe for the Jesuit novitiate and subsequent clerical education that was banned in England itself. Roman Catholicism largely died out among most lower class Englishmen during the reign of Elizabeth I because they generally lacked the means to provide for a private space for the practice of the faith. Only those poor who managed to cluster near Catholic businessmen in London or around gentry estates in the countryside found havens for devotion. The result was that the first Catholic settlers of Maryland, while a small minority of the colony, were also its elite until at least the late 1640s. The large majority of the first settlers were lower class Protestants.[6] This situation of Catholic elitism was unique in "the entire history of English North America."[7]

After decades of threats and occasional repressions, Catholics were effectively eliminated from political participation in Maryland by the Glorious Revolution of 1689 and remained so until the American Revolution of 1776. The exclusion began when Maryland Protestants took advantage of the deposition of the Catholic James I in favor of the Protestant monarchs William and Mary to bar Catholics from government. This event was known locally as the revolt of the Protestant Associators.[8] As far as Catholics were concerned, it was no longer enough to be a propertyholder in order to vote. The exceptional impediment to Catholic civil rights thus became religious minority status rather than social class. Jesuits remained the intellectual leaders of the Catholic planters of Maryland, however, and led the way in articulating resistance to this imposed settlement. They developed a political philosophy which regarded landholding and slaveholding as avenues to the procurance of civil rights for themselves and their coreligionists. Examination of this philosophy may augment studies of white people of the Chesapeake, in general, found slavery to serve their own purposes. For Catholics, at least, more was at stake in the tradeoff between slavery and freedom than simple political participation and social prestige. They used the fact of their slaveholding to argue the case for their own religious liberty.

Much of their spiritual and intellectual formation prompted Jesuits to conduct slaveholding for what they told themselves were fundamentally altruistic reasons, as part of a paternal responsibility for the spiritual and material welfare of lower class people and people of darker color whom the Jesuits regarded as needing the direction of others. The political motivations for their slaveholding, however, revealed that this rationale of selflessness was not wholly accurate. Jesuits, like their peers, thought of their self-interest when they practiced politics. Moreover, the self-interest they pursued in this matter resulted in a Church which accorded spiritual freedom to slaves even while holding them in material bondage. Jesuits' theological, political, and social activities thus intermingled generosity and repression in a paradoxical way.

It is not possible to understand the weight the Jesuits attached to land ownership in the Maryland colony unless one comprehends their experience as fugitive, landless priests in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. The English government feared that the Jesuits were agents of the papacy and Catholic Spain in a conspiracy to overthrow the Protestant settlement. From 1585, it was high treason for a Jesuit even to be present in England. This policy was reinforced after Jesuits were implicated in the so-called "Gunpowder Plot" to blow up the houses of Parliament in 1605.[9] While many Jesuits continued to enter the country secretly, they fell dependent on the willingness of sympathetic householders to conceal them.

This dependence on the English gentry lessened Jesuit freedom to choose and conduct their own apostolates. Their occupations became chaplaincy and tutoring behind the doors of manor households rather than open proclamation

of the Gospel.[10] This was a frustrating situation for most Jesuits, whose spiritual heritage and personal dispositions inclined them toward a bold public evangelization of the English nation. They were restless at the gentry's willingness to privatize religious practice in return for the government's tacit consent to leave upperclass Catholics alone. An open break with the gentry, however, would have cost the Jesuits not only financial support, but also possibly their lives.

On balance, therefore, life in England was disappointing to many Jesuits by the middle third of the seventeenth century. Those who traveled to Maryland from 1634 were responding to this frustration, and to the hope that in the New World they might be able to proceed more freely.[11] This hope was not to be fulfilled entirely, but from the start of the colony Jesuits fully shared in the typical desire of colonists to seek their own land rather than dwell perpetually on estates belonging to others.

Their eagerness to leave England led to Jesuit acquiescence in the conditions which the first proprietor of the colony, Lord Baltimore, imposed on all Catholic settlers proceeding to Maryland. In the interests of domestic peace within the settlement, and in hopes that the Protestant colonists would refrain from sending complaints to the government in London, Baltimore directed Catholics to keep their religious observance private and not engage in polemics with their neighbors.[12] Baltimore may have devised this strategy following his failure to secure a colony at Avalon in Newfoundland, where sectarian bitterness was a major impediment to success. This experience made him all the more determined to promote Catholic discretion from the outset of Maryland.[13] The result was that the Jesuits were impelled to seek a zone of privacy for Catholic practice immediately—their own landholdings.

Jesuits joined Lord Baltimore in articulating an important paradigm for the new colony. Baltimore's promotional literature for his settlement envisioned Maryland landholdings as analogous to the medieval manors of England—not only in terms of their legal classification, but also in terms of their social structure. They would be class-based, with landlords, tenants and servants in descending order.[14] Thus was devised a patriarchal order that would provide an important context for the emergence of slaveholding.

Most importantly, there was an aspect of Catholic life on the gentry estates of England that the Jesuits were determined to continue on their own farms. Back home, lower class Catholics who went to work for the gentry as servants found, on these large estates, a private space in which to carry out religious devotions that the penal laws denied them a public right to perform. In the gentry homes, domestics and estate workers could attend the liturgies at which Jesuits and other priest chaplains presided. Thus, gentry estates became the nuclei of what small pockets of Catholic population survived in the English countryside.[15] If there was indeed to be no public promotion of religion in

Maryland, in accordance with Lord Baltimore's wishes, this model appeared to be the best alternative for Catholic proceeding there as well.

A slight revision of this model, in which the Jesuits joined the laity as estate owners, became the paradigm for Catholic community among the English settlers of Maryland. This model regarded the farms as fundamentally conducted for the good of the upper and lower classes living together in a unity of soul. Catholics who came to a Jesuit estate in Maryland were drawn first of all by their common religion, and only secondarily by their diverse social roles.

The early Maryland manor is believed to have fulfilled three main functions. First, it provided an overwhelmingly male population with a community to live in until they could afford their own households. While working for the manorial lord, they could learn the skills of farming tobacco and maize, as well as accumulate equipment for their eventual own farms.[16] To these reasons, we may add the thought that a Jesuit manor, in particular, provided a safe place for the practice of Catholicism. For Protestants, the manor rather quickly fulfilled its function and passed from the scene toward the end of the seventeenth century.[17] However, for Jesuits, the manor remained a key ideal. They continued to regard the colony itself a "manor writ large" until the Revolutionary War.[18]

Important theological and historical currents within Counter-Reformation Catholicism encouraged this persistence in manorialism. The Church of this era envisioned itself as a "perfect society." This expression did not signify a morally flawless Church, but a Church in accordance with a definition of perfection found in medieval scholastic philosophy—a self-sufficiency in every respect, "a society having all the means at its disposal to reach its own end."[19] The Jesuits hoped that their Maryland manors would become such entities, places where Catholics could gather for prayer because economic productivity had made them places where the Church would be free to pursue its goal of union with God through Catholic practice.

Following the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the "perfect society" paradigm also came to be understood as involving a parallelism between church and state. Each should have its own sphere, within which each would have all the means at its disposal for the work proper to its own sphere. In Catholic countries, this meant that the Church developed its own parallels of several governmental institutions ordinarily associated with secular rule, such as law courts and administrative agencies, but to handle the business of the Church rather than that of the state.[20] The Jesuits of England and Maryland were not in a position to create parallel secular government, but they could and did develop attempt to develop parallels of secular *social* institutions, such as manorial estates and, in Maryland, plantations.

Under the pressure of the persecutions which Jesuits faced in Elizabethan England during the years immediately following Trent, they altered church-state parallelism into the proposition that the world was divided into rigid

spheres of influence for church and state, with each having all the means to function autonomously within its own sphere, but also with neither having any right to intrude on the specific business of the other. Fatefully, the Jesuits would accept parallels for the regulations for slaveholding according to this model. The state would codify it as a social institution, while the Church would limit itself with the spiritual lives of slaves.

The influence of this parallelism on the English Catholicism that would give birth to the Maryland Jesuit manors can be measured by examining two sets of comments made forty six years apart during the sixteenth century. At his execution in 1535 for failing to acknowledge the royal supremacy over the English Church, the former lord chancellor Thomas More (1478–1535) remarked that he died "the king's good servant—but God's first."[21] The logical implication of More's declaration was that the good English Catholic would obey the papacy before the Crown. This was characteristic of a medieval outlook that the Church enjoyed supremacy over the state in every particular. In 1570, this belief seemed to be reaffirmed when Pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth I and exhorted English Catholics to work for her deposition, violently if need be.[22]

A Jesuit who reentered England after this decree, Edmund Campion (1542–1581) realized that he would only be able to do priestly work there if he could convince the authorities that Jesuits sincerely held the belief that it was wrong for priests to interfere in the business of the state. Therefore, Campion took More's thesis and revised it, making church and state parallel—equal but separate entities. He informed the Privy Council that he had never intended, and in any case was strictly forbidden by his religious superiors, to deal with the political issues facing the English crown. These were not part of his vocation, so Campion claimed that he had been trained to keep himself away from them.[23]

At his trial for treason, Campion emphasized that Jesuits were "dead men to the world; we only traveled for souls; we touched neither state nor policy; we had no such commission."[24] Campion concluded his defense with an emphasis on the obedience due to Elizabeth I in all temporal matters.

Some have equated Campion's thought with More's identification of himself as a loyal servant of the King.[25] The truth, however, is that Campion was much more willing than More to give the state autonomy within its proper sphere. Campion wanted the government to abstain from ecclesiastical interference in return for Jesuit abstinence from politics, so his only disagreement with the Elizabethan state was to deny its right to regulate religious practice.

Campion's successors on the Jesuit mission to England matured his philosophy of political reticence. Robert Southwell, S.J. (1561–1595), for example, addressed "An Humble Supplication to Her Majiestie" in 1593. In this treatise, Southwell tried, once again, to convince Elizabeth I that the Jesuits were pre-

pared to be docile on other political questions in exchange for their religious liberty:

> Disloyalty shall never be found the sequell of any Article of our Religion; which more than any other tieth vs to a most exact submission to your temporall authority, and to all points of allegiance, that either now in Catholique cuntries, or ever before in Catholique times, were acknowledged to be due any Christian prince. . . . It is a point of the Catholique faith (defended by vs against the Sectaries of these dayes) that Subiects are bound in Conscience, vnder pain of forfeitting their right in heaven, and incurring the guilt of eternal torments, to obey the iust lawes of their princes . . . in all . . . civil and temporall respects, we are as submitted and pliable as any of your Maiesties best beloved subiects.[26]

There are two reasons why this rigid division of church and state was important for the emergence of Maryland Jesuit slaveholding. First, it encouraged the Jesuits to establish small private enclaves, their manors, where they attempted to function as unobtrusively and self-sufficiently as possible and thereby ensure the survival of their faith. The means to religious liberty was always discretion. Therefore, Jesuits and other Catholic elites resorted to a policy of regarding Maryland as "the manor writ large" in lieu of formal laws protecting Catholic rights.[27] In their attempt to make their enclaves self-contained, Jesuits would accept whatever labor they needed—indentured servants at first, slaves when the supply of indentured laborers began to run low.

Second, their theory of church-state separation adversely affected the Jesuits' ability to participate in the debate over how the colonial government should regulate the emerging institution of slavery. Significantly, this result came about because the Jesuits, pursuing their ideal of temporal abstinence to a logical conclusion, demanded exemption from service in the Maryland Assembly.

The Maryland Assembly was an important institution in colonial America—the first such body to be established in a North American English colony from the settlement's founding.[28] At least three of the first seven Assemblies were general meetings. All freemen, including the Jesuits, were summoned to participate.[29] Had this tradition continued, the Jesuits would have been drawn more deeply into the political process than they wished to be.

The issue of the Jesuit presence in Maryland became an important means for acting out a struggle between the proprietor and the assembly to determine who would have the greater law-making power. Lord Baltimore believed that the assembly's role should be subordinate to his own decisions; the legislature was to advise and consent but not initiate policy on its own. A strict interpretation of the colonial charter supported Baltimore's opinion: it spoke of a unitary process in which the proprietor would propose and enact laws with "the advice assent and approbation of the Free-men of the said Province."[30] From

the beginning, however, the Assembly wished to devise laws on its own.[31] Since Baltimore was inclined to regulate Jesuit activity and the assemblymen were not, during the first decade of the colony defenders of the Jesuits were usually also advocates of legislative supremacy.[32]

The conventional interpretation of the Jesuits' own role in this controversy is that they wanted to establish a Catholic ascendancy in Maryland and actively lobbied Catholic assemblymen to vote accordingly.[33] There were three Jesuit activities that convinced Baltimore of Jesuit aspirations for a Catholic ascendancy—their desire to have their manors exempted from political, military and financial obligations, their willingness to accept gifts of land from native Americans without seeking proprietary permission, and their evangelization among both the indigenous peoples and the Protestant settlers.[34] However, what the Jesuits really wanted was recognition of their right to live without interference on their manors.

