



Joy Palacios

University of Calgary, Canada

Sermonic Performance as Cultural Protest in New France

Abstract

This article analyzes the antitheatrical sermons produced under the bishop of Québec, Jean-Baptiste de la Croix de Chevrières de Saint-Vallier, in response to a rumored performance of Molière's *Tartuffe* in 1694. It makes the case that the performance of these sermons constituted a form of cultural protest in an early modern sense in that Saint-Vallier saw himself as a defender of the ideal social and religious order he envisioned for New France and drew on the same conservative tropes common to agents of pre-Revolutionary social unrest. Although France already had a long antitheatrical tradition by the end of the seventeenth century, theatrical performance proved particularly contentious in New France given that the colony lacked a printing press, making performance an essential medium for the transmission of information, or publication. Publication, the article argues, is also a useful way to understand the imperative to make devotion manifest or visible in Counter-Reformation Catholicism, which the sermons present plays as disrupting. The article concludes that as cultural protest, the sermons succeeded. They helped suppress theatrical activity in New France for more than a century. However, when evaluated in relation to Saint-Vallier's spiritual objectives, his sermonic protests against the theater failed. By emphasizing the outer forms of devotion, Saint-Vallier turned theatricality into the enemy within.

Introduction

Canada's colonial history, like that of so many former colonies, is in large part a missionary history. "New France was created in the name of Religion," observe Raymond Douville and Jacques Casanova (1967, 107), and its founders aspired to establish a purified Christianity on the continent. The colony's first bishops shared this utopian vision and promoted it when representing colonial Canada, or New France, to European readers.¹ In a letter to Pope Innocent XI, François de Laval, the first bishop of Québec, compared Canada to the new Jerusalem promised by the prophet Isaiah. "*New heavens and a new earth will be created in Canada*," he wrote, "everything will be agreeably renewed in this Church" (Quoted by Gosselin 1911, 10, emphasis in original).² Laval used the future tense because his objective was to recommend the man who would become his successor, Jean-Baptiste de la Croix de Chevrières de Saint-Vallier, to his Episcopal seat.

Saint-Vallier's early writings show that the Christian utopianism expressed in metaphors like that of Canada as a new heaven and new earth informed both what he saw in New France and what he expected of its inhabitants. In a letter he published in 1688 after his first visit to the colony, he declared:

The people, generally speaking, are as devout as the clergy appeared to me to be holy. One notices a *je ne sais quoi* of the character that was admired in the past in the Christians of the first centuries: simplicity, devotion and charity are radiantly visible. (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:252)³

New France, through Saint-Vallier's eyes, offered a return to the sanctity of the early church of the Apostles.

Unsurprisingly, this utopian projection did not accurately describe life in the colonies. Nonetheless, the idea that New France constituted a new Jerusalem shaped the colonial imaginary in such a way as to influence which cultural practices could be thought of by Europeans as indigenous to Canadian society. Activities not associated with an idealized view of Canada as the site of a Catholic Church purified of pagan and secular elements were rejected, at least by churchmen like Saint-Vallier. As missionary efforts to convert and Frenchify indigenous peoples demonstrate, Canada as a new Jerusalem left little room for native American ways of life (Trudel 1968, 31; Li 2001, 77–108). Likewise, a society understood as a renewal of the early Church did not readily encompass certain practices dear to many early modern French men and women, like plays and playgoing. For Saint-Vallier, as for other priests and devout Catholics who advocated for liturgical and disciplinary reforms associated with the Counter-Reformation, theater represented *le monde*, or the world. As one early modern convert to Catholicism put it, the theater's "origin, circumstances, and effects" were incompatible with "the infallible rules" of the "Religion of Jesus-Christ" (Conti 1666, 7, 4).

Indeed, Saint-Vallier's zeal in his role as the bishop of Québec to renew the early church in New France had profound consequences for the development of the performing arts in colonial Canada, severely curtailing theatrical practice for over a century. Although his anti-theater measures had a lasting impact, they stemmed from a single incident. In 1694, the Governor-General of New France, a man by the name of Louis de Buade, le Comte de Frontenac, launched a season of winter entertainments for the inhabitants of Québec that featured performances of Pierre Corneille's *Nicomède* and Jean Racine's *Mithidrate* (Gosselin 1898b, 60). Word then spread that

Molière's *Tartuffe* would be next. *Tartuffe* symbolized for French churchmen all that was dangerous about plays. After its initial performances at Versailles, its depiction of religious hypocrisy had motivated the Company of the Blessed Sacrament to campaign for its suppression in 1664 (Ferreyrolles 1987, 33). Saint-Vallier retaliated with a series of antitheatrical discourses, two of which were delivered during the parish mass as part of the sermon, or *prône* (Gosselin 1898b, 61). To defend his flock against cultural influences that from his perspective undermined Christian values, such as the theater, Saint-Vallier therefore drew on the local church's ritual practices, orchestrating sermonic performances against what he believed to be an imminent *Tartuffe*.

The story of the theater's suppression in New France is not new and in many ways plays out a familiar conflict between secular and religious performance forms, in this case theatrical representation versus sermons. It does, however, reveal some of the surprising ways religion and spirituality operate performatively in the context of political change. The colonial context, for example, brings into sharper relief the diverse ways sermons and plays engaged the spectator or auditor. Saint-Vallier's story also problematizes the concept of protest as historically contingent. In what follows, I argue that although Saint-Vallier's religious action repressed the performing arts – which from a twenty-first-century perspective would align him with those who should be protested rather than with protesters – from an early modern perspective his rejection of the theater constituted a protest both in that he saw himself as a reformer engaged in building a Christian society in colonial Canada and in that he drew on the same conservative impulses that frequently animated social unrest in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France.

Protest, whether early modern or postmodern, typically takes place in public. Religious renewal of the kind desired by Saint-Vallier, too, had a public quality in that spiritual devotion needed to produce visible signs, such as abstinence from theatrical entertainments. An analysis of Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical sermons as protest calls first for a contextualization of the way early moderns understood the interplay between that which was hidden and that which was given to view, between the private and the public. As I will explain below, laws and definitions related to printing and publication shed light on what Frenchmen like Saint-Vallier thought it meant to be public and the mediums by which they believed private or hidden information should and could be made known. One law that had particular pertinence for the relationship between performance and notions of publicness in New France concerned printing. In early Canada, the conflict between Church and theater derived its special character from the lack of a printing press under the French regime. Not until 1764, under English rule, did the region have its own press (Melançon 2004, 46; Colby 1908, 289). In the absence of easy access to printed sources, performance played a privileged role in the efforts of colonial authorities to civilize and evangelize the local population. The competition between sermons and plays was thus all the more contentious given the crucial function filled by performance as a medium for transmitting information in New France.