The Jesuits envisioned each of these goals as only pursuing and expressing their deeper desire for a more secure network of private manors. They wanted to exempt the land from secular obligations so that it might be more fully private and private in its Catholicism. Jesuits were willing to accept land from the natives because they were eager to establish their private manors as quickly as possible. Even the evangelization of the Protestants was to be done passively: the Jesuits hoped that Protestants would be drawn by the word and example of the priests to visit the manors and so be converted. The annual letter of the missionaries to the English Provincial in 1639 said:

> To the hope of the Indian harvest, are to be added also no mean fruits reaped from the colony and its inhabitants, to whom, on the principal feast days of the year, sermons are preached, and the expositions of the catechism given on the Lord's Day. Not only Catholics come in crowds, but very many heretics. . . . Our people cease not daily to engage in their divine employment, and to dispense the sacraments to those that come, as often as circumstances demand.[35]

An important reason that the evangelization of the Protestants was envisioned so passively was that the Jesuit mission to Maryland, in its earliest years, regarded itself as primarily directed to the conversion of the native Americans. Work among the English settlers was secondary to the prospect of winning natives to Christ. Many Jesuits who volunteered for the Maryland mission spoke of the chance to work among the native peoples as their primary motivation in migrating.[36]

Had they really been as politically ambitious for a role among the English settlers as Baltimore regarded them, the Jesuits would not have persistently claimed an exemption from service in the Assembly throughout the sessions that debated Baltimore's wish to limit their role within the colony. They sent proxies named Thomas Cornwaleys, Cuthbert Fenwick and Robert Clarke to

the Assembly of 1637–38, which refused to accept their votes.[37] The Jesuits did not really believe they should sit in the assembly; they sent the proxies because the law required them to do so. They did not fight the dismissal of the proxies, a telling sign that representation in the colonial government was repugnant to their doctrine of abstinence from temporal affairs.

In fact, negotiations between Baltimore and the English Province of the Society of Jesus in 1642 resulted in a compromise in which the exemption of Jesuits from further summons to the Assembly represented their side of the bargain. Baltimore wanted them to abandon the land claims they had received from native Americans without the proprietor's permission; the Jesuits demanded the exemption from officeholding in return. This result was due to the negotiating tactics of the English provincial, Henry More (1587–1661), a great-grandson of Thomas.[38] His demand for the exemption shows that he leaned closer to the theory of Campion regarding church-state relations than to those of his own ancestor.

This accommodation, coming just eight years after the founding of the colony, set up one of the most important reasons why the Maryland Jesuits acquiesced in the later emergence of slaveholding in the colony. It ensured that the Jesuits would not be party to the process that began in the Maryland Assembly as early as the 1660s, the statuatory definition and regulation of slavery. The Assembly early adjudicated such issues as enslavement of negroes for life and a ban on interracial marriages.[39]

This situation was acceptable to the Jesuits because the writings of a premier English Jesuit political philosopher, Robert Persons, assigned the regulation of slavery to the temporal realm as early as 1606. Parsons believed that the temporal order "helps to gouerne well the Commowealth, in peace, aboundance, order and prosperitie . . . handleth the Ciuill affaires of the Realme, and Commonwealth, as they apertaine to the temporall good, and prosperitie thereof."[40] The regulation of property, both landed and chatteled, was what determined "the temporall good and prosperitie" of Maryland with its planting-based economy. Jesuits found it entirely natural that the Assembly should be the party to regulate slavery.

Henry More's decision of 1642 gave the theories of Campion and Parsons about church-state separation formal recognition among the Jesuits in Maryland. This decision provided an unappreciatedly early beginning to a theme often regarded as appearing in American Catholic history only during the Revolutionary War, the idea that priests should remain aloof from politics while only the Catholic laity pursued the full rights of citizenship.[41]

Because Campion's theory of parallelism between church and state and Person's division of labor between the two were both embraced by Henry More in his settlement with Baltimore, the legislature's assumption of jurisdiction over slaveholding signified for the Jesuits of a generation later the end of their eligibility to comment on the future of slavery. Publicly, they could neither

advocate its adoption nor advocate its abolition; the only role left to them was to set examples of good moral conduct for masters through the treatment of their own slaves.

When slavery was discussed within the Assembly, records of the proceedings indicate that the debates were brief and superficial. Decisions were reached quickly, with little dissent.[42] The presence of the Jesuits might have at least extended this process. There is no evidence that they would have sought to abolish slavery, but their thought regarding the spiritual lives of slaves and the religious liberty of all was different enough from Protestant conceptions of the same issues to suggest that Jesuits might have at least sought to place some Catholic influence upon the slave codes. It would have been particularly intriguing had they contributed to the debate on the relationship between baptism and temporal status as a slave. The latter seventeenth century was a time when several colonial legislatures, including Maryland's, passed laws denying the proposition that Christian conversion would necessitate the manumission of a slave.[43] Jesuits embraced this proposition willingly, raising their chattel as both Catholics and slaves from birth. Had Jesuits been in the legislature, they might have championed the perspective that these slaves had a right to their Catholicism, thus upholding the proposition that the basic human right to religious freedom extended even to people without any other civil rights.

There was a deeper level on which the absence of the Jesuits from the Assembly after 1642 hurt the Maryland colony itself. Seventeenth century Maryland was a place of great political immaturity and instability. Settlers proved unable to express and resolve philosophical differences within stable political institutions, instead resorting to violence, uprisings, and manipulation. One reason for this situation was the prolonged political ascendancy of recent immigrants in political office due to high mortality rates and the general failure of the colony's population to reproduce itself naturally during the early decades of settlement.[44]

The Jesuits might have contributed to an earlier stabilization of this situation had they remained active in officeholding. Their experience in accommodating themselves to a difficult political situation in England, combined with their extensive intellectual formation, especially in philosophy, and their tendency to value social stability, all qualified them to make public policy. They exerted indirect influence on the process through the Catholic lay planters whom they educated and ministered to. In fact, until the revolution of 1689, a disproportionate number of the Catholic laity served in elective office.[45] The Protestant majority's resentment of the predominance of the Catholic minority was a major cause of the revolution of 1689.[46]

The fact that there was a Catholic ascendancy makes the Jesuits' abstinence from it between 1642 and 1689 all the more striking. It is a powerful indication of the depth of their desire to live in privacy on their landholdings. It is possible that their theory of the "manor writ large" emerged only after, and in

response to, the 1689 Revolution. The Jesuits were characteristically English in that they devised political theory only in response to actual events, and shunned *a priori* reasoning. This underlying point is true, but the Maryland Jesuits took their underlying philosophy from thought shaped long before 1689, in response to events in Elizabethan England.

There were deeper, more human reasons why the Jesuits came to regard landholding as so important. There were three criteria by which to measure the full integration of new arrivals into Chesapeake society. These were to become a planter, to marry and raise children, and to participate in the political decisions of the community.[47] The Jesuit vow of chastity barred them from the second criteria, while the crucial decision of Henry More in 1642 barred them from the third. Thereafter, the Jesuits were left with only the first goal, the pursuit of planting. From the beginning, they pursued the accumulation of land with great zeal—perhaps because it was the one outward sign of success they could demonstrate to the rest of the colony.

Jesuits first exploited the proprietor's policy of awarding land to gentlemen settlers who paid for the transportation of indentured servants from England in 1634. 400 acres were to be granted for each servant thus imported.[48] One Jesuit alone, Thomas Copley, earned entitlement to 28,000 acres through his diligent response to this offer.[49] Copley, therefore, must have imported sixty-five servants. However, the Jesuits only took possession of 8000 of the acres they thus earned.[50]

Therefore, the missionaries decided to press for the restoration in Maryland of the medieval English law of mortmain, by which the Church would receive the right as an institution to hold its own land in perpetuity, able neither to transfer or sell it. Recognizing the medieval origins of mortmain, some historians have concluded that their advocacy of it meant that Maryland Jesuits desired to return to a medieval English conception of the church-state relationship. Some believe that the Jesuits regressed to this position after arriving in the Cheasapeake.[51] This argument is echoed by those who stress the importance of medieval papal bulls to the Maryland Jesuits.[52] However, to focus only on the Jesuit desire for mortmain is to take a narrow view of their wider goal. They wanted to use mortmain as part of a creative synthesis of the best of medieval philosophy and the Campion-Persons theory of church autonomy in its own sphere. This desire is best illustrated by their nuanced approach to the colonial charter. They championed the charter's provision supporting mortmain, and ignored the provision that only the proprietor could dispose of native American land.

The Charter granted to the first Lord Baltimore by King Charles I indeed provided that mortmain be secured in Maryland. However, within England there was considerable doubt that the monarch had the arbitrary perogative to overrule the Parliamentary statutes that had ended the practice a century earlier. The struggle between Crown and Parliament for supremacy added spice to

this uncertainty. Another complication was a further act of Parliament, passed in 1585 and amended in 1604, which made it a capital felony to "wittingly and willingly receive, comfort, and/or maintain any . . . Jesuit." Lord Baltimore, anticipating the victory of the Puritan party in the English Civil War, refused to concede mortmain in Maryland for fear that a strict interpretation of this later legislation might then cost him his life.[53]

Henry More apparently recognized Baltimore's dilemma and sympathized with it. As part of the compromise of 1642, More agreed to an arrangement whereby the Jesuits would own land as individuals rather than as a corporate body. In effect, colonial Maryland law would not recognize the corporate existence of the Society of Jesus, but it would treat individual Jesuits like any other Englishmen in their personal right to own property.[54] While this was not what the Jesuits had initially wanted, it was an advance over the situation in England itself, where they could not own property under any conditions, either corporately or individually. At least an important individual right of Englishmen had been guaranteed to them by the proprietor, and the Jesuits defended his guarantee for the remainder of the colonial period.

After 1642, the only ways left for individual Jesuits to obtain land was either to buy it outright or receive it as a gift from other English settlers. This simple fact suddenly made the system of indentured servitude much more important to the Jesuits. Who would be willing to sell or give them land? An obvious source was the Catholic lay planter elite, including those who emerged as landholders after initial service as indentured servants. Having their own indentured servants became a way for the Jesuits to assure the emergence of a class of benefactors in later years, donors who would provide them with both land and chattel in gratitude for Jesuit assistance to their passage to the colony.

The Jesuits quickly proved willing to assist indentured servants to Maryland for reasons that went far deeper than the practical need for assistance in the working of the land. Unlike Massachusetts Bay, where most of the migration from England took place during the first decade of settlement, Maryland continued to absorb large numbers of immigrants for most of the seventeenth century. These immigrants fulfilled two crucial economic functions, providing a supply of labor for the tobacco crop and the replenishment of a population as yet unable to reproduce itself naturally due to high and youthful mortality rates.[55]

For the Jesuits, however, these new arrivals served two additional functions: the chance to exercise their project of converting lower class Englishmen to and upholding them in Catholicism, as well as a chance to increase the number of Catholics in the Maryland colony itself. The Jesuits regarded this as an important proactive task for themselves because they did not trust the English Catholic gentry's enthusiasm for Catholic colonization. As early as 1605, Robert Persons, S.J. felt that odds were against the project of "transferring Englishe Catholiques to the Northen partes of Americe" because the rich

would not wish anyone to go and the poor would follow their advice.[56] Thus the Jesuits came to regard themselves as the only trustworthy champions of Catholic immigration to Maryland. Underscoring this fact is the discovery that they never completely abandoned the practice of sponsoring Catholic servants who wished to immigrate to Maryland, owning indentures well into the nineteenth century.[57]

Religion has been an overlooked motivation for migration to Maryland, at least when it comes to people who were recruited to the Jesuit manors. In general, people who emigrated from England to the Chesapeake were people of little wealth, low social standing—illustrative of those Englishfolk who were obliged to work with their hands for a living, either in agriculture or the craft trades. They came from a broad geographical cross section of English society.[58] Many factors impelled people to emigrate, but unemployment was probably the strongest one. Few left their homes in the English countryside with the intention of proceeding overseas, but ventured on to the Chesapeake as an expediency when they could not find work in English cities and seaports.[59] It is probable, however, that Catholic emigrants were more likely than others to have known from the beginning that Maryland was their goal, due to its reputation as a haven for Catholicism.

The eighteenth century was a time when the slave trade was more important than the recruitment of indentured servants in meeting labor needs in Maryland. The importation of some indentures continued, however, and its probable that slaves were reserved for work in the fields while the indentures received the skilled work of the plantation—clerkships, carpentry, masonry, housekeeping and, tutoring for the planter's children.[60] These were skills that pointed to upward mobility once the indenture expired. It was in the Jesuits' interest to cultivate Catholic laymen of such skills, since they could go on to become important benefactors of Church activities.

In 1729, a wealthy planter named James Carroll left "all my servants . . . and chattels" to some Jesuits.[61] This was the type of gifts that Jesuits counted on receiving from their lay neighbors. Such bequests vindicated the policy that the Jesuits had begun, long before the eighteenth century, of nurturing Catholic indentured servants. As early as 1638, the annual report of mission activity sent to superiors back in England recorded the Jesuits' interest in engaging indentured servants primarily as a means of protecting the faith of those servants:

> We bought the contracts of two Catholic indentured servants in Virginia. Nor was the money ill-spent, for both showed themselves good Christians; one, indeed, is extraordinary. Some others have performed the same charitable act in buying from that place Catholic servants, of whom there are a great number. For every year a great many sell themselves into bondage for Virginia, and, as they live among persons of the worst example and are utterly deprived of any spiritual means, they generally make shipwrecks of their souls.[62]

There is no indication here that the Jesuits placed their practical economic need for these servants first. What was important to them was that Catholic servants be brought to the Jesuit plantations so that they could practice the faith in a protective and encouraging environment. It seems likely that servants were encouraged to stay on the farms whether they were needed or not as long as those farms were the safest place for their Catholic devotional practice.

This prioritization of religious over economic need would eventually become a motive for the acquisition of slaves as well. Just as they initially saw an opportunity to salvage the faith of indigent Catholic immigrants from the British Isles by bringing them to the Jesuit manors, the Jesuits later saw the need to protect slaves from assertions by some Protestants that slaves were not worthy of Baptism. In 1749, George Hunter, S.J. affirmed that the "greater glory of God" demanded that all slaves be recognized by their masters as "members of Jesus Christ, redeemed by his precious blood."[63] The one way to illustrate this point was for the Jesuits to obtain slaves and treat them according to Hunter's affirmation of their humanity and Christianity. Keeping them in Jesuit hands was one way to make sure that such slaves received catechesis and the opportunity to persevere as Catholics. Jesuits like Hunter saw the desirability of financial self-support for the plantations as a means of serving the deeper goal of establishing the plantations as such havens of religious liberty that even slaves could be spiritually free there. The plantations' importance as a place of refuge for the reign of the Catholic God took priority.

The idea that the Jesuits may have initially seen little to distinguish the status of indentured servants and African slaves is encouraged by a list of Jesuit indentures from 1638. In an attempt to claim reward under Baltimore's conditions of plantations, which promised land for each servant sponsored on the journey to Maryland, the Jesuits submitted this list to officials of the colony. It included "Matthias Sousa, Molato . . . Francisco, a Molato . . . black John Price." These servants were imported in the same manner as "white John Price" and "Charles the Welshmen."[64] It may be presumed that they were worked in a similar manner, too.

Jesuit political philosophy indicates that what ultimately distinguished white from black labor for them was the equation of the right to purchase one's own property with Englishness. What separated "white John Price" from "black John Price" was that the former, as a British subject, could go on to buy his own land once his indenture expired.

Robert Persons, S.J. made this Jesuit identification of property rights with Englishness in a written rebuttal to some opinions of Justice Edward Coke in 1606. As a Catholic dissenter, the basic issue for Persons was, what made a man English? Coke had argued that an indispensable component of Englishness was membership in the established Church. Persons answered, fatefully for the future emergence of slaveholding among his confreres in Maryland, that religious liberty transcended nationality but that what really set

apart an Englishman was his right to buy, own and sell property. It was this equation of Englishness with property-holding that motivated Maryland's Catholics to join the patriot cause during the American Revolution; they fully agreed that taxation without representation was an affront to English liberty.[65]

Persons argued that the right to worship God preceded the establishment of the English state or any other state; it was a birthright for all human beings due to the universal or "generall large commission" of Jesus Christ to the apostles to spread the faith throughout the world and govern the Church everywhere.[66] Persons noted, "That is Catholic, and undoubtedly trew, which everywhere, is one and the same. And this both in tyme, place, and substance."[67] Therefore, religious affiliation lay outside the regulation of the secular state of one mere nation.

The state emerged much later in history; Persons liked to point out that nearly half a millenium separated the conversion of England to Catholicism under Pope Gregory the Great and the Norman Conquest, which he took as the beginning of the modern English state.[68] The state emerged at that much later time to protect the rights of property owners.[69] Persons pointed out, however, that property owners were relatively few and far between; "a good patrimony . . . is not every man's case." He asked, "what riches, or inheritance have those men . . . which are born without landes or liuings?"[70]

Parsons' answer to this question, that the rights left to the propertyless were spiritual and therefore placed under the protection of the Church, pointed to the Jesuit regard for the spiritual lives of their slaves. Slaves were, by definition, people who could not own property. Jesuits, however, also stressed constantly that these same slaves, eligible as they were to receive the Gospel, were as human as any English people who lacked land. Therefore, slaves were as free religiously as anyone else.

Jesuits, therefore, developed a consistent record in Maryland of guaranteeing the rights of slaves to worship as Catholics. They always allowed them to be baptized and married, and to receive the Eucharist. Having Catholic slaves on hand, moreover, also proved to be a convenient way of demonstrating Person's point that the right to religious liberty was separate from, and prior to, superior to and more universal than the rights of being English.

While the Jesuits thus based the right to religious liberty on an encompassing humanity, they based the right to own property on narrow nationality. It was Englishness that awarded the right to own land. Furthermore, this right to own land was not in the gift of the state. In 1642, the Jesuits denounced as unjust "laws, formerly passed in England and unjustly observed there . . . that it shall not be lawful for any person or community, even ecclesiastical, in any wise, even by gift, to acquire or possess any land, unless the permission of the civil magistrate first be obtained."[71] It would be a mistake to overemphasize the appearance of the words "community" and "ecclesiastical" within this passage, which broadly claims a clear right for every English individual to own

land. Again, the presence of African bondsmen in Maryland dramatized this point. Who could be less English than an African without land? His skin color dramatized the race and nationality that English Catholics and Protestants shared rather than the religious issues that divided them, and his landlessness suggested that only people of color should be landless.

The emergence of slaveholding and the inferiorization of blacks were entangled parts of a systemic process, and it is impossible to designate one of these two factors as taking priority over the other.[72] The Persons philosophy, however, suggests that this debate could be settled more clearly by imagining the English perspective as nationalistic as well as racial. For Catholics, at least, "English over Black" was as important an expression than "White over Black."

There are indications that just as the Jesuits initially provided little sense of a division of labor between white and black servants, so too they did not always clearly divide labor between masters and slaves either. Jesuits were quite willing to join in manual tasks when the occasion demanded it. This willingness to humble themselves may be traced to an important book of the English Catholic heritage, Thomas More's *Utopia*. This work provided many models for the conduct of the Jesuit manors in Maryland.

Thomas More became a hero to all Catholics of English heritage after his execution in 1535.[73] For Jesuits, this tie assumed a more personal aspect through the connection of Thomas' great-grandson Henry More, whose role in securing their manors and political philosophy in Maryland was so decisive. Two themes of the fictional country of Utopia—rejection of religious coercion and the proposition that civic peace was more important than doctrinal conformity—formed ideals of conduct for Maryland Catholics.[74] To them, these fictional ideals of Catholic discretion became more important than what More said about the supremacy of church over state on the scaffold in real life.

It is, therefore, pertinent to examine the models of servitude that More constructed in the same book, and compare them to what little we know of Maryland Jesuit proceeding.

An important justification for Utopian slaveholding helps to explain complaints by Maryland Jesuits that they experienced a conflict between their vocation to apostolic labor and the demands of plantation work. More's Utopians believed that certain low, material tasks hindered the educated elite from contemplation of higher, more spiritual matters. Hunting and the slaughter of livestock were believed to make the person performing them act less humane, so such tasks were to be left to the less educated.[75] Compare this insight with the conviction of Maryland Jesuits that they must be as free as possible from the day to day activities of their plantations so that they might pursue priestly work—the preparation of homilies, the riding of the circuit to celebrate the sacraments for the laity, and the tutoring of children from upper class Catholic families. Jesuits often complained that the assignment to do both the tasks of

plantation management and clerical duties ensured that neither was performed well.[76]

Utopians strove to make any worker above the level of slave as "free from physical drudgery as the needs of the community will allow." That would free him for the cultivation of his mind,"the secret of a happy life."[77] This was an obvious incentive for Jesuits, with their intellectual heritage and theological interests, to leave the mundane needs of their plantations to servants.

Utopians also stressed, however, that there should not be too sharp a division of labor between upper class people and servants; they should work together on important projects. For example, the preparation of meals should be done together. The creative side of cooking was left to the ruling class, who devised the menus and planned the courses while the slaves pursued "all the rough and dirty work."[78]

When Father Joseph Mosley was assigned as the lone Jesuit at a mission station in Tuckahoe, Maryland, from 1765–1787, he honored this Utopian insight by joining his slaves in work. The only difference between them was that Mosley lived in a "miserable dwelling house" while the slaves had "a much worse." In 1766, the slaves accomplished the messy task of plastering the priest's house for Mosley, but he himself built a brick chimney after choosing the type of bricks he wanted and hauling them five miles from market. In a letter to his sister, Mosley noted "I have my own grain, and make my own bread."[79] Eighteen years later, when Mosley was able to resume correspondence with his sister after the long hiatus of the Revolutionary War, he noted that "Since the commencement of the War, I've built on my farm a brick chapel and dwelling house." Concerning this latter accomplishment, Mosley noted how difficult it was to do under wartime conditions, when nails, in particular, were in very short supply.[80]

This comment echoes the flexibility shown by the Utopians in time of war. Officers in the Utopian army were often put to work usually done by slaves, such as digging fortifications in the interest of quick completion by many hands.[81]

As the Jesuits grew more and more preoccupied with securing their landholdings as enclaves for the protection of Catholic religious observance, simultaneously noticing more and more the difficulties involved in making a living with these landholdings, More's insight about the desirability of the upper class pursuing manual labor in emergencies came to have a greater and greater influence on Jesuits management of their plantations. Jesuits showed a similar openness to manual labor in emergencies, even carrying it further than the Utopian soldiers by working alongside rather than replacing the slaves. Their willingness to do so was in the spirit of this passage from *Utopia*:

> they believe that the only way to earn happiness after death is to spend one's life doing good works. . . . In short, they behave like servants, and work harder than slaves, not only for the community, but also for private individuals . . . the more they make slaves of themselves, the more everybody respects them.[82]

In Utopia, "The normal penalty for being too aggressive in religious controversy is either exile or slavery."[83] That was certainly not the explicit reason why any individual was enslaved by the Jesuits. However, the deeper insight of this statement was that the institution of slaveholding was somehow linked to the price that society had to pay for a climate of religious toleration. This was certainly a proposition that the Jesuits in Maryland accepted by treating their slaveholding plantations as devices for the protection of religious liberty.

Utopian slaves were often used as tools to teach moral lessons to the whole country. Slaves were chained in gold as part of a didactic effort to persuade Utopian freemen not to covet that metal.[84] The Jesuits hoped that the kind treatment of their slaves would serve as a didactic reminder to other masters that they should not view their pursuit of riches as the most important thing in their lives, and that they should concentrate on the just governance of the less fortunate committed to their care. George Hunter's observations of 1749 that Jesuits were called to set a charitable example of the treatment of slaves was made in that spirit. Jesuits sought to teach by clothing the slaves in kindness rather than gold.

More portrayed the Stywards, supervisors of servants in Utopia, as officials responsible for striking a balance between mandating the laborers to work all the time and leaving them completely idle. The result was to be time balanced between work and leisure.[85] Regulations devised by the Jesuits in 1722 for the observance of holydays by slaves in Maryland show the influence of this balanced philosophy. Despite pressures to make the slaves work every day of the planting season, they were given five holydays completely off during the summer, including Ascension, Whit Monday, Whit Tuesday, Corpus Christi, and Assumption. On other important feast days of the summer, they were to be allowed to attend Mass or a prayer service before proceeding to the fields. However, those servants who worked within the household were to take all the holydays completely off from work.[86]

The Jesuits thus entered the eighteenth century with their unique way of governing their slaves and operating their plantations. The task that remained to them was to defend this right, and they produced two important political philosophers, Peter Attwood, S.J. (1682–1734) and George Hunter (1713–1779) who brought their case to a maturity of political expression.

Attwood's contribution was composed in 1718 and was called "Liberty and Property: or, the Beauty of Maryland Displayed, Being a Brief and Candid Search and Inquiry into her Charter, Fundamental Laws and Constitution, by a Lover of his Country." It was written in response to the crisis of the Old Pretender's Rebellion.