Although I argue that Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical sermons constituted a protest in early modern terms, I contend that this protest failed when evaluated in light of his spiritual objectives. Saint-Vallier's arguments against the theater can help explain this spiritual failure. By analyzing the way Saint-Vallier articulated the tension between liturgy and theater in his diocesan Ritual (the liturgical book, based on the *Rituale Romanum*, in which a bishop provides instructions to his priests regarding all the sacraments and services not detailed in the Missal or Breviary), his pastoral letters,

and his memoranda, I show that in New France secular performance forms, such as plays, and religious performance forms, such as liturgical ceremonies and preaching, served as what I will call publication mechanisms.⁴ Although these forms all rendered hidden things public, they did not do so in the same way. Whereas sermons conveyed instructions, early modern rhetoric attributed to both plays and liturgical ceremonies the capacity to leave an “impression.” Sermons were therefore useful for addressing external behaviors. Plays, meanwhile, posed a risk because despite their spectacular apparatus they were perceived as touching the unseen depths of the heart. The moral distinctions drawn between various performance mediums in Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical texts thus hinged in part on the way performances were thought to affect the inner and outer dimensions of a believer’s self. From Saint-Vallier’s perspective, theatrical publication disrupted the proper interaction between the soul’s inner and outer aspects, the *intérieur* and *extérieur*, thereby compromising an individual’s right relationship to God and the faith community. Meanwhile, I argue, sermonic performance failed to correct the damage caused by theatrical publication because preaching, unlike plays, relied too heavily on discourse. To borrow a metaphor commonly used to describe both plays and ceremonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, sermons published without “printing.” Saint-Vallier’s sermonic protest failed spiritually because he did not complement preaching with other forms of religious performance, such as ceremonies, that would have operated in a way similar to plays. His inattention to the full spectrum of religious performance created an overemphasis on external behavior without fostering inner transformation, paradoxically reproducing the very disequilibrium between interiority and exteriority he critiqued in the theater. Saint-Vallier’s story thus reveals the challenges of using religious performance as protest and the value of combining multiple performance forms to achieve change.

Protest and Religious Reform in a Colonial Context

Four texts make up the *dossier* of Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical discourses. The first precedes the *Tartuffe* affair by almost a decade and dates from the bishop’s first trip to Canada, when he crossed from La Rochelle to Québec in 1685 on the same boat as the Marquis de Denonville, the colony’s governor general from 1685-1689, who was accompanied by his pregnant wife and two daughters (Eccles 1982). Upon reaching New France, Saint-Vallier composed a document titled *Avis donnés au Gouverneur et à la Gouvernante sur l’obligation où ils sont de donner le bon exemple* (Notice to the governor and his wife concerning their obligation to set a good example), in which he warned them against letting their daughters perform in plays (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:171–72). On 16 January 1694, prompted by the prospect of a performance of *Tartuffe*, he issued a *Mandement au sujet des comédies* (Pastoral letter on the subject of plays). A *mandement*, or pastoral letter, as Jean Laflamme and Rémi Tourangeau explain, was a memorandum written by a bishop to the Catholics in his diocese explaining an ordinance or providing information about liturgical practice (1979, 41n23). Saint-Vallier simultaneously issued a longer text titled *Éclaircissement touchant la comédie* (Instruction concerning the theater). These three documents, published in 1887 by H. Têtu and C.O. Gagnon as part of an edited collection of documents from Québec’s bishops, contain Saint-Vallier’s summary of the spiritual harm he believed the theater to cause. Lastly, in 1703 Saint-Vallier published a diocesan Ritual in which he

listed actors and farce players among those who should be excluded from the sacraments as public sinners (Saint-Vallier 1703a, 10).⁵

Although textual documents give us access to this antitheatrical episode in Québec's religious history, both the *Mandement au sujet des comédies* and the *Éclaircissement touchant la comédie* began as sermonic performance. The opening lines of the pastoral letter make the text's performance origins clear, in which Saint-Vallier positions his *mandement* as a means of reinforcing "The instruction that was given on Sunday the tenth of this month in the church of the Basse-Ville for the enlightenment of moral consciences regarding plays" (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:302).⁶ Auguste Gosselin argues that Saint-Vallier entrusted the preaching of the aforementioned antitheatrical sermon to Charles de Glandalet, Saint-Vallier's secretary as well as the second assistant to the superior of the seminary of Québec (Gosselin 1898b, 61; Bélanger 1982). The *Éclaircissement* appears to be the text of this sermon.⁷ Not only does Saint-Vallier use the word *éclaircissement* in his pastoral letter to describe the instruction, in the opening lines of the text the author, whether we take it to be Saint-Vallier or Glandalet, appeals to his "listeners" and refers to the obligation of "the preachers and ministers of God's word ... to preach the truth" (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:304).⁸ At the end of the *Éclaircissement*, a concluding note refers to the pastoral letter, calling it an *ordonnance*. "We have approved the above instruction," writes Saint-Vallier, "as evidenced by our attached ordinance. Jean, Évêque de Québec" (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:308).⁹ The *Éclaircissement*, therefore, was first delivered as a sermon and then committed to writing and stamped with Saint-Vallier's approval.

The *Mandement*, too, existed first and foremost as what we would now call performance. Its concluding lines declare:

And so that no one can claim cause of ignorance, we wish that our present pastoral letter be read and published in Quebec and elsewhere where need be during the sermon (*prône*) of the mass and in other devotional assemblies which take place regularly in Quebec. (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:304)¹⁰

Catholics in Québec would have therefore heard the *Mandement* at mass as part of a sermon. In relation to the dozens of sermons preached in a given year, this one had a distinctive character. Together, the *Mandement* and the *Éclaircissement* provide an example of what Louis Rousseau calls in his research on preaching in New France "circumstantial instruction," or sermons that depart from the standard cycle of themes associated with the liturgical calendar to treat a topic precipitated by recent events (Rousseau 2007, 225).¹¹ Sermons that treated liturgically inspired themes were often repeated each year (Rousseau 2007, 223). The *Éclaircissement* did not lend itself to this type of sermonic recycling. As such, the *Mandement* and the *Éclaircissement* constituted something of an interruption to the regular rotation of parish sermons. Their circumstantial nature also heightened their ephemerality and hence, following Peggy Phelan's definition of performance as that which disappears (1993, 146), their status as performance.

In Phelan's terms, the documents that ostensibly record or preserve a performance – like the texts of Saint-Vallier's *Mandement* and *Éclaircissement* – are "only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present" (1993, 146). The material qualities of these texts, when compared to other ordinances issued by Saint-Vallier, further underscore the ephemerality linked to their status as

performance. Rather than enjoying the relative permanence of print that was accorded to documents like Saint-Vallier's Ritual, which was published in Paris and then exported to New France, the *Mandement* and *Éclaircissement* would have circulated as manuscripts. Although the attitude toward the theater expressed in these sermonic performances later informs the Ritual, where their influence can be seen in the classification of actors as public sinners, Saint-Vallier did not choose to reproduce them in the collection of statutes and ordinances he published in 1703 alongside his Ritual. Instead, he contents himself in that volume, in the context of a more general ordinance on diocesan discipline from 1700, to reference his earlier *mandement* on plays, reminding his priests that "with regards to plays, balls, dances, masquerades, and other dangerous spectacles, we renew the ruling made in our ordinance of 16 January 1694" (Saint-Vallier 1703c, 111). The full texts of the *Mandement* and *Éclaircissement* are therefore readily accessible today thanks to the archival and editorial work of Têtu and Gagnon, who by publishing the manuscripts renewed their function as spurs to memory.