The German princes of the Hanoverian dynasty had just succeeded to the British throne in preference to the Catholic members of the House of Stuart, who had the better hereditary claim but the inferior political one. A Protestant Parliament had enacted the Act of Settlement, limiting the crown to professed Anglicans. Jesuits and the Catholic laity were suspected of plotting to aid the "king across the water" in France, the Stuart pretender, James Edward, in his efforts to overthrow George I. Within the Britain itself, there was an outburst of fear that absolute monarchy was about to be restored under "papist" influence.[87]

This apprehension spread to Maryland. In 1715, the Maryland Assembly imposed an importation tax "on all Irish Papist Servants imported into the Province." An additional levy of twenty shillings was imposed "on all Irish Servants being Papists" through an act of May 28, 1717.[88] There were indications that the Assembly might proceed further, stripping the Jesuits of all their property. As a precaution, the Jesuit owner of the Newtown plantation, William Hunter, temporarily signed his land, slaves and other effects over to a sympathetic lay friend, Thomas Jameson, for ten shillings[89]. The deed of this transfer provided what is now the earliest known surviving legal documentation of Jesuit ownership of slaves in Maryland.

The issue of Irish indentured servants is important to understanding the emergence of slaveholding in in the Chesapeake. The major social difficulty of the indenture system was that each year it graduated into the Chespeake economy numerous young settlers with limited prospects for prosperity. Fearing the potential of such frustrated young men for violence, planters often welcomed the importation of African slaves as an alternative to further white immigration.[90]

Imagine, however, the special Jesuit and Catholic predicament in this situation. Given the continuing Protestant tendency to portray the Jesuits as plotters against the political and social order of both England and Maryland, Jesuits were particularly vulnerable to charges that they were behind any revolt of the restless freedmen. This suspicion was probably a factor in the denial of political rights to Catholics at the time of the 1689 Revolution. The Irish, with their record of hostility to the British Crown, were a particularly provocative group to have present as indentured servants in such an atmosphere. Other planters may have turned to slave labor out of economic motivations, but the Jesuits had the extra pressure of finding a labor pool whose composition would not arouse the hostility of suspicious neighbors.

The year 1715 may have been the crucial moment in the general transition from indentured to slave labor. After this date, the number of servants no longer kept pace with the number of slaves entering the colony.[91] Not coincidentally, this was the very same year that the Assembly cracked down on the importation of Catholic indentured servants. This evidence suggests that the

special circumstances of religious intolerance forced the Jesuits to rely even more on slave labor than the typical Marylander came to.

Whatever circumstances forced them to do, however, Jesuits like Attwood clung to the argument that any subject of the Crown had inalienable rights that should be unaffected by religious affiliation. It was Attwood's understanding that *any* English subject who settled in Maryland was to be granted a free tract of land, on which they could live according to all the rights and privileges of Englishmen.[92]

As Englishmen, Jesuits like Attwood felt that they shared an ancient right to buy, own and sell property. As far as they were concerned, this was a right based on Englishness alone, and not on whether one was a *Protestant* Englishmen. Moreover, this right was not dependent on the crown; the king could neither grant nor deny this right. He had only the duty to recognize it and guarantee it. As George Hunter put it, Catholics desired "that they may be assured they shall not at any time be molested or affected by any law touching their Religion or Property uncommon to their fellow subjects."[93] Efforts by Parliament to take away these rights from English Catholics struck the Jesuits as violations of the true spirit of the Constitution.[94]

When the Jesuits decided that property ownership was a function of English nationality, they produced the side effect of neglecting the civil rights of people who did not happen to be English subjects. Had they based the claim to property ownership on humanity, as they did in the case of religious liberty, they would have found it difficult indeed to justify holding other human beings as property. But since Jesuits decided to limit land ownership to a right of Englishness, they missed an opportunity to affirm a universal right to economic liberty.

It was the Jesuit view of religious liberty that was exceptional. The idea that property was an English right made the Jesuits reflective of conventional political thought. Their only quarrel with the Bill of Rights passed by Parliament in 1689 was that it limited the ancient property rights of the English to Protestants. Jesuits quite agreed with John Locke when he wrote that political power is delegated by the people who happen to own property for the protection of their property.[95]

The theory that Maryland Jesuit thought was characteristically English is instructive here, especially as regards the notion that such thought flowed from experience rather than theory.[96] Jesuits made no attempt to impose an *a priori* political philosophy upon their conduct in Maryland. Rather, they adapted a pragmatic approach in reaction to events. They affirmed the universality of religious liberty and the particularity of property ownership because developments in Maryland suggested to them that such a combination of policies would be the best way for the Catholic Church to survive there.

A crucial consequence of their political theory was that Jesuits developed a great sensitivity to exercising all the same property rights as their fellow English

colonists. They also realized early on that to claim such a right was not enough; one had to also exercise it. In fact, one also had to be seen to exercise this right. If their Protestant neighbors had property, Catholics not only had to have it, too, but they also had to prompt Protestants to see that they had it. In that spirit, as mission superior, Attwood was willing to make the first public concession that Jesuits actually owned slaves in 1718. In doing so, he explicitly laid claim to a right to do so.[97]

Attwood combined a lengthy documentation of the colony's founding and its early legislation regarding religious liberty and property rights with a protest over the more recent denial of those freedoms to Catholics. Everything he wrote was designed to demonstrate his case that Maryland was meant to be religiously blind. All Englishmen who came to Maryland had the same rights:

> All Christians enjoyed not only ye free use of their religion, but an equal share, in all their Rights, Places, and Privileges . . . there was also an entire liberty and full enjoyment of all other rights, privileges and immunities for all subjects of Great Britain, as to buy and sell, to take profits and enjoy,to transmit to their heirs, or to convey and bequeath unto anyother wt goods or chattles, lands or hereditaments, and in a word, all their estates, or any part there of, whatever, real or personal . . . both Clergy and Laity of all persuasions, and consequently of ye Roman Catholics among ye rest, were ever deemed to be qualified to purchase, buy, sell, or possess any lands or estates in Maryland.[98]

Attwood protested the injustice and inconvenience of taking these rights away from Catholics, noting that the Jesuits had a great practical need for this land, their only potential source of subsistence. To deprive them of this means of livelihood on account of their religion would be a form of molestation.[99]

Here Attwood made a remarkable statement: it was wrong to take away his right to own a slave just because the master was Catholic. This treatise had the effect of definitively incorporating Robert Persons' political philosophy within Maryland Jesuit thought.

The second important Jesuit document in support of property holding in colonial Maryland came four decades later. In 1757, George Hunter, S.J. (1713–1779) produced "A Short Account of the State and Conditions of the Roman Catholics in the Province of Maryland, Collected from Authentic Copies of the Provincial Records and Other Undoubted Testimonies."

Protestant Maryland experienced a renewed anti-Catholic panic in the 1750s, as the French began infiltrating the neighboring Ohio Valley and allying themselves with the native Americans there. French Jesuits had a historical presence among the indigenous peoples of Canada, and it was suspected that their English confreres in Maryland would collude with them in stirring up transAppalachian peoples against the British Crown. Meanwhile, the English Jesuits might also assist the enemy by inciting slave revolts in the Chesapeake

itself. These suspicions were not true, but they led to further threats to Catholic religious liberty and property rights that Hunter felt obliged to respond to.[100]

Forty years earlier, the object had been to strip the Jesuits of their indentured servants. Now there was much agitation to take away their slaves. In 1753, the General Assembly formed a "Committee on Grievances" to investigate "the growth of Popery within this province." Its report showed signs of paranoia concerning the Jesuit custom of allowing white people and slaves to worship together: "Their public preaching is so notorious and unreserved, that there are known instances of their Preaching publicly to large mixed congregations." Another suspicion was that the Jesuit custom of hearing the confessions of Catholic slaves might become the means by which to issue secret orders for revolt. The Committee also blamed the Jesuits for a supposed increase in the rate of Catholic conversions among slaves owned by Protestants.[101]

In 1756, these Protestant suspicions prompted a new law, which doubled the property tax for Catholics. It was this measure that drew George Hunter's protest. He worried that the double tax would prove to be an underhanded way of driving Catholics off their land. Rather than ban them from it outright, it would simply make it financially impossible for them to remain.

Hunter began his commentary with two essential claims. The first was that the penal laws of England did not extend to Maryland, thanks to an exemption granted by Queen Anne in 1705. The second was that Roman Catholics in Maryland had committed no acts which warranted any punishment, let alone a double tax.

Thus far, Hunter had made a conventional Jesuit defense of Catholic civil rights. What set his appeal apart from Attwood's was Hunter's threat that Catholic planters would leave the colony unless their just rights were restored and honored. Not only should the offensive tax be repealed, but "such an order be given as that they may be assured they shall not at any time be molested or affected by any law touching their Religion or Property uncommon to their fellow subjects." Only the Crown and the Proprietor could change that situation, and Hunter trusted their "justice and clemency" toward contemporary Catholics and their posterity.

Hunter concluded his demand with this emphatic assertion to the Lord Proprietor:

> This is the humble petition of the Roman Catholic gentlemen, merchants, planters and others, Inhabitants of the Province of Maryland, as a necessary encouragement to the people of that persuasion to continue to cultivate and improve that Province. They, on assurances of this sort, contributed chiefly to the first settling of it, and to the bringing of it to that flourishing condition in which we now behold it under your Lordship's wise government and administration.[102]

This assertion showed a new measure of self-confidence in Jesuit political thought. For the first time, there was an awareness that their property was an economic weapon which they could use to their advantage. Hunter believed that the colony's economy and culture would be hurt if Jesuits and other Catholics left Maryland, and that his political enemies knew that to be the case. Hunter's boldness foretold the coming participation of Catholics in the American Revolution, but it also showed that the possession of slaves and other attributes of Catholic wealth would also make that participation effective. This was a clear example of a Jesuit using his slaves in pursuit of political self-interest. It also foreshadowed that many participants in the American Revolution would regard a right to slaveholding as one of the "liberties" they were fighting for.

That the new value which Hunter accorded to the Jesuit properties was shared by other Jesuits is shown by a series of new "ordinations and regulations" for the Maryland Mission, promulgated on April 2, 1759. These rules took elaborate steps to protect the plantations. The eighth of the new rules acknowledged the danger facing "our lands and settlements," and ordered each individual Jesuit holding the title to a plantation to make a will, leaving the property to whatever Jesuit was designated to inherit it. The willmaker also had to sign a bond, holding his estate liable for 40,000 pounds if he should ever change the inheritance to favor someone other than the Jesuit selected. Copies of both the will and the bond had to be deposited at two Jesuit plantations other than the one which was their subject, and placed in the possession of a Jesuit not mentioned in either. While the designees of wills were customarily selected by the Provincial in England, the mission superior or his consultors on the scene in Maryland could make the choice in urgent cases.[103] While it had been the custom for Jesuits to make wills from the time it became clear that there would be no mortmain in Maryland, the tightened procedures of 1759 showed a new awareness of how important land and slaves were in the struggle for Catholic civil liberties.

The evidence presented in this chapter shows that slaveholding emerged among the Jesuits for reasons peculiar to their status as English Catholics. Their exceptional motivations for slaveholding have been overlooked. Since the Jesuits emerged as slaveholders at about the same time as everyone else in Maryland, it has been taken for granted that they shared the general motivations. They no doubt did, but they also had special reasons of their own. Quite simply, the Jesuits found in slaveholding a special way to illlustrate their belief that anyone could be Catholic but only Englishmen in Maryland could own property.

In 1995, Martin E. Marty published *A Short History of American Catholicism*. In the introduction to this work, Marty called it "the first extended historical essay on American Catholic history by a non-Catholic."[104] Catholic slaveholding, however, is very poorly covered in this book. The index

only contains one reference to it, a brief discussion of the enslavement of native Americans in Latin America in the sixteenth century.[105] Remarkably, Marty's only reference to the Civil War does not mention slavery at all, instead stressing that Catholics identified with whatever part of the country they found themselves dwelling in during that struggle.[106]

Marty made a serious omission in not exploring Jesuit slaveholding. It resembled general slaveholding in many respects, but it was conducted for additional reasons and according to additional norms than other variations of the practice. The spirituality, the intellectual life, and the economic sensibilites of the Jesuits also contributed to their unique variation of a peculiar institution. To these factors this study will now turn.

NOTES

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2. Gerald Fogarty, S.J., "Property and Religious Liberty in Colonial Maryland Catholic Thought," *Catholic Historical Review* 71 (1986), pp. 573–600.

3. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York: Doubleday, Image Books Edition, 1958), p. 40.

4. See Edmund S. Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," in Stanley N. Katz and John M. Murrin, editors, *Colonial America: Essays in Political and Social Development* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), pp. 572–596.

5. Peter Attwood, S.J., "Liberty and Property, or, the Beauty of Maryland Displayed," 1718, *United States Catholic Historical Magazine* III (New York: Press of the Society, 1890), p. 239.

6. John D. Krugler, "'With Promise of Liberty in Religion:' The Catholic Lords Baltimore and Toleration in Seventeenth Century Maryland, 1634–1692," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 79, no. 1 (Spring, 1984), pp. 26–27.

7. James Hennesey, S.J., "Roman Catholicism: The Maryland Tradition," *Thought* 51, no. 202 (September, 1976), p. 284.

8. David W. Jordan, "Political Stability and the Emergence of a Native Elite in Maryland," in Thad W. Tate and David L Ammerman, editors, *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo American Society* (New York: Norton, 1979), p. 249.

9. Francis Edwards, S.J., *The Jesuits in England: From 1580 to the Present Day* (Tunbridge Wells, England: Burns and Oates, 1985), p. 24, p. 43.

10. For a summary of Jesuit status in England, see John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), especially Chapter 7, "Congregation: The Role of the Gentry," pp. 149–181, and Chapter 11, "The Priest in the Community," pp. 250–277.

11. John Bossy, "Reluctant Colonists: The English Catholics Confront the Atlantic," in David B. Quinn, editor, *Early Maryland in a Wider World* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), pp. 155–156.

12. Hennesey, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

13. R.J. Lahey, "The Role of Religion in Lord Baltimore's Colonial Enterprise," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 72 (Winter, 1977), pp. 492–511.

14. Aubrey C. Land, *Colonial Maryland: A History* (Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1981), pp. 23–24.

15. Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 168.

16. Land, *op. cit.*, pp. 23–24.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

18. John S. Krugler, "Lord Baltimore, Roman Catholics, and Toleration: Religious Policy in Maryland During the Early Catholic Years, 1634–1649," *Catholic Historical Review*, LXV (January, 1979), p. 74; Fogarty, *op. cit.*, p. 573.

19. Ladislas Orsy, S.J., "The Meaning of *Novus Habitus Mentis:* The Search for New Horizons," *The Jurist* 48, no. 2 (1988), p. 437.

20. *Ibid.*

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CHAPTER SIX

To Serve the Slave or the Immigrant?

In 1854, Thomas Mulledy, S.J., (1794–1860), the former provincial who had conducted the mass sale of Maryland Jesuit slaves sixteen years earlier, discussed the obligations of masters toward their servants in a lecture delivered at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The first such obligation which Mulledy proclaimed was that masters must make "a good choice of their domestics. . . . It is not permitted masters, according to the law of the Gospel, to have in their service useless persons, who live in idleness and sloth."[1] This theme, that employers had both the right and duty to choose workers of upright character, had been a factor in Mulledy's resolve years earlier to replace slaveholding with immigrant tenant labor on the Maryland plantations. Many of the characteristics which Mulledy attributed to bad servants in his Holy Cross lecture—that they were violent, swearers, drunkards, insolent in speech, unchaste, immodest, idle and slothful—were traits which Jesuit observers like Joseph Mobberly had ascribed to their slaves during the last years before Mulledy's mass sale. Jesuits also worried that similar qualities were emerging among working class, white Catholic immigrants in the cities of the eastern seaboard whenever they were left too long without the care of priests. In the case of slaves, such conduct became an excuse for Jesuits to get rid of them. In the case of the immigrants, such conduct became a pretext for the Jesuits to draw closer to them through increased urban ministry. Racism was at work in this paradox, for the Jesuits regarded whites as more reformable morally than blacks.

Who was the man whose actions thrust this paradox into the heart of Jesuit life in the United States? The son of an Irish immigrant farmer, Mulledy grew up in Hampshire County in western Virginia. After paying his own way through Georgetown College, he joined the Society of Jesus and was sent to

Rome for his theological studies. There he developed a reputation as an outspoken defender of republican American values against the more authoritarian European clergy who taught there at the time. His position foreshadowed his struggles as provincial, when he would nudge Maryland Jesuits away from their traditional emphasis on rural ministries toward engagement with the city. Mulledy initially wanted to work in ministry to native Americans upon his return home, but superiors assigned him to higher education. By 1829, when he was only 35 years old, Mulledy was president of Georgetown. In January, 1838, he became the second provincial of Maryland. In the aftermath of the controversial sale of the slaves later that year, Mulledy had to resign as provincial and go to Rome to defend his decision to invest income from the sale in construction projects on the Georgetown campus rather than in the training of Jesuit priests. When he did return to the United States in 1843, it was at first to serve in Massachusetts as the founding president of Holy Cross. In 1845, his reputation somehwat rehabilitated, Mulledy returned to the Chesapeake region to head Georgetown for another three years.[2]

Mulledy's proposed transition to white tenant labor on the Jesuit farms did not come to pass without opposition within the order. Between 1814 and 1820, the Jesuits of Maryland first instituted, but then reversed, a policy of gradually selling all their slaves to new masters who would agree to free them after some years of preparation.[3] When the Jesuits finally turned back to the idea of a mass slave sale in 1830s, they shunned their previous resolve to prepare their slaves gradually for freedom and instead sold them to new owners in Louisiana. The long uncertainty about whether and how to proceed with the disposition of their slaves revealed that there remained a strong sentiment within the Society of Jesus to keep them in Catholic hands, no matter how recalcitrant their behavior, out of fidelity to the obligations that Jesuits had traditionally felt to a people they regarded as inferior to themselves.

Still, the basic insight of Mulledy and Joseph Mobberly, that Jesuits now had choice with regard to the people who would work on their land, prevailed in the end. Why? One part of the answer is that these Jesuits correctly foresaw an era of great demographic change for the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, a period which would give the Jesuits many more demands on their ministerial attention than the care of slaves and plantations.

By 1820, some Jesuits anticipated that their church, hitherto largely rural and largely situated in the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania, was poised to become a predominantly urban institution along the eastern seaboard through an increase of European Catholic immigration. This prospect raised the question or whether of not the Jesuit farms had outlived any apostolic utility that they might have once possessed. Related to this was the question of whether the Jesuit order could become numerous enough to operate in both the country and the city, or whether it would it have to choose between ministries in those two areas.

Just two statistics are necessary to demonstrate how correct was the surmise that a demographic revolution would overwhelm Jesuit ministries and their supporting plantations as the nineteenth century proceeded. It is doubtful that the total number of Catholics in what became the United States ever exceeded 35,000 before the establishment of the Constitution in 1789. Between the first federal census in 1790 and 1850, however, over a million Catholic immigrants arrived in the United States from Europe.[4] This was a change of such magnitude that it was inevitable that those Jesuits who foresaw it and sensed its early stages would seek changes in their manner of proceeding in order to meet it.

The fate of the Jesuits' slaves hinged in part upon this discernment, with advocates of urban ministry, like Mulledy, tending to view the old plantation system as an obstacle to be discarded and defenders of rural ministry, like Peter Dzierozynski (1779–1850), arguing that the order simply could not walk away from the moral obligations it had long incurred in the countryside—especially duties toward the slaves.

Efforts have been made to trace the motivations of those Jesuits who took particular sides in this discernment. The history of the Georgetown faculty reveals that there was a basic cultural dichotomy between two groups, who may be designated as "native" and "continental" Jesuits.[5] This cleavage was not unique to the Jesuits, but a general characteristic of the American Catholic Church during the early decades of the nineteenth century.[3]

The "native" Jesuits may be generally defined as those who were raised in the United States or in the British Isles. Heavily influenced by Anglo-American and/or Irish culture, they placed great stress on individual liberty, self-initiative, and the provisions of the Constitution, particularly the Bill of Rights. Indeed, they hoped that the Catholic Church would apply some of the republican ideals of the Constitution to its own internal governance.

The "continentalists," by contrast, may be generally defined as those Jesuits who came from the European mainland. They immigrated to the United States because of the harassment they were subjected to during the suppression of the Society and also because of the anti-clericalism fostered by the French Revolution. Basically, these Jesuits were representative of Europe's *ancien regime*. The continentalists tended to be skeptical of American culture, wanted to see Catholics maintain a critical distance from republican ideals, and felt that the Church should continue the authoritarian structure of government that it had developed during the Counter-Reformation.[7]

Place of origin, however, was not always indicative of the positions which specific Jesuits took on the slavery question. The Italian Giovanni Grassi (1775–1849) was a continentalist by birth, but he was supportive enough of the Constitution to perceive that slavery contradicted it. He predicted that it would be allowed to die out gradually. A more adamant continentalist advocate of disposing of the slaves was the Alsatian Anthony Kohlmann (1771–1836), whose vision of more schools in the eastern seaports was an

impetus to those who wanted to abandon the rural ministry epitomized by the plantations.[8] There were both natives and continentalists who favored keeping the slaves, and both natives and continentalists who favored disposing of them.

It is better, therefore, to analyze the division over slavery not according to where various Jesuits came from, nor in terms of how they felt about secular and ecclesiastical government, but in terms of where they believed the future needs of Jesuit ministry lay. If a specific Jesuit was convinced of the coming urgency of ministry to the urban immigrant, he often advocated discarding the plantations and/or selling the slaves.

The immigrants, by the weight of their numbers and the strength of their cultural background, came to offer some hope that the United States might one day become a majority Catholic country. In 1820 the 124 Catholic church buildings in the United States represented a lower sum than those of any other denomination, and the 195,000 Catholics in the nation represented fewer adherents than either Methodists or Baptists. By 1850, just thirty years later, immigration had pushed the total number of Catholics to 1,606,00, making Roman Catholicism the largest single denomination in the nation. The second largest group in 1850, the Methodists, had more than a quarter million fewer adherents than the Catholics.[9] One reason that the hope that enough immigrants might come to America to make it a more Catholic country moved Jesuits was that it seemed to offer a chance to foster more vocations to religious life or priesthood. In the racial climate of the early nineteenth century, it was not possible for African Americans to become clergy, but it was possible for Americans of European origin to. The Jesuits were drawn to immigrant ministry as a means of perpetuating the existence of their own order. When Mulledy arrived at Holy Cross in 1843, for example, he followed the wishes of Bishop Benedict Fenwick of Boston, a fellow Maryland Jesuit, and wrote to the Jesuit general that the new college would admit Catholic boys only. The "dangerous communications with the Protestant boys" which Mulledy believed marked Georgetown, the centerpiece of the old rural ministry in Maryland, thus would be avoided in Massachusetts. Mulledy anticipated that "in all probability" that there would be more vocations at Holy Cross alone, than there would be in all the Catholic colleges that admitted Protestants put together.[10] Contrast this conviction with the "Proposals for Establishing an Academy at George-Town" in 1789, which stated "Agreeably to the liberal Principle of our Constitution, the SEMINARY will be open to Students of EVERY RELIGIOUS PROFESSION."[11]

The ultimate decision to hold a mass sale in 1838 may be regarded as a compromise between the ruralists and the urbanists. The Jesuit farms were retained—a concession to the ruralists—but the slaves were sold—a concession to the urbanists. The hope was that efficient farms, run by free labor, would play a role in supporting the new Jesuit ministries in the cities. This hope was realized, for the farms began to prosper for the first time during the generation

after the mass sale. By the beginning of the Civil War, events had vindicated Mobberly's anticipation that Jesuit farms would do quite well without slaves.[12]

One reason this solution was so long delayed, however, was a tactical error of the urbanists. Such pioneering urbanists as Kohlmann tried to promote their vision by stressing the financial benefits that would eventually accrue to the Society as a result of concentrating ministries in the cities. This emphasis ran up against a cultural bias, the longstanding Jesuit hostility to profits. This hostility had long impeded the progress of the plantations; now it became an impediment to effective urban ministry, too.

Kohlmann showed his basic continentalism through the authoritarian methods he adapted as President of Georgetown from 1817–1820. However, he also worked in Manhattan between 1808 and 1813, there founding the New York Literary Institution, a short-lived secondary school. This experience convinced Kohlmann that Catholic immigrants in great cities like Boston, New York and Philadelphia already needed more priests, and also that there was going to be much more immigration. What Kohlmann seems to have feared was that the new arrivals would drift too far toward American republicanism and individualism unless their adjustment to their new country was mediated by the Church. Confirmation that this was his anxiety may be found in Archbishop Carroll's assessment that one reason Kohlmann's school failed was his refusal to hire lay teachers who had not been trained in the Jesuit method of education. Carroll felt that Kohlmann was overly anxious to leave all the instruction in Jesuit hands, an unnecessary move in such a populous city with many well-qualified foreign-born schoolmasters.[13] Kohlmann's scrupulosity may have doomed the New York Literary Insitute, but it also apparently became a means by which this Jesuit of continental European origin reconciled the tension between the traditional committment to the plantations and the growing needs in the cities. Jesuits, he felt, were simply more needed in the cities than the countryside because there now was a greater need to strengthen Catholic identity in the motley cultural atmosphere of places like New York.

Kuhlmann's ill-advised emphasis on the potential profitability of urban ministry arose through his reaction to the news that his Manhattan school must close because there were not enough Jesuits to station both there and at Georgetown College and the other apostolates in Maryland. Kuhlmann's perspective was similar to the characteristic attitude of members of the American Colonization Society when they sought money for their scheme of relocating slaves to Africa. Commercial and trading centers like New York offered more opportunities for voluntary charitable activities than landed towns like Washington.[14] That was not a small consideration for a school administrator like Kohlmann in an era when Jesuit schools were forbidden to charge tuition. He was convinced his school in New York had great potential to become self-supporting because it was located in a more dynamic economic setting than the Maryland plantations.