It may seem odd to frame sermons emanating from a bishop as protest. It would be more in keeping with a twenty-first-century understanding of protest to classify Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical discourses as repression. A sermon, first, involves one performer who, in the Catholic tradition at least, possesses a certain degree of authority. By contrast, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, since the nineteenth century the term "protest" in the English language suggests a gathering of "a (large) number of people" ("Protest, v." 2017). Furthermore, the term implies resistance exercised by a weaker group against a stronger one. The *OED* describes a protest's aim as "to express collective disapproval or dissent publicly, typically by means of an organized demonstration" or "to engage in a mass protest, usually against a government policy or legal decision." In this light, it is easiest and perhaps most accurate to align Saint-Vallier with the types of policies and decisions against which a populace would object through public collective action. To do otherwise would seem to contradict what Katrina Navickas calls the "grand narratives of progress and development" that shape scholarship on protest, despite a growing effort among social historians to produce more nuanced accounts of resistance by moving back and forth between micro and macro histories and popular and elite perspectives (2012, 306). Rather than affording political participation, protection, or autonomy to previously marginalized groups as a progress-based narrative about protest would require, Saint-Vallier's antitheatricalism does the opposite, threatening to exclude those who participate in theatrical activity from the Christian community.

Linguistically, too, a modern vocabulary for protest must be applied with caution. Seventeenth-century meanings of the terms *protest* and its verb *protester* in French do not correspond to the twenty-first-century English meanings, nor do they quite encompass Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical discourses. Antoine Furetière, author of the *Dictionnaire universel*, classes both words as terms of negotiation (Furetière 1690d, 1690e). For seventeenth-century French speakers, *protest* and *protester* define legal actions taken before a notary or court, typically to defend or demand a right or traditional privilege.¹² Today's French words for protest – *manifestation* and *manifeste* – did not yet bear a relation to public dissent in the seventeenth century. They did, however, denote the act of making something public, and especially of revealing a hidden truth. Furetière defines *manifeste* as "To make oneself seen and known, to appear," giving as an example Jesus' appearance before his disciples after his

resurrection (Furetière 1690c).¹³ Likewise, *manifestation*, according to Furetière, means a “Discovery, knowledge that one gives,” the primary example being God’s decision *not* to make manifest his glory, laws, and judgements except to the Jews and Christians (Furetière 1690b).¹⁴ Although not related to protest in the modern sense, the religious connotations of *manifestester* and *manifestation* during the early modern period suggest the degree to which a medium like the theater, which makes things seen, thereby enters into competition with the Church.

The difficulty of fitting Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical efforts into a twenty-first-century paradigm does not, however, foreclose the possibility of interpreting them as protest in an early modern sense. First, the conservatism that characterizes Saint-Vallier’s attack on plays draws on the same “reformist mentality” that, in Michael Mullett’s words, motivated the collective actions commonly analyzed under the rubric of popular protest in early modern studies, such as food riots and peasant revolts (Mullett 1987, 1). Natalie Zeamon Davis, in her work on charivaris and violence, concurs that “the loud and mocking laugh of misrule” – which sometimes led to insurrection and rebellion – “intended to keep a traditional order,” whether domestically or politically (Davis 1971, 65–67). Not unlike the youth groups studied by Davis who punished disorders in marriage, Saint-Vallier condemns the theater in part to protect what he understands as a God-given and traditional relation among the sexes. This attitude comes through most clearly in the letter he wrote to the Marquis de Denonville advising the governor and his wife to keep their daughters away from the stage, and especially not to let “boys declaim [verses] with girls,” warning that mixing the sexes in performance was “more dangerous than balls and dances” (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:172).¹⁵ During the conflict surrounding *Tartuffe*, he accused the theater of providing pleasure “at the expense of ... chastity” (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:306).¹⁶ Saint-Vallier’s invocation of sexual purity aligned him with the same protective impulses discernible in the uprisings of the lower orders prior to the Revolution.

Even more so than the generally conservative character of early modern dissent, the way French men and women imagined New France makes it possible to interpret Saint-Vallier’s action as protest. As Paul Slack argues for the early modern English context, protesters identified their “enemies” as “outsiders threatening social cohesion” (1984, 11). In France during the early modern period, the theater and its players could not easily be figured as outsiders. Although ecclesiastical authorities certainly tried to discourage playgoing and threatened to withhold the sacraments from actors who did not renounce their profession (Dubu 1997, 71–94), the king nonetheless patronized the theater. Among the evidence for the crown’s theatrical patronage, one can cite the royal subsidies received by the *Comédiens du roi*, or King’s Players, at the Hôtel de Bourgogne and by Molière’s troupe before his death (Clarke 1998, 1:4, 42), the various interventions exercised by Louis XIII and Louis XIV to move actors from one troupe to another (Lemazurier 1810, 1:8; Clarke 1998, 1:45–48), and the fact that Molière enjoyed the status of “Valet de chambre tapissier du roi” (valet of the king’s chamber and keeper of carpets and upholstery) (Jal 1876, 875). However precarious the actor’s social status in France (Blocker 2009, 280–363), the imbrication of royal power and theatrical production under the Bourbon monarchs cast plays and those who made them as cultural insiders.

In New France, the theater did not occupy an insider position. It could be cast by Counter-Reformers like Saint-Vallier as an alien import from the Old World and a threat to the idealized community churchmen like Saint-Vallier believed they were

building. The plays staged by the Comte de Frontenac in 1694 were by no means the first theatrical activity in colonial Canada but, as Martin Banham explains, “material conditions in New France were not conducive to the establishment of an enduring theatrical tradition” (Banham 1988, 152). In his words, a “sparse, transient population in a huge colony ... militated against sustained theatrical activity” (Banham 1988, 152). Indeed, by the 1660s, New France had only approximately 3200 French settlers, many of whom would leave (Greer 1997, 5). According to Allan Greer, of the 27,000 colonists who came to colonial Canada before the English Conquest in 1760, as many as two-thirds “returned home without leaving descendants in the colony” (Greer 1997, 12). Even though some of these colonists brought a taste for plays with them, theater did not play a regular part in daily colonial life. Whereas churchmen in France who contested the theater’s moral value adopted what was becoming an increasingly fringe stance against a cultural practice in full flower the theater’s outsider status in New France positioned Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical discourses as the voice of an insider defending the community against an external threat.

Given that the conservative impulses characteristic of early modern protest run counter to the progressive connotations associated with twenty-first-century uses of the term, it is therefore useful to nuance the discussion with language drawn from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The activist and repressive aspects of Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical discourses come together in the early modern meanings of the French verb *défendre*, to defend. The first meanings assigned to the verb *défendre* by Furetière concern battle, whether “To resist someone who attacks, to shield oneself from violence” or, in the context of war, “to retain a post or place,” like a city under siege (Furetière 1690a). It is in this sense that Saint-Vallier’s sermons can be read as protest. Saint-Vallier sees himself as resisting the theater to protect the colonial Church against the invasion of cultural practices that could undermine its nascent rights, traditions, and integrity. As he explained to the Marquis de Denonville when advising him not to let his daughter perform in plays, to do so “would be to renew here without thinking the usage of the theater and of plays” that had given rise to “disorder” in other times and places (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:171–72).¹⁷ At the same time, in acting as the defender of the Church, Saint-Vallier prohibits plays, an action that falls under the definition of *défendre* as “To prohibit the use of something” (Furetière 1690a). Here, too, though, the idea of protest, at least in its early modern conservative guise, remains relevant, because the act of prohibition identified Saint-Vallier as a Catholic reformer, one engaged in reformation, or the “Correction of an error, an abuse” and the effort to “Re-establish the old discipline in some House or State” (Furetière 1690h, 1690i). The bishop’s actions and attitudes toward the theater clearly indicate that he perceived stage playing as a disruptive force capable of interrupting the liturgical framework essential to a post-Tridentine vision of the spiritual life. In the spirit of reform, his goal was to re-establish order. His protest is thus a defense of the ideal social and religious order he envisioned for New France.