The ban on Jesuits charging tuitions lasted until 1832–1833, when Maryland Jesuits, as part of the reorganization process that made their mission an independent province of the Society of Jesus, successfully petitioned the Jesuit general in Rome for permission "to receive pensions from day scholars" in places where the schools lacked foundations and other adequate means of support.[15] The traditional policy of free marticulation was based upon an ideal of Saint Ignatius of Loyola that Jesuit ministries should be offered gratuitously whenever possible. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus stated that alms could be accepted but not begged, "for the greater edification of the people."[16] This norm was a reaction to the late medieval clergy's fattening upon fees for their ministries, an abuse which Jesuits viewed as a major cause of the Reformation.[17] Thus there was a great demand on the plantations to provide compensating support for schools like Georgetown, but plantations as poorly run as the Jesuit ones had trouble carrying one school, let alone several. Kohlman warned that the Jesuits would "starve and go ragged" in Maryland but could have $60,000 invested in New York banks within ten years if they cultivated well-disposed donors in the business community. That would be a financial foundation which the plantations could never come close to providing.[18]

Schools founded in the Protestant tradition did not have to contend with the Jesuit antipathy to tuition. The records of Harvard College make it clear that tuition was charged there from the earliest days. In the seventeenth century, when there was a shortage of hard money, students often paid Harvard with wheat, malt, cattle or poultry. When tuition was raised, the cost of living and the expenses of paying tutors and supporting more students were the reasons. Sometimes students were assessed extra money if they took a course with a professor to whom the college could not give an adequate salary otherwise. Always, however, there was the expectation that students would bear some of the cost of their own education.[19] This was so even though most colleges founded during the colonial period also received measures of governmental support, beginning with the 400 pounds that Massachusetts Bay contributed to the founding of Harvard in 1636. Later, the college received grants of land and further tax levies from Massachusetts. In Virginia, tobacco was taxed to support William and Mary, and land control fees also went to the school—including George Washington's surveying license.[20] A system of state support for education emerged in New England, especially, because the Puritans there believed that learning was necessary in order to distinguish between true and false religion.[21] However, since most Protestant Americans of the early nineteenth century still believed that Catholicism was one of the false religions, there was no tradition of state support for a schools like Georgetown or the New York Literary Institute.

At the same time that he was trying to promote his hardheaded financial view of the Society's affairs, even Kohlmann fostered sentimentality about

slaveholding among Jesuits in a sermon which included a tale of how a Brazilian slave woman had edified her master. She had consecrated her life to God and wore a crucifix around her neck as a sign of her perpetual virginity. When the master approached her sexually, she begged him to look upon her crucifix and contemplate the high price Jesus had paid to redeem each of them. Would he take an action which would destroy two such dearly bought souls? Moved, the master abandoned his harassment of "her who was indeed a slave by her condition but a heroine by her faith."[22]

Kohlmann's sermon echoed a widespread Jesuit conviction that there was much grace for a master himself to gain through slaveholding, so long as he conducted it with humility and a realization that the slaves were children of God. Opportunities to draw souls to Christ would be lost if slaves were let go. The "Principle and Foundation," from the *Exercises*, as applied here, still saw slaveowning as one of the means by which a Jesuit could attain his own salvation through caring properly for the slaves entrusted to his charge.

Those who wished to retain the slaves typically feared what would happen to them if they passed out of Jesuit supervision. Would lecherous new masters await them, along with other dangers to their moral and religious development? Typical of these doubters was Francis Dzierozynski, a Polish emigre who was appointed as the Jesuit General's unofficial permanent representative in the United States in 1821 after expulsion from his homeland by occupying Russians.[23]

Dzierozynski believed two things. First, the plantations should be cherished as a "perpetual good," no matter what their economic record. Second, the slaves who dwelt on them should not be regarded as an economic investment, but as spiritually needy "children" whose needs had been entrusted to the Society of Jesus by divine will.[24] Even if the Society were to respond to the needs of Catholics in the cities, Jesuits would still have a moral obligation to care for the slaves.

In pondering the plantations, Dziezorynski took a classicist view of moral problems. This perspective is dominated by a sense that the world is complete, fixed for all eternity, and marked by the harmony of an objective order. It describes the world in terms of sharply defined essences using absract, universal concepts. Its conclusions remain the same, and it emphasizes the mandate to sustain the established order.[25] When Dzierozynski said that the plantations were a perpetual good that must be cherished no matter what their economic condition, he epitomized this cultural paradigm.

Set against this classicist view was an ideal in the Jesuit Constitutions that Jesuits should go where the greater apostolic need lay. Ignatius gave two justifications for this principle, the shortage of available workers and "the wretchedness and infirmity of the people there and their danger of eternal condemnation." Ignatius also stressed that an estimate should be made as to where the greater fruit was likely to be reaped through the usual means of the Society

of Jesus: "where one sees the door more widely open and a better disposition and readiness among the people to be profited."[26] Ignatius believed that in some cases, these norms would involve travel to new sites for ministries, while in others they would involve "residing steadily and continually in certain places."[27] The criterion, however, was heavily related to the need and receptivity of the people who were to be ministered to.

The question of who might be more receptive to Jesuit ministries was an issue that could be manipulated to favor the immigrants against the slaves. Indeed, the 1820s began a strong transition in Jesuit rhetoric toward concentration on the unworthiness of the slaves to receive Jesuit ministrations.[28] This change can be noted in the comments of Mulledy regarding the obligation to select good servants, and in the comments of Peter Kenney regarding the peace that would fall upon the Maryland mission once it was freed of the burden of slaveholding.

For a time, the parameters of the discussion assumed that the Jesuits faced an either/or choice between rural and urban ministry. Either everything in the countryside must go or not. Mobberly, however, envisioned a possible compromise in which the Jesuits would keep some presence in rural areas through farms operated with white tenant labor. This was an important insight, for it allowed the future of slaveholding and the future of the plantations themselves to be considered separately.

Mobberly began to ruminate on the unprofitability of slaveholding as early as 1812, when he completed a census of the longevity of the slaves at St. Inigoe's. While records were poorly kept, he believed that many lived to be nonagenarians and even centenarians. It was a fact that only nine of fifty-five slaves at St. Inigoes had died during Mobberly's first six years of management there, beginning in 1806.[29] These statistics apparently convinced Mobberly that the Jesuits were fulfilling their paternal obligations to the slaves quite well, but at great practical expense.

Mobberly's testimony contradicts the conclusion that the vortex of poor living conditions, greater exposure to contagion, heavier tasks, and deficient medical attention gave slaves shorter life expectancies and higher mortality rates than whites throughout the South. There has been some skepticism concerning a tradition that many aged slaves spent a long decline living off the largess of their masters.[30] Had Mobberly possessed more reliable information on the ages of his slaves, it is possible that his data might not have been so far out of alignment with this tradition after all. However, the crucial effect of this episode was that Mobberly believed in the longevity of his slaves and spoke from that perception.

On February 5, 1815, Mobberly sent his first detailed proposal for free labor plantations to Grassi, now the mission superior. Mobberly gave three motives for his proposal.

The first was that the Jesuits should no longer risk their own salvation by

taking upon themselves the responsibility of governing the morally obtuse slaves. As their "parents" in the Lord, the Jesuits would be blamed at the last judgment for the slaves' failure to learn and practices the basics of Christian living, so it was best to abandon them as hopelessly incapable of enculcating the same. This was Mobberly's own interpretation of the "Principle and Foundation. Since Christians should only make use of created things so long as they helped them achieve everlasting life, the Jesuits should now concede that their slaveholding no longer served their own best end.[31] Contrast Mobberly's thought here with Mulledy's comments on the damnation that would await Jesuits who abandoned immigrant orphans: "If these children be this day deserted by you . . . the blood of the murdered Abel calls aloud for vengeance upon you."[32]

Mobberly's second motive was that the slaves had become much harder to govern than even a generation earlier.[33] He chose to attribute this moral decay to a decline in the character of the slaves rather than to any problems of the plantation system itself. This was a telling lack of connection, for Mobberly was aware of the decline of the system. To him, however, the slaves' unruliness were a cause rather than a symptom of the plantations' difficulties.

Mobberly did not linger over his first two reasons, however, for he believed that they were already well-known to Grassi. Instead, Mobberly devoted most of the letter to developing his point that "we shall make more and more to our satisfaction" without slaves.[34]

One of his first points was that slave labor involved difficulties with white hired labor as well as with the slaves themselves. Mobberly's experiences in plantation management exposed him to many problems with overseers. He deplored the necessity that "The planter must overlook his overlooker," for such a situation was inevitably the source of time-consuming and expensive quarrels between them. Mobberly grasped the point that laborers worked better when they could work for themselves. This led him to the conclusion that a tenant farmer, working the land with some potential of keeping some profits for himself, was much more likely to produce for the Jesuits than either an overseer or a slave.

Overseers were enormously demanding of compensation. Typically, Mobberly found that they wanted, annually, 300 pounds of pork, three barrels of corn, a furnished house, a personal garden, firewood to be cut and hauled to their door, the right to graze their own poultry and from $150 to $200 in cash.[35] When George Williams was hired as overseer at St. Inigoe's without informing the Jesuits of his poor health, they soon found themselves bearing the expenses of his mortal illness from tuberculosis and "slow fever."[36]

Even more problematic than an ill overseer was an ill-behaved one. Samuel Leach, the overseer at St. Inigoe's in 1818, was uncooperative in so many ways that Mobberly began to keep a day-to-day record of his offenses. At first, Leach tended to stay at his own house, either lounging or working in his own

garden. He consistently neglected Mobberly's commands to thin corn, cut weeds, or help in the harvest field. Later, Leach began traveling away from the plantation on his own business, often attending feasts at neighboring farms and harvesting oyster for himself in Chesapeake Bay. Despite ample documentation of these transgressions, Mobberly could not fire Leach outright. Under the direction of two arbitrators, he was merely able to deduct $35.26 from the overseer's annual salary of $100 before Leach would resign.[37] Mobberly rued the waste.

One reason the employment of overseers in the antebellum South was precarious was their difficult task of balancing leniency and strictness. Overseers had to be benevolent enough to inspire the slaves to work, but strict enough to remind them of their servile status. Masters and overseers alike frequently were dismayed by the ambivalent results, so turnover was high. There is broad consensus concerning this analysis.[38]

Mobberly's own case against overseers seems to have been more complicated. The overseer's absenteeism and passivity no doubt were no inspiration to the slaves to work themselves, but Mobberly was more interested in the contrast between the apathy Leach displayed when working for the Jesuits and the zeal with which he pursued his own money-making pursuits, like gardening and oystering. Unlike many of his Jesuit contemporaries, Mobberly had an appreciation for market capitalism. He was convinced that it was entirely moral for the Jesuits to look out for their own interests in accordance with that system. Was there a way to make a zealous white laborer like Samuel Leach work for the Society of Jesus as well as for himself? Tenant farming seemed to offer the best chance of that.

Many Jesuits resisted Mobberly's zeal for economic reform, however. This fact came home to Mobberly when he noted that for all his painstakingly drafted reports of expenses, losses, and demands for change, his superiors tended to ignore him. Briefly, he wondered whether this was because his rank as a brother made it impertinent for him to speak up to priests on these matters.[39] Soon enough, however, he reflected that the problem was not his rank but his topic. Jesuits were still uncomfortable with all this talk of making money. Perhaps it would be best to change his emphasis to the topic so often proposed at the meetings of the clergy corporation, that any sale be motivated by the hope of improving the moral character of the slaves.

This topic became clearly articulated in his diary around 1817, when Mobberly recorded the decision of Father John Henry, the manager of Bohemia, to sell some slaves from that plantation. Henry did this, Mobberly asserted, because he "found the blacks so ungovernable and so corrupt in their morals" that he deemed it better to send them away. Mobberly's text, which implied that he had not personally discussed these motives with Henry, speculated that the manager had "probably supposed" that a change in climate and locality would inspire the slaves to reform their morals. In any case, five of the

slaves were sold, prophetically, to a neighbor who was acting as an agent for planters in Louisiana.[40]

It is significant that all five of these slaves were young males, of a most desirable gender and age for labor. In any case, Mobberly's record of this episode marks the earliest appearance in the Maryland Jesuit literature of the proposal to relocate Jesuit slaves to the Deep South.

Church policy regarding the family life of slaves was a further spur to the idea of replacing them with tenants. If the child of a tenant laborer, or the laborer himself, needed to go elsewhere to find adequate work, he could do so. Canon law, however, decreed that heroic efforts must be made to keep slave families together on the same plantation, even when individual members of the family were not really needed for the work. Married couples could not be separated at all, and every effort was to be made to keep their children with them, too.[41] Slaves throughout the South actually had their own high degree of success in sustaining long marriages and close family ties, learning from their experience of servitude to establish their own standards and rules of conduct for family preservation.[42] The behavior of the Jesuits, however, simply failed to recognize any self-responsibility of the slaves in this regard. The Jesuits took it for granted that they, not the slaves, had to safeguard the slaves' marriages.

There was good reason for this skepticism. Circumstances in Maryland and the Upper South were much less favorable for keeping slave families together than was the case in the Deeper South. Throughout the period between 1800 and 1860, possession of slaves in the state declined to the point where the typical holding was just one slave. Ninety-percent of Maryland slaveholders in 1860 owned eight slaves or less.[43] When these figures are compared with the fact that the Maryland Jesuits collectively owned 272 slaves as late as 1838, it becomes obvious why they were hard pressed to find local buyers. Since keeping families together was a higher priority for the Jesuits than avoiding the transportation of slaves into harsher working conditions, the Jesuits had few compunctions about sending the slaves to Louisiana, where it seemed that there were still Catholic masters who capable of taking on large slave families.

Slaves could often exploit their own broader cultural definition of family to exert more control over how owners might dispose of them. They preferred an "exogamous" model of marriage, in which bonds outside their own clans and plantations were frequent. The slaves championed the inclusion of the extended family—including aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents—in their model of the unit that must be kept intact.[44] This philosophy, however, while it may have been used to stop sale within Maryland, was also a dangerous advocacy for the slaves to make, for it provided a further incentive to transport such masses of slaves to the Deep South.

Meanwhile, Jesuits were emphasizing an unfavorable impression of the incorrigibility of slaves, which contrasted with their expectations that immigrants would develop good character. Mobberly's diary reveals that by the

1820s, bitter experience in plantation management had hardened his racism. Gone were the affectionate nicknames for the elderly slaves he had counted in the St. Inigoe's census of 1812. Mobberly now believed that African Americans were intrinsically dishonest. He kept a list of the items they had supposedly stolen from their Jesuit masters: pigs, sheep, geese, turkeys, tobacco, corn and wheat. They would even stealthily run their master's horses on exhausting night rides so that the animals would not work productively the next day. Meanwhile, plantation tools were abused through neglect and breakage. Always in the background was the specter of a slave uprising. To Mobberly, all these misdeeds, actual and potential, constituted a sign that the African American character was perverted rather than a rebellion against injustice.

While Mobberly was prophetic in some respects, particularly when writing about business and financial matters, he reflected conventional Roman Catholic morality of his era in analyzing slave misbehavior. He took it as a product of the individual characters of unruly slaves and slothful masters rather than the rejection of corrupt social structures. Not until Pope Leo XIII's encyclical letter of 1890, *Rerum Novarum*, which discussed the situation of the European laboring class, did the Church begin to draw more explicit connections between living and working conditions and individual moral conduct. This connection reached maturity only in the twentieth century, when the "theology of liberation" was developed by Catholic theologians in Latin America to emphasize that social structures could themselves be sinful.[45] None of these insights occurred to Mobberly.

Mobberly believed that slaves born in the United States were harder to govern than their imported counterparts. This phenomenon he attributed more to the breakdown of discipline on the masters' part, which had allowed a latent African unruliness to flourish. Mobberly condemned his peers for "losing sight of the old observation that the better a negro is treated, the worse he becomes." Mobberly resorted to poetry to describe the way for a master to proceed:

> Tender handed brush a nettle
> And it stings you for your pains
> Grasp it like a man of mettle
> And as silk it soft remains
> It is the case with common natures
> Treat them kindly, they rebel
> But be rough as nutmeg graters
> And the rogues obey you well.[46]

The poor behavior of the slaves may have had another cause, however. Slaveholding attempted to rob slaves of their own African cultural identity.[47] The deteriorating deeds of the Jesuits slaves may have been a reaction to this deprivation. As they became generations more and more removed from the African way of life from which their ancestors had been torn, the slaves felt

increasingly rudderless and rebellious.

Another difficulty for Mobberly's scheme for harsher discipline was that he believed that many whites in Maryland now frowned upon the corporal punishment of slaves. A master who complained too openly about his slaves' misdeeds, Mobberly claimed, would be suspected of harshness by the vocal and growing numbers of abolitionists. His reputation would grow even worse if the abolitionists saw him resort to whipping. Mobberly was particularly wary of Methodists, whom he described as especially vigorous opponents of Jesuit slave labor. He recorded that on one occasion, Methodist abolitionists brought up kidnapping charges against the Jesuits for trying to transport slaves out of state to Louisiana.[48]

Mobberly's combined pursuit of the goals of agricultural profit and punishment of slave misconduct had some effect on the thinking of his confreres by 1822. In that year, the trustees of the Roman Catholic clergy corporation authorized the sale of slaves whose conduct had been "refractory." However, just three months later the same trustees authorized their corporate agent to sell up to thirty slaves from the Whitemarsh plantation, but only "provided the loss of so many does not materially injure the the cultivation of the farm."[49] The corporation was now capable of embracing both punitive and financial motives for sales.

Mobberly, in his racism, focused so deeply on slave perversion that he overlooked an opportunity to demonstrate how profits could help slaves. This omission came when, continuing his focus on the "Principle and Foundation," he made a list of ten forms of slave mistreatment through which masters had alienated themselves from God. Several of these abuses involved material neglect, deprivations of food, clothing and shelter that arguably occurred because the plantations were not making enough money. Mobberly could have made a good case that increased profits would have avoided these sins of omission, allowing the Jesuits to both support their ministries and their slaves. Instead, by choosing to argue that profitability was possible only without slaves, Mobberly left that line of argument untouched.

For example, the first mistreatment that Mobberly listed was that the health of the slaves was afflicted when masters did not provide adequate huts and beds for them. More profits could have led to improvements in shelter. He also noted that masters did not provide the slaves with proper nourishment and winter clothing, which he felt would have been the nearest thing to just wages that the slaves could have received in their servile status. More profits would have purchased that food and clothing. Mobberly did acknowledge that the deprivation of so many things to slaves constituted "a sin which cries to Heaven for vengeance." In general, too, Mobberly believed that masters neglected slaves once they became too old or fell too ill to work. He specifically said that the only way the Jesuits could avoid further multipication of these sins would be to relinquish the slaves to better providers.

The remaining six failures of masters to serve their slaves were moral and spiritual rather than material, reflecting that even the pragmatic Mobberly shared the Jesuit tendency to worry more about the moral than the material lives of their slaves. Mobberly condemned the practice of having slave children sleep in the same bed, regardless of their sex or age. This practice was an invitation to carnal corruption. Temptation was compounded when masters forbad their slaves to marry young, thus increasing the possibility that they would commit fornication.

Accompanying this was a failure to instruct slaves in Christian doctrine or to prepare them properly to receive the Sacraments. They were not "compelled by proper means" to carry out Christian duties. Little restraint was applied when slaves acted wickedly; there was almost no chastisement for such behavior. When they finally were corrected, cruel means were often used. Finally, they were often sold under "grievous circumstances" which separated husband from wife, directely violating canon law. Pondering this long list of problems, Mobberly did not consider the possibility that masters simply had been exhausted by the strain of trying to administer an impossible system. Instead, he concluded that God would blame them for a failure of vocation:

> How many masters will be infallibly lost for the commission of the above crimes? In this life, they are impoverished by keeping slaves; their lives are filled with cares and vexations; their prospects of happiness are marred and when they die, they lose all for ever! Who, then, would possess a slave?[50]

The pessimism of this peroration is remarkable and manifests a striking contrast between Jesuits and other southern slaveholding intellectuals of the era. Such commentators as William Gillmore Simms, James Henry Hammond, Edmund Ruffin, Nathaniel Beverley Tucker and George Frederick Holmes consciously promoted and sought to strenghten slavery as part of their program for the moral reform of the South.[51] Mobberly did not share their convictions that slavery could be made to operate better or that it would make masters themselves more virtuous. When he did write in its defense, as he did in "Slavery or Cham," Mobberly basically used slavery as a rhetorical weapon in disputations with Protestantism. But when he measured the actual conduct of Jesuit slaveholding against the moral standards of the Roman Catholic Church, Mobberly found it sorely wanting.

The antebellum period has been seen as a time when the Southern planter class evolved from accepting slavery as a necessary evil to proclaiming that it was a positive good in comparison with the Northern wage earning system.[52] Mobberly was one Southern planter who did not reach that conclusion. Not only did he continue to view slavery as a necessary if divinely willed evil, he also preferred the wage labor system. This record suggests that Mobberly fell outside the mainstream of Southern thought on slaveholding.

When Mobberly's stance is compared with that of the Reverend Thornton Stringfellow, a proslavery Baptist evangelical minister, the Jesuit's lack of enthusiasm for slavery becomes even more manifest. Stringfellow felt that he had a moral duty to foster respect for slavery. So convinced was he of slavery's righteousness that he did not take its abolition in 1865 as an indication of its failure. Rather, Stringfellow saw abolition as a mysterious test of faith to which God was subjecting the South before vindicating its way of life.[53] Such mysticism was far removed from Mobberly's practical conclusion that Jesuits could easily survive and even prosper without slavery.

Mobberly's pessimism about the possibility of developing the character of slaves also turned sharply away from the usual Roman Catholic view of human sinfulness. This ordinarily might be defined, in one theologian's phrase, as "sober hope." It involved a realistic appraisal that evil was a factor in all human situations, but was accompanied by a deep conviction that the redemption wrought by Christ had provided the means to check this evil. Mobberly, by contrast, had gone so far as to despair that the slaves were capable of responding to the Gospel.

Ironically, as this despair spread and hardened among his fellow Jesuits, there was a dissipation of belief in Mobberly's racist conviction that blackness of skin resulted from a Biblical curse. Mulledy, for example, endorsed a revised exegesis of the Noah and Cham encounter in a lecture that he delivered at Nice, France in 1840. Mulledy was in Europe to explain his conduct of the recently concluded slave sale to the Jesuit curia in Rome. Superiors advised him to remain abroad until feelings cooled at home, so Mulledy spent some time as a teacher to the American expatriates at Nice.

In his discourse, Mulledy denied that any such curse had carried down through the ages to any African peoples. Rather, he saw Noah's pronouncement as having applied only to certain nations of literal descent from Noah, nations which had existed in the ancient Middle East during Biblical times but which were long extinct by the nineteenth century.[54] Mulledy took the Bible literally in the sense that he still believed that Noah's curse was historical, but he also believed that no one subject to it was anymore alive anywhere in the world.

Mulledy's abandonment of curse theology did not represent a conversion from racism, as is shown by the imagery he used in denouncing the old theory as a silly pious fable:

> If looking glasses were, in those days, in use, only think what a fracas and turmoil those good ladies (of Cham's family) must have excited, on beholding themselves suddenly changed. . . . This is nothing but a fable, calculated to frighten children, by telling them, that if they are disobedient and naughty, they will turn black and ugly, which if it were true, I am apprehensive that the number of negroes would be woefully multiplied.[55]

In this mockery, Mulledy made an ugly suggestion. There was no need to attribute guilt to African Americans for a misdeed of thousands of years ago because there were plenty of misdeeds to blame them for in Mulledy's own time. The idea that white children might be genuinely frightened by the thought of turning black when they misbehaved suggests that Mulledy still accepted the bleak analysis of the African American character outlined by Jesuits like Mobberly.

Mulledy's goal here was not really to disavow a curse on the slaves, but to deny any curse on the masters. If it was true that there was no divine mandate to enslave people of black skin color, then there was no mandate for Jesuits to hold them as slaves. This idea had obvious appeal for Mulledy at a time when his sale of the Jesuit slaves had endangered his credibility and his career.

Corresponding to this zeal to rid the Jesuits of the burden of the slaves was their eagerness to embrace ministry to the immigrant. Even Mobberly, who wanted to sell the slaves so that the plantations would be more likely to remain in Jesuit hands, himself believed that the European Catholic immigrant would be a good influence in the United States. This attitude becomes clear through some reflections on liberty that Mobberly entered in his diary at Georgetown on the fiftieth anniversary of American independence in 1826. A classics student before his days in plantation management, Mobberly remained well read in American literature throughout his life. References to both books and newspapers marked his diary. He liked to respond to what he had read, particularly if it seemed to challenge Catholicism in any way. Seeing Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* as potentially useful in warning the American Republic against "Luther's principle . . . of irregular and unbounded notion of liberty," Mobberly offered a nuanced response to some anti-immigration sentiment that Jefferson expressed in his book.