Publication and Spiritual Formation

To understand the spiritual disruption posed by the theater from Saint-Vallier’s perspective and against which he positioned himself as a defender or reformer, it is necessary to grasp the importance of publication within the spiritual tradition in which Saint-Vallier received his ecclesiastical training. The theater’s ability to make manifest

the invisible presented a threat because the soul's formation in French Counter-Reformation thought involved a disciplined process of publication.

Saint-Vallier came of age in the Paris of the early 1670s, where he studied at the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, completing a licentiate in theology in 1672 and receiving his ordination in 1681 (Rambaud 1982). Although little is known about Saint-Vallier's intellectual trajectory, for the purposes of my argument two features of his cultural milieu stand out. First, for French men and women of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the concept of publication conjured images not of the printing press but rather of a range of oral practices by means of which information could be made public. The 1690 edition of Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel* defines publication as "Notification that one makes in assemblies and public places of something one wants everyone to know" (Furetière 1690f).¹⁸ He offers as his primary example the *prône* or sermon delivered as part of the parish mass, during which announcements of marriage banns and other such legal affairs were regularly made. Saint-Vallier's Ritual reinforces this meaning in a chapter titled "Diverse examples of the things that must be published at the High Mass" (Saint-Vallier 1703a, 338).¹⁹ Likewise, Furetière's definition of the verb *publier* – "To make a thing public" (Furetière 1690g)²⁰ – gives priority to public readings, criers, and gossip. He does mention printing and posters, but the placement of these tools in his list of examples suggests they complement rather than dominate oral forms of publication. In other words, for French speakers of Saint-Vallier's generation, publication entailed live presence, gesture, spectatorship, audition, and use of the human voice, all of which in today's disciplinary terms place early modern publication under the rubric of performance.

Second, the obligation to render public the soul's right relationship to God and the Church preoccupied the men and women engaged in the Catholic Counter-Reformation under the Ancien Régime. The question of when, how and to what degree a Catholic should give physical, visible, or material expression to his or her spiritual experience constituted a constant thread in the religious polemics of the period. Sometimes reformers articulated their concerns about the proper ways of making religious convictions public by referring explicitly to the concept of publication. Pierre de Bérulle, for example, in his *Discours de l'estat et des grandeurs de Jesus* (Discourse on the state and grandeurs of Jesus) reprimands Protestants for their use of violence by declaring their religion a "Doctrine published on Earth, not as a Gospel, by gentleness, by miracles; but ... by arms and fury (Bérulle 1644, 132).²¹ In this metaphor, Protestant military action publishes, from Bérulle's perspective, their theology's flaws.

More frequently, though, early modern French Catholics framed the problem of spiritual expression in terms of a tension between inner and outer action, between *l'intérieur* and *l'extérieur*. This formulation sheds light on the way Saint-Vallier interpreted the spiritual damage caused by the theater. Two documents from the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris demonstrate how his Sulpician training would have taught Saint-Vallier to think about the soul's inner and outer aspects. The first is an *Entretien*, or guided reflection, on the theme of right action, composed in the late seventeenth century by Saint-Sulpice's third Superior General, Louis Tronson, for use by seminarians. In an effort to teach how to do good, the *entretien* explains that an action consists in two things, "the exterior and the interior" (n.d., fol. 16).²² The exterior "is that which one sees on the outside, which strikes our sight, which touches our senses," while the interior is "that which takes place in the spirit and in the heart of the

person who acts, and which is known only by that person” (Tronson, n.d., fol. 16).²³ To achieve spiritual perfection, the Catholic must “synchronize the exterior and the interior” by first filling the soul with the same dispositions and intentions as Jesus Christ and then practicing on the outside the same virtues (Tronson, n.d., fol. 22r).²⁴ Although the *entretien* does not use the word publication, the dynamic involved is one of making public. Disciplined outer action reveals an inner and hidden mystery. By publishing, as it were, Christ’s spirit, the Catholic not only restores unity to his or her own interior and exterior, but also establishes a connection with other Christians by edifying them through his or her example. “We are obliged to be an example to them,” the *entretien* says of our neighbors, adding “we would know no other way to do so but by the exterior” (Tronson, n.d., fol. 19r).²⁵ One Catholic’s virtuous outer action thus inspires another’s inner dispositions.

Liturgically, the relationship between publication and spiritual formation operates in the same way. A cycle or chain of publication – of outer actions that render visible an inner mystery – links the individual to the faith community. A second document from the seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris reveals how Saint-Vallier’s training would likely have disposed him to understand liturgical action as what I am calling publication. Jean-Jacques Olier, the founder of the Seminary and Society of Saint-Sulpice, published a liturgical handbook titled *Explication des cérémonies de la grande messe de paroisse* (An explanation of the ceremonies of the high parish mass) in 1656, shortly before his death. According to the text’s most recent editors, it likely began as conferences given by Olier to his seminarians, which allows us to infer that the *Explication* influenced liturgical pedagogy at Saint-Sulpice (Olier 2009, 32). In his preface, Olier insists on the revelatory nature of ceremonies, by which he means the gestures and physical movements, such as genuflections and the raising of arms, executed by the clergy during the mass. Ceremonies, which he calls “the Spirit’s coverings,” make visible and sensible Christ’s hidden and holy work in the sacraments (Olier 1656, 7–8).²⁶ They first inspire faith in the priest, who then uses ceremonies “to express outwardly that which he sees and which he feels of the holy things he handles” (Olier 1656, 2).²⁷ The priest’s gestures in turn reveal Christ’s glory to the people. Although Olier does not use the word *publier*, he returns repeatedly to the metaphor of impression. Ceremonies print respect in the hearts of worshippers: “Ceremonies are in the Church the organs and instruments of the respect that the Spirit of Jesus-Christ prints in the Heart of the Faithful” (Olier 1656, 7).²⁸ The faithful, continues Olier, “receive from them [the ceremonies] light and divine movement” (1656, 8).²⁹ Spiritual growth in and through the mass thus relies on publication for its dynamism: Christ institutes ceremonies to reveal his mysteries to his priests, who in turn use them to make visible Christ’s glory. Upon seeing the ceremonies, Catholics receive an impression in their souls, filling them with spiritual life (light and divine movement). This inner printing disposes them to right action, making them examples, and thus triggering anew the cycle of publication and witness.

Theater in New France

An analysis of Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical texts shows that from his perspective theatrical representation reversed the publication cycle essential to spiritual formation and sustained by the liturgy. His statements against the theater advance the argument that plays disrupt devotion – that sphere in which the individual Catholic strives to

achieve spiritual perfection by harmonizing his or her interior and exterior – by displacing good intentions and blocking their outer expression. Plays, Saint-Vallier writes in his *Éclaircissement*, “dissipate the spirit of devotion, ... make one lose the way to serve God, ... sap the soul’s strength, ... make charity go cold and ... awaken in the soul a thousand bad affections” (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:307).³⁰ Diluted, weakened, cold and filled with bad thoughts, a soul watching a play cannot, to return to Tronson’s words, synchronize its interior and exterior.

Saint-Vallier says little about the nature of sin committed by those who perform in plays, other than specifying that their sin is public. In his Ritual, however, he does address the issue of representation in a way that suggests that the spiritual damage of play-acting consists at least in part in a disequilibrium between the interior and the exterior. In a fascinating passage that signals the importance of performance in a colonial setting where priests were not always handy at critical moments such as birth and death, Saint-Vallier writes:

It is certain that an Infidel can administer the sacrament of baptism even if he does not believe our mysteries and thinks they are useless, superstitious ceremonies, provided that he wants to do what the Church claims to do, that is to say to carry out with seriousness that which he has seen Christians do; I say with seriousness because if he were to play at it, he would instead show a desire to represent what Christians do, rather than to do what they want to do. (Saint-Vallier 1703a, 2)³¹

According to Saint-Vallier, a non-Christian who administers baptism ceremonies with the intention of baptizing someone achieves his or her objective. Even if he or she lacks faith, the harmonization of inner and outer action, between intentions and ceremonies, proves effective. However, a person who conducts the ceremonies without the proper intentions falls into performance. He or she represents a baptism rather than accomplishes one, play-acting rather than doing. For both spectators and actors, theatrical representation from Saint-Vallier’s perspective disconnects the soul’s interior and exterior.

Theater attendance also disrupts or reverses the next step in the cycle of spiritual formation in which a Catholic who succeeds in harmonizing the soul’s inner and outer aspects then serves as an example for others, his or her model leaving an impression that fosters spiritual growth in other members of the community. This second type of disconnection, Saint-Vallier seems to suggest, results from the way in which plays keep some spiritual things hidden that should in fact be revealed. In other words, plays publish, but insufficiently. This is especially true regarding the audience’s involvement in a play. Spectators participate in an actor’s outer performance even though visibly this union is not obvious. Saint-Vallier warns that “in addition to the manifest danger to which one would expose oneself of receiving the bad impressions that such spectacles are accustomed to leave in the spirit, [to attend] would be to cooperate in the sin of those who perform [the plays] and who would not do so if no one came to hear them” (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:305–6).³² A play needs an audience, observes Saint-Vallier, and so the audience is in a sense co-responsible for the actor’s sin. The theatrical event does not, however, properly publish the spectator’s agency in the performance. Similarly, plays seem to publish one thing when they in fact publish another. According to Saint-Vallier, what I would call mis-publication especially applies to plays like *Tartuffe*, whose apologists claim represents wrong-doing so as to correct it. In contrast to Molière, who argues in his preface to the play that “nothing

corrects most men better than the depiction of their faults” (Molière 1971, 885)³³, Saint-Vallier sees comedy as a trap. “Under beautiful pretexts,” writes Saint-Vallier, “these sorts of plays insinuate adroitly and artfully vice itself and contempt for religion and devotion into the souls of spectators” (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:308).³⁴ A play’s apparent content and that which it actually makes public are often diametrically opposed from Saint-Vallier’s perspective, precluding the possibility that the theater functions as a school of morals. Put another way, a play’s moral ambiguity derives in part from the difficulty of determining the relationship between its *intérieur* and *extérieur*.

Saint-Vallier offers disappointingly few details about how, precisely, attending or performing in plays produces the devotional and liturgical disruptions he attributes to theatrical representation. He largely reproduces the antitheatrical arguments that circulated in France in the 1660s following the polemics incited by Molière’s *Tartuffe*.³⁵ Yet, the form of Saint-Vallier’s response to the threat of a *Tartuffe* demonstrates with greater clarity than in the French case how clergymen tried to leverage the Church’s publication resources, both through print and performance, to guide the souls in their care. In seventeenth-century France, the churchmen and zealous Catholics who penned treatises against the theater were rarely the same churchmen who issued Rituals against actors or who took action at the parish level to exclude stage players from the sacraments. Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, for example, published a long condemnation of the theater in 1694 under the title *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie* (Maxims and reflections upon plays, see especially the version edited by Urbain and Levesque 1930), but does not, as the bishop of Meaux, issue a diocesan Ritual declaring actors as public sinners (Dubu 1980, 205–6). Meanwhile, in the diocese of Paris, where the Ritual excludes actors, or *comédiens*, from communion starting in 1654 (Dubu 1997, 86–93), the priests who served parishes that housed theaters did not publish treatises against plays. Neither Olier and his successors in the parish of Saint-Sulpice, nor Pierre Merlin in the parish of Saint-Eustache – the curate who refused the last rites to Molière – pen antitheatrical texts.³⁶ The strategic use churchmen made of religious performance in the form of preaching and ceremonies, combined with antitheatrical discourse, to protest the theater is thus more difficult to trace in France because it is more dispersed.

The unification in the figure of Saint-Vallier of treatise-like discourses against the theater as well as liturgical texts condemning actors makes it possible to interpret his antitheatrical campaign as an effort to realign the relationship between inner and outer action in his diocese by activating a series of interlocking performances and extending them into the future through print. I have already evoked to some degree this process in describing the primary sources that compose the *dossier* on Saint-Vallier’s antitheatricalism, but will now outline it in more detail. To protest the theater, he first issues two discourses to be presented or read aloud – “published” in early modern parlance – during the *prône*, or sermon, the first an instruction given in a specific parish, the church of the Basse-Ville, and the second a pastoral letter to be read throughout the diocese. Curiously, as discussed above, neither the *Mandement* nor the *Éclaircissement* figure in the collection of ordinances published by Saint-Vallier in 1703, appearing in print only in 1887 in Têtu and Gagnon’s collection of episcopal documents. These texts therefore trace a trajectory from what could be considered a site-specific performance to a circulating performance, reaching print more than a century after Saint-Vallier’s death.

The sermonic performances find expression, however, in Saint-Vallier's Ritual, which translates into liturgical prescriptions the idea that play-acting and play attendance lead to sin. Article V of the chapter "On Sacraments in General" specifies that priests should not administer sacraments to any "public sinners, such as the excommunicated or banned, heretics, those who live together outside marriage, usurers, magicians, sorcerers, blasphemers, drunks, *actors and farce players*, debauched women and girls... in a word all those who live in a state, habit, or cause of mortal sin" (Saint-Vallier 1703a, 9, 1703b, 10; emphasis mine).³⁷ The Ritual also contains a chapter on the *prône* with a set text, or *formule*, to be read by the priest during each high parish mass. This standardized sermon includes in its opening paragraphs a condemnation of the theater. After emphasizing Sunday as the Lord's day and a day for holy rest, the priest warns, "But beware, my brothers, that your rest, which must be holy, does not take place in idleness and crime by abandoning yourself on this day to the pleasures of the senses, *at shows*, at dances, in games, in debauchery or in excess" (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 385; emphasis mine). Together, Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical campaign therefore moves from sermonic performance to ceremonial prescription, inscribing a protest of the theater upon the worshipper's body by withholding sacraments, and then back to an oral performance ritualized by repetition.