In the passage to which Mobberly responded, Jefferson wondered if there were any disadvantages to be weighed against the advantages some expected from increased immigration. He believed that those who must join together in a society must have some consensus about their common business if they were to be happy. Societies were formed to support civil government, so its administration must be conducted by common consent. The principles that formed the consenus underlying American government, Jefferson added, were unique in the world, the offspring of the English constitution and the best principles of natural right and reason. The principles of absolute monarchies were directly opposed to these, yet from such states the greatest number of immigrants were likely to come. Either they would prefer their original country's principles, or throw them off in favor of unrestrained licentiousness. The American ideal of ordered liberty would be too foreign for them. They would propose legislation against ordered liberty, and render it incoherent and confused. [56]

Mobberly saw value in this Jeffersonian analysis, but only to a point. Basically, Mobberly felt that Jefferson was correct to the extent that he

described potential immigrants of *Protestant* origin and influence. The damage which such people could do to social order was indeed to be feared. However, Mobberly believed that anyone who been cultivated in the *Catholic* tradition of obedience to legitimate authority would know how to distinguish among tyranny, licentiousness and ordered liberty. Such a man would know how to "regulate his conscience according to the dictates of reason and the rules of the Christian faith."[57]

Therefore, Mobberly retorted that the presence of more European Catholics in the United States would strengthen the moral life of the country, but only if these people were provided with enough priests, churches and schools to sustain their Catholic faith. He hoped that reformed plantation management would make such expansion of ministries financially possible.

Like Kohlmann, Mobberly was convinced that the Church would have to remain in constant contact with Catholic immigrants if there was to be any chance of saving their faith from Protestant and exaggeratedly republican influences. Unlike Kohlmann, Mobberly did not believe that the plantations had to be totally abandoned in that effort.

Mobberly's convictions became clearer in another diary entry of 1826. In this further reflection, Mobberly felt that Jefferson's bleak assessment of the prevalence of absolute monarchy in continental Europe was too pessimistic an analysis of what these governments were like:

> I do not aim at royalty—I respect majesty; and tho there may be at present some petty instances of domineering rule in certain corners of Europe . . . yet Europe at the present day is blessed generally with good and gracious Sovereigns, who labour to render their subjects happy, by guaranteeing to them the rights and privileges of free citizens.[58]

This comment added to Mobberly's dissent from the Jeffersonian proposition that people from continental Europe had so little experience of "temperate liberty" that they would be unable to adjust to life in the United States. Such maladjustment would only be true of arrivals who were fallen under the sway of Luther. Where Jefferson attributed ordered liberty to the influence of the English constitution, Mobberly attributed it to the influence of Catholicism. The great events of seventeenth century English Constitutional history—the attainment of Parliamentary supremacy over the monarchy through the efforts of the Puritans—had been disastrous for Catholicism. Jesuits like Mobberly preferred to see the origins of ordered liberty much earlier, in the undivided medieval Church.

On this point, Mobberly agreed with some conservative Protestant proslavery commentators of the Deep South. While these writers rued what they believed to have been the scandal, corruption and idolatry of the medieval clergy, they acknowledged that the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages

had fostered social stability. There was an organic social structure to the Middle Ages, a society of mutual obligations and mutually recognized rights, which some Protestant slaveholding intellectuals felt contrasted well with the rampant individualism of modern capitalism.[59]

To a Jesuit trained in the Counter-Reformation ethos, such tributes to Catholicism came as a vindication. The English Constitution was an unsatisfactory source of order for Mobberly because it was corrupted by the Reformation. It was better to trace liberty back to medieval Christendom. Since he was Catholic, Mobberly did not have to look upon this source as sheepishly as the Protestant intellectuals of the day did.

Mobberly shared the views of many European Jesuits who had fled to the United States during the French Revolution that exaggerated Lutheran notions of liberty had recently ruined the nominally Catholic country of France. The French Revolution had expanded the concept of liberty to include the insupportable notion of equality. The events of 1789 provided this combination with a fair trial, but its futility was illustrated when that Revolution descended into what Mobberly believed was a new and worse form of despotism than that which it had sought to replace. The paradoxical result was more inequality than France had ever experienced before, with the new despotism of Bonaparte replacing that of the Bourbons.[60]

Like Kohlmann, Mobberly believed that the United States could avoid a similar fate only if it cultivated the growth of a citizenry with some regard for hierarchy, people who would know that social equality was an absurb proposition. Mobberly saw much potential for the devout Catholic immigrant to temper egalitarian sentiment in the United States—this would be the perfect means to fight the "unbridled licentiousness" that had so frightened Jefferson.

Mobberly noted that life in the military, and the "galling yoke" of life as a slave, were often cited as proof that manifestations of tyranny survived in the United States. However, Mobberly begged people who held these opinions to look beneath appearances. Both the military and slavery were guardians against anarchy and self-destruction. He felt that human nature, reason, and the will of the American nation called upon the government to safeguard the political system through the cultivation of discipline. No laws, no liberty; no rulers would mean unrestrained behavior.[61]

The fear of "unbridled licentiousness" was important for the Jesuit discernment about how to discard their slaves. Since Mobberly felt that the excessive pursuit of equality actually led to inequality during the French Revolution, he refused to recommend a step like slave emancipation for the United States, which he believed would only inspire futile attempts to treat free blacks as equal in ability to free whites. To give freedom to the slaves would be a step toward complete despotism, for order would collapse if those who needed the moral governance of people of greater natural ability and superior color were to be set loose in American society. Had he lived to see it, Mobberly would likely have supported proposals in 1834 that Jesuits join in the colonization movement to send manumitted slaves back to Africa.[62]

Jesuits like Mobberly and Mulledy were racist elitists. They felt that slaves needed guidance from white religious leaders. However, in another sense they were also nonracist elitists, for they felt that working class white immigrants needed ruling, too, and they gradually gave this second need precedence over the first.

Mobberly was concerned that the distorted ideals of the French Revolution remained in circulation in the United States, and this conviction determined his strategy for ending Jesuit slaveholding. What America needed was honest laborers who would know how to use their liberties with measure, in the Jeffersonian tradition. Former slaves could not fit that definition, but pious Catholic immigrants might, with proper direction.

To Mobberly, the slaves would not fit that description because he wholly agreed with Jefferson's analysis of the African character. He quoted approvingly Jefferson's declaration that black people were more sensate than reflective, living more out of passion than reason. Mobberly also asserted that his experiences as a plantation manager supported Jefferson's observation that Africans were likely to sleep when deprived of work or amusements.[63]

These racist observations of Jefferson's were used by Mobberly to support two of his own convictions. The Jesuit farms would be better off with enterprising immigrant tenant laborers than with apathetic slaves, and the lethargy of the slaves clearly made them morally incapable of governing themselves.

Mobberly's nuanced respect for the thought of Jefferson—the fact that he tempered the observations on immigration but wholeheartedly endorsed the racist comments—demands an augmentation to traditional analysis of the political beliefs of American Jesuits during the early republican and antebellum periods. Early on, Jesuits like John Carroll were essentially Federalists.[64] They honored that party not only for its advocacy of a Revolution and a Constitution that had secured religious liberty, but also for its sense of social patriarchy. Later, Jesuits like Mulledy displayed Whiggish economic convictions, advocating that the Society invest its wealth in banks rather than land as a means of better supporting its educational endeavors.[65] However, Mobberly showed that some Jesuits also shared the basic Jeffersonian belief that life in the countryside was more virtuous and more likely to promote social and political order than the urban, industrial order championed by the Hamiltonian Federalists. The difference between Jefferson and Mobberly was that the latter saw room to to include Catholics in this yeoman agrarian order.

Mobberly feared that either emancipation or the concentration of unemployed immigrants in the cities would lead to pauperism and anarchy. Citing an article which had appeared in *The Washington Republican* in June, 1823, Mobberly described the huge number of unemployed and beggars in European nations, even though formal slavery did not exist there. His observation is

worth quoting extensively, for it summarizes his conviction that there were people whose nature required that they live in subjection, for their own good:

> All the above paupers are lost to society in a two-fold light. Society is not only deprived of their services, but it must also spend its treasures to support them. If those unhappy people had good masters, they would then be in a comfortable situation. They would be saved from a habit of indolence, which paralizes their every nerve, + entails upon them a crowd of various and afflicting diseases. In their infirmities, the medical balm of comfort would be administered, and the soothing care of a kind master would drown their multiplied sorrows. Society would be relieved from a troublesome burden, and States and Provinces would be freed from an enormous tax. When slavery exists, beggars are rarely found. We must therefore conclude, that slavery is not only lawful, reasonable, and good, but that it is also necessary.[66]

Mobberly's definition of slavery was an expansive one. He clearly believed that there were more forms of servitude than the variety applicable to African Americans. Mobberly did not suggest that European paupers be made slaves in the same legal sense that African Americans were. Rather, he suggested that poor people were better off when people of means and superior ability answered a vocation to govern the poor responsibly. This was the obligation of the elite to which the Jesuits belonged, to provide the poor with moral and religious direction as well as appropriate supervision of their work. Mobberly felt that if American society resisted egalitarianism and kept in mind the natural distinction between rulers and ruled, those gifted for ruling would absorb the immigrants and guide them to a condition best conducive to social order. This scenario would give the religious orders of the Church, most especially the Jesuits, with their Catholic wisdom and extensive educations, a crucial role in the American future as Mobberly envisioned it.

A strain of Southern thought regarded slavery as a broad principle of life that transcended any of its institutional embodiments. There was a conviction that "the normal and necessary condition of labor was some form of personal servitude within the extended biblical model epitomized by Abraham."[67] This condition was neither exhausted nor necessarily epitomized by the chattel version of slavery found in the American South. Mobberly shared this conviction, and he sensed that the number of servants whom the Jesuits were broadly responsible for was about to expand dramatically.

This new obligation demanded some form of adjustment for the older sense of obligation to African American slaves. Of the alternatives, manumission within the United States looked unlikely to succeed. If the slaves were to be cast off on their own along the eastern seaboard, an area then straining to absorb massive immigration, the employment crisis in those states would only grow worse. The realization that freed slaves and immigrants would compete for jobs at the pit of the economy has been cited as a major reason why Catholics

of the mid-nineteenth century were skeptical about the abolitionist movement.[68] Manumission accompanied by transportation to Africa was another possibility. The Jesuits considered that course and did not pursue it, apparently out of the fear that the colonization groups had too many ties to anti-Catholic nativists[69] A third option was to sell the slaves to a state of the Deep South where they could remain under Catholic ownership without impeding the need for the Church to minister to immigrants along the Eastern Seaboard. Louisiana not only still had a massive slave labor economy, but an extensive Catholic heritage which seemed to promise that the slaves would be governed in a traditional manner there.

Jesuits of the 1820s and 1830s did not abandon their longstanding conviction of a vocation to the role of master. Rather, led by Mobberly and Mulledy, they broadened their definitions of just whom masters were responsible for among the world's servants. Jesuits discerned that they were masters by vocation—masters who were about to receive more subjects and greater responsibilties. The modern mind is so accustomed to distinguishing between the chattel slave and the immigrant that it has overlooked the extent to which the elitist Jesuits of the middle nineteenth century linked these two groups together in their thought as people in need of the care and governance of wise priests. The Jesuits looked upon any people of the working class, whether white or black, as servants by nature.

Jesuit antiabolitionism erected a tremendously high wall against the suggestion that they should free their African American slaves. However, there were three serious cracks in this wall that left an opening for selling off the slaves instead: the Jesuit sense of their obligation to the coming working class immigrants from Europe, the increasingly intractable financial situation on the farms, and the growing conviction that African Americans were incapable of moral conversion. Each of these factors left room for the argument that the problems facing the Maryland Jesuits could be resolved by selling off their chattel. As the 1830s approached, the Jesuit slaves fell into this vortex, assuring that some of the wall erected by Jesuit antiabolitionism would tumble down after all in the decade to come.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

The End of Maryland Jesuit Slaveholding, 1838

BETWEEN 1830 AND 1832, FATHER PETER KENNEY CONDUCTED HIS SECOND visitation to the Jesuits of the United States on behalf of the Jesuit General in Rome, Jan Roothan. An immediate concrete result of this inspection occurred on February 2, 1833, when Roothan accepted Kenney's recommendation to raise the Maryland mission to the adminstrative status of a province of the Society of Jesus. This move was an ecclesiastical parallel to the American constitutional process of elevating a territory to statehood. It was a recognition that the Jesuits of Maryland had formed a mature branch of the Society of Jesus that was capable of taking an equal place with its elder branches. Roothan's announcement of this promotion was signed on the Feast of the Purification, the celebration of the announcement of the prophet Simeon to Mary that her son, Jesus, was the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. A similar feeling, that the moment had arrived for the fulfillment of God's pledges to the American Church and its Jesuits, permeated Roothan's proclamation of the Maryland Province.[1]

The establishment of the new province instigated a reorganization of its institutions that lasted five years, culminating in the sale of all the Jesuit slaves and the reform of plantation administration. Kenney's first inspection, in 1820, had recommended that American Jesuits look for an opportunity to dispose gradually of their slaveholdings.[2] During the years that intervened before his second inspection, five important influences finally came together to make that step more likely. These included alarm concerning the moral behavior of Jesuit slaves, optimism about the growth of Catholicism in the United States, the pressures imposed upon all slaveowners by the abolitiont movement, the enmity posed to American Catholicism by the nativist movement, and the practical need for Jesuits to deal with American economic realities of the 1830s. All these