Given that Counter-Reformers regularly associated liturgical ceremonies with the word *extérieur*, it would seem that in an offensive against the theater, sermons would target the soul's interior while rites and sacraments would discipline a believer's outer self. In fact, however, prescriptive documents on preaching and sacraments suggest that the performance mode – words or gestures – and its influence over spectators and auditors were opposite. Sermons, and the *prône* in particular, served a disciplinary function and therefore bore a relation to a believer's behavior as much as to his or her spiritual vivification. Saint-Vallier's Ritual defines the *prône* as a "familiar instruction in which the curate teaches his parishioners the Christian truths that they must know, motivates them to practice the virtues proper to their station, and reprimands their faults" (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 380–81).³⁸ Reinforcing the emphasis on duty and behavior, the Ritual continues, "One could say the *prône* is a discourse read publically at the parish mass which contains an instruction for the people of what they *should* believe, *should* do, *should* ask from God, and *should* receive in order to obtain the grace necessary for sanctification" (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 381; emphasis mine).³⁹ Ceremonies, by contrast, at least when performed well, "win the hearts of those who are present," according to the Ritual (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 9).⁴⁰ Whereas sermons publish, ceremonies, as Olier observed, "print in the spirit of the most poor and the most ignorant" (Olier 1656, 6), making an inner mark.⁴¹

As methods for guiding souls, both preaching and ceremonies had their limitations. In theory, parishioners were required to attend mass each week, giving the *prône* as well as liturgical ceremonies a captive audience. In practice, however, enforcing proper attendance proved a challenge. In the statutes published (that is, delivered orally) at the synod held by Saint-Vallier in Québec on 27 February 1698, he laments, "We cannot help but moan about the abuse that has slipped into several parishes of leaving the *prône* that is given during the high mass" (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:371).⁴² Ceremonies, too, could go awry. Intended to highlight "the grandeur of our Mysteries," if executed poorly ceremonies could "inspire contempt rather than respect" (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 9).⁴³ The use of religious performance to respond to the

spiritual threat posed by theatrical representations therefore called for a strategic combination of sermons and ceremonies.

Conclusion: Protest and Extremism

By most accounts, Saint-Vallier's use of preaching and ceremonies effectively stamped out the theater in New France. As Leonard E. Doucette notes, Saint-Vallier's successor renewed the prohibition on public play-acting, such that his *mandement* against the theater "remained in effect in Quebec for some 200 years" (1984, 30). Histories of the theater in French Canada jump directly from the *Tartuffe* affair of 1694 to the period following the English Conquest after mentioning a handful of eighteenth-century performances, such as a Biblical spectacle in the form of a *réception* – or series of laudatory orations delivered to a dignitary – presented to Saint-Vallier by the female boarding students at the Hôpital Général of the Ursulines in 1727 (Doucette 1984, 31–34). If the antitheatrical sermonic performances of 1694 are interpreted as an act of cultural repression, Saint-Vallier won.

Yet, all but eliminating theatrical representations from the diocese does not mean Saint-Vallier succeeded in achieving the spiritual goals that animated his campaign against plays. When analyzed as protest, the results of Saint-Vallier's antitheatricalism are more ambiguous. He may have overpowered his opponents, but at the expense of his own and the Church's reputation. The Jesuits asserted that he was "a terrible scourge who has caused more devastation in the spiritual realm than an army can cause in the worldly realm" (Quoted by Rambaud 1982).⁴⁴ One could say he crossed the fine line between protest and extremism, making of himself, ironically, a spectacle. His peers, both in France and New France, denounced him as a caricature of devotion. The author of a letter to the directors of the Seminary of Québec reports in 1695 that following the *Tartuffe* affair, "No one can be more decried at court than he is" (Brymner 1888, lxxvii). Saint-Vallier's show of zeal, continues the letter, made piety appear loud and empty. "[T]he opportunity was seized to decry devotion and devotees as troublesome people with whom it is impossible to live in peace," he laments, "and even the wisest took occasion to say that it was much better to give the bishoprics to people who had not so much apparent piety and more good sense, than to these rash devotees who turn everything into fire and fury" (Brymner 1888, lxxvii). Saint-Vallier may have suppressed the theater, but in doing so he presented devotion not as the synchronization of the interior and the exterior but rather as an outer performance devoid of both common sense and soul.

The bad feelings stirred up by Saint-Vallier did not derive exclusively from his responses to the theater. In true reformer fashion, he overturned at every step the power relations that had become status quo in his diocese prior to his arrival. Among other actions, he reorganized the diocesan seminary, reducing its authority over local clergy (Rambaud 1982), and by 1693, shortly before the conflict around a rumored *Tartuffe*, he had "quarreled with ... almost all his clergy" (Gosselin 1898a, 29).⁴⁵ Likewise, the failure of a theatrical tradition to develop prior to the Conquest cannot be solely attributed to Saint-Vallier's antitheatrical efforts. In Paris, although the combination of sermons and liturgical prescriptions against the theater was less centralized, the Church's efforts to prevent plays had little effect, suggesting that if Saint-Vallier had faced a richer economy and larger population his sermons might have

fallen on deaf ears. Nonetheless, at least two conclusions about religious performance in the colonies can be hazarded based on Saint-Vallier's case.

First, the imbalance between the interior and the exterior in Saint-Vallier's public reputation results at least to some degree from an overreliance on discursive performance and underuse of ceremonies. As I have argued, the *prône* aimed to influence parishioner behavior through the transmission of information. Defined by Saint-Vallier as a text read aloud, the *prône* as he conceived it did little to touch the senses in a way that would compete with the impressions he believed the theater could leave on a spectator's soul. Nor were the *Mandement au sujet des comédies* and the *Éclaircissement touchant la comédie* the only sermons directed at reforming his parishioners' behavior, or exterior. During his tenure, Saint-Vallier issued 84 pastoral documents, eleven of them during 1694 alone (Plante 1970, 50), all of which would have been published orally. This flurry of sermonic discourses inundated his parishioners with performances focused on discipline.

At the same time, Saint-Vallier's ceremonial reforms as represented by both his Ritual and his ordinances focused on the most hidden and the least theatrical of the sacraments: penance. According to Guy Plante's careful study, sixty percent of Saint-Vallier's pastoral letters, ordinances and other such pastoral documents concerned the sacrament of penance (1970, 50). Meanwhile, only slightly more than half of the pages of his Ritual – fifty-seven percent – provide instructions about the sacraments, a third of which discuss penance (Plante 1970, 49). Saint-Vallier dedicates only eleven pages of the Ritual to ceremonial practices, like processions and the sprinkling of holy water at mass, that rely on the senses to convey the resurrection of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit (Saint-Vallier 1703b, 369–80), thereby touching what a reformer like Olier would consider the soul's interior. Furthermore, Saint-Vallier's ceremonial strategy prioritized ceremonial withholding rather than liturgical creation. "The most effective remedy one can employ to convert sinners," he told his clergy in the Statutes from the Synod of 1694, "is to defer absolution" (Têtu and Gagnon 1887, 1:320).⁴⁶ In performance studies terms, Saint-Vallier failed to foster an ecosystem of liturgical activity akin to what Jill Stevenson calls, in the context of twenty- and twenty-first-century American Protestantism, "evangelical dramaturgy" (2013, 4). Such a dramaturgy would capitalize on the liturgical genres that flourished during the Counter-Reformation to, in Stevenson's words, "confront users with vivid, sensual, and rhythmic experiences designed to foster embodied beliefs that respond to specific devotional needs and priorities" (2013, 4). A defender, Saint-Vallier failed as a liturgical creator.

Second, Saint-Vallier's use of religious performance, both sermonic and ceremonial, slips from protest into extremism through an overemphasis on what in theatrical terms would be considered audience response. That is, rather than issuing memorandum upon memorandum to his clergy to improve the way they preached and performed the sacraments, Saint-Vallier issued ordinance upon ordinance to modify the way parishioners made use of liturgical space and events. The first two documents in the collection of ordinances he published alongside his Ritual in 1703, for example, are a set of instructions on how to attend church and receive communion with modesty and rules for treating church buildings with respect, titled, respectively, *Lettre pastorale touchant la modestie avec laquelle les fidèles doivent assister à l'Église, & les dispositions qu'ils doivent apporter à la communion* (Pastoral letter concerning the modesty with which the faithful must attend church, and the dispositions they must bring to communion) and *Ordonnance touchant la vénération dûë aux Eglises*

(Ordinance on the veneration due to churches) (Saint-Vallier 1703c, 5–12). Or perhaps more accurately, Saint-Vallier’s many reprimands of parishioners who talked, laughed, wiggled, or dressed to be seen suggest that whereas the faithful understood themselves as attending an event at which they were a spectator or auditor, Saint-Vallier conceived his parishioners as performers who should display certain devotional skills and conform to liturgical scripts. This disconnect between the bishop’s conception of religious performance and that of his parishioners made it difficult to elaborate a liturgical dramaturgy responsive to their needs. Consequently, Saint-Vallier’s promotion of sermonic performance at the expense of ceremonial flourishing succeeded as cultural repression but failed to accomplish the spiritual objectives of his antitheater protest because it published without “printing.” To synchronize religious behavior and spiritual life in his diocese, thereby defending against the disequilibrium he thought theater caused, Saint-Vallier would have needed to promote more amply the liturgical resources that churchmen of his generation believed could impress the soul. Ironically, by relying predominantly on sermons to conduct his protest, and thus on a religious performance form that according to his own Episcopal writings targeted outer behavior, Saint-Vallier not only made himself into a character but instantiated what one could call a “theatrical” liturgical dramaturgy focused on appearances. In expelling theater from the colony, he turned theatricality into the enemy within.

Notes

¹ In this article, I use “colonial Canada,” “New France,” and “early Canada” more or less as synonyms, although each designation has specific connotations. In the seventeenth century, “Canada” referred to the area that is now the province of Quebec (Greer 1997, 3). “New France” referred to the full extent of territories claimed by France in North America, including Louisiana, the Mississippi valley, and the Great Lakes region, although it was also used “as a synonym for ‘Canada’” (Greer 1997, 2). I use the term “early Canada” to evoke the importance of French holdings in Quebec City, Montreal, and along the St Lawrence River for the development of what later becomes the country of Canada as we know it today, for example situating Saint-Vallier’s antitheatrical discourses in the context of Canada’s larger theater history.

² “*De nouveaux cieux et une nouvelle terre vont être créés au Canada: tout va être agréablement renouvelé dans cette Eglise.*” The phrase highlighted by Gosselin is from Isaiah 65:17. The New International Version translation reads: “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth...” The promise of a new Jerusalem becomes clear in verses 18-19: “I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people...”

³ “Le peuple communément parlant, est aussi dévot que le Clergé m’a paru saint. On y remarque je ne sais quoi des dispositions qu’on admirait autrefois dans les Chrétiens des premiers siècles: la simplicité, la dévotion et la charité s’y montrent avec éclat...”

⁴ For a helpful definition and history of the Ritual, see Fortescue 1912. On the relationship between the Ritual as a liturgical book and the anthropological category of rituals as religious practice, see Asad 1993, 55-80

⁵ Two versions of the Ritual exist, one more Jansenist than the other. Actors found themselves on the list of public sinners in both versions. On the publication history of Saint-Vallier's Ritual, see La Charité 2011, 74-75 and Hubert 2000, 117-20.

⁶ "L'instruction qui fut faite, le dimanche dix de ce mois, dans l'église de la Basse-Ville pour l'éclaircissement des consciences touchant les comédies." Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

⁷ This is Gosselin's conclusion as well, although he does not explain how he arrived at it. See Gosselin 1898, 61.

⁸ "auditeurs", "les prédicateurs et les ministres de la parole de Dieu ... de prêcher la vérité." Gosselin and all those who cite him attribute the authorship of the *Éclaircissement* to Glandalet. The version of the *Éclaircissement* published by Têtu and Gagnon, however, does not include Glandalet's name. Not having had the opportunity to consult the manuscript version, I leave its authorship an open question. In any case, as Guy Lapante rightly observes, the *Mandement* and the *Éclaircissement*, regardless of their authorship, "expresses his [Saint-Vallier's] thought, since he supports them with his authority" (1970, 174n2; "ils expriment sa pensée, car il les appuie de son autorité").

⁹ "Nous avons approuvé l'instruction ci-dessus, comme il paraît par notre ordonnance ci-jointe. Jean, Évêque de Québec." The use of the term *ordonnance* instead of *mandement* raises the possibility that there was an additional document against the theater. I have not, however, been able to locate another *ordonnance* against plays from 1694, nor do any of the many secondary sources that treat the *Tartuffe* affair mention one. Saint-Vallier uses the term *ordonnance* to refer to the pastoral letter again in 1700 (1703c, 111), which suggests that he treated the terms *mandement* and *ordonnance* as synonyms.

¹⁰ "Et à ce que personne ne puisse prétendre cause d'ignorance, nous voulons que notre présent mandement soit lu et publié dans Québec et ailleurs ou besoin sera au prône de la messe et dans les autres assemblées de dévotion qui se tiennent réglément au dit Québec."

¹¹ "instruction de circonstance"

¹² The definitions given by Furetière are very similar to those found in the *OED* for protest before the nineteenth century.

¹³ "se faire voir & connoître, apparôître"

¹⁴ "Decouverte, connoissance qu'on donne"

¹⁵ "que des garçons déclament avec des filles," "plus dangereuse que le bal et la danse"

¹⁶ "au dépens de ... la chasteté"

¹⁷ "ce serait renouveler ici sans y penser l'usage du théâtre et de la comédie ... les désordres qui en sont arrivés autrefois"

¹⁸ "Notification qu'on fait dans les assemblées & lieux publics d'une chose qu'on veut que tout le monde sache."

¹⁹ "Diverses formules des choses qu'on doit publier à la Grande Messe."

²⁰ "Rendre une chose publique"

²¹ "Doctrine publiée en la Terre, non comme un Évangile, par douceur, par miracles; mais ... par armes & par fureurs."

²² "l'extérieur et l'intérieur"

²³ “est ce que l'on voit en dehors, ce qui frappe notre veüe, ce qui tombe sous nos sens;” “ce qui se passe dans l'esprit, et dans le coeur de la personne qui agit, et qui n'est connu que d'elle mesme.”

²⁴ “regler, et l'exterieur et l'interieur”

²⁵ “[N]ous somme obligez de lui donner exemple,” “or nous ne le scaurions faire que par l'exterieur”

²⁶ “les couvertures de l'Esprit”

²⁷ “pour exprimer à l'exterieur ce qu'il void & ce qu'il sent des choses saintes qu'il manie”

²⁸ “[L]es Ceremonies sont en l'Eglise des organs & des instruments du respect, que l'Esprit de Jesus-Christ imprime dans le Coeur des Fideles.”

²⁹ “en reçoivent lumiere & mouvement divin”

³⁰ “dissipent l'esprit de devotion, ... font perdre le moyen de servir Dieu, ... alanguissent les forces de l'âme, ... refroidissent la charité et ... réveillent en l'âme mille mauvaises affections”

³¹ “Il est certain qu'un Infidele peut administrer le Sacrement de Baptême, encore qu'il ne croye pas nos mysteres, & qu'il les regarde comme une ceremonie inutile, & superstitieuse, pourveu cependant qu'il veuille faire ce que l'Eglise pretend faire, c'est-à-dire faire serieusement ce qu'il a vû pratiquer aux Chrétiens; je dis serieusement, parce que s'il le faisoit par jeu, il auroit plutôt la volonté de représenter ce que font les Chrétiens, que de faire ce qu'ils veulent faire”

³² “outre le danger manifeste où l'on s'exposerait de recevoir de mauvaises impressions que de semblables spectacles ont accoutumé d'y faire d'eux-mêmes dans les esprits, ce serait encore coopérer au péché de ceux qui les représentent et qui ne le feraient pas si personne ne les venait entendre”

³³ “rien ne reprend mieux la plupart des hommes que la peinture de leurs défauts”

³⁴ “[S]ous de beaux pretextes,” writes Saint-Vallier, “ces sortes de pièces insinuent adroitement et artificieusement le vice même, et le mépris de la religion et de la devotion dans l'âme des assistants”

³⁵ For a chronology of antitheatrical texts from this period, see Laurent Thirouin's *L'Aveuglement salutaire: Le requisitoire contre le théâtre dans la France classique* (1997, 265-71). Jonas Barish in *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* provides a good overview of basic antitheatrical arguments in the French context (1981, 191-220), as does Moses Barras in *The Stage Controversy in France from Corneille to Rousseau* (1933).

³⁶ For a list of Olier's works in both print and manuscript form see Louis Bertrand's *Bibliothèque sulpicienne* (1900: 7-40). I have not found a comparable publication list for Merlin (whose name is sometimes spelled Marlin and Martin), but a brief profile can be found in the *Notice descriptive et historique sur l'église et la paroisse Saint-Eustache de Paris* (1855: 15, 79-81).

³⁷ “pécheur public, comme sont les excommuniez, ou interdits, les heretiques, les concubinaires, les usuriers, les magiciens, les sorciers, les blasphemateurs, les yvrognes, les comedians & farceurs, les filles ou femmes débauchées ... en un mot tous ceux qui sont en état, habitude, ou occasion de péché mortel”

³⁸ “une instruction familiere, par laquelle le Curé enseigne à ses Paroissiens les veritez Chrétiennes, qu'ils doivent sçavoir, les excite à la pratique des vertus propres à leur état, & les reprend des fautes qu'ils commettent plus ordinairement”

³⁹ “On peut dire encore que le Prône est un discours qu'on lit publiquement à la Messe de Paroisse, qui contient une instruction qu'on fait au Peuple, de ce qu'il doit croire, de ce qu'il doit faire, de ce qu'il doit demander à Dieu, & de ce qu'il doit recevoir; afin d'obtenir les graces dont il a besoin pour sa sanctification”

⁴⁰ “gagnent le coeur de ceux qui sont present”

⁴¹ “impriment dans l'esprit des plus pauvres & des plus ignorans”

⁴² “Nous ne pouvons pas nous empêcher de gémir sur l'abus qui s'est glissé dans plusieurs paroisses, de sortir du Prône qui se fait durant la grande Messe”

⁴³ “Pour servir à la grandeur de nos Mysteres,” “inspirent plutôt du mépris que du respect”

⁴⁴ “terrible fléau, qui a plus causé de ravages dans le domaine spirituel qu'une armée n'en peut causer dans le domaine temporel”

⁴⁵ “se brouiller avec ... presque tout son clergé”

⁴⁶ “le remède le plus efficace que l'on peut employer pour convertir les pécheurs ... est de différer l'absolution”

Works Cited

- Asad, Talal. 1993. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Banham, Martin, ed. 1988. *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barish, Jonas. 1981. *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bélanger, Noël. 1982. “Glandelet, Charles de.” In *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Vol. 2. University of Toronto/Université Laval.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/glandelet_charles_de_2E.html.
- Bertrand, Louis. 1900. *Bibliothèque sulpicienne ou histoire littéraire de la Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice*. Vol. 1. 3 vols. Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, Éditeurs.
- Bérulle, Pierre de. 1644. “Discours de l'estat et des grandeurs de Jesus, par l'union ineffable de la divinité avec l'humanité, et de la dépendance & servitude qui lui est deuë, & à sa tres-saincte mere, en suite de cét estat admirable.” In *Les oeuvres de l'eminetissime et reverendissime Pierre Cardinal de Berulle, instituteur et premier superieur general de la Congregation de l'Oratoire de Jesus-Christ nostre seigneur. Augmentées de divers opuscules de controverse & de pieté, avec plusieurs lettres: et enrichies de sommaires & de tables*, edited by François Bourgoing, 121–426. Paris: Antoine Estienne, et Sebastien Huré.
<http://solomon.tinyurl.alexanderstreet.com/1AS14>.
- Blocker, Déborah. 2009. *Instituter un “art”: politiques du théâtre dans la France du premier XVIIe siècle*. Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur.
- Bossuet, Jacques Benigne. 1930. “Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie.” In *L'Église et le théâtre: Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie précédés d'une introduction historique et accompagnés de documents contemporains et de notes critiques*, edited by Charles Urbain and Eugene Levesque, 169–276. Paris: Chez Bernard Grasset.

- Brymner, Douglas. 1888. *Report on Canadian Archives*. Ottawa, ON, CAN: Maclean, Roger & Co.
<https://books.google.ca/books?id=FsVOAQAAMAAJ&lpg=PR24&ots=v2Mm3pmlul&dq=report%20on%20canadian%20archives%20saint-vallier&pg=PR23#v=onepage&q&f=false>.
- Clarke, Jan. 1998. *The Guénégaud Theatre in Paris (1673-1680): Founding, Design and Production*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. Studies in Theatre Arts 5. Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Colby, Charles W. 1908. *Canadian Types of the Old Regime, 1608-1698*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
http://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacLZB1nkJvkCM6eNwsIBei7761hpbvbbZksFNvFRKYahUxbJwur1vhMqTjCiRjLISql1paKZJUx5aBlynShw4WUL-1bZqcxcldLyXRfCFx-a1AuvaUE2zJwJAHHGelfr3vAIFj6-w2VyegSdsxzYY_vQw9Z08NXwQ6t0mM9KTP_xCaGbUjSwhS17NMArrmS4qtfw_Whkl7YU8BgdP9C2tlm6FXQDgkNtBSjff1oOngk_ZDiVrDv-_GSICbL5Timy5xBE3uZmya84DedRXBftGlte4XnT1w.
- Conti, Armand de Bourbon, prince de. 1666. *Traité de la comédie et des spectacles, selon la tradition de l'Église, tirée des conciles & des saints père*. Paris: Chez Louys Billaine.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=ttU8CbrTuCoC&dq=trait%C3%A9%20de%20la%20com%C3%A9die%20et%20des%20spectacles&pg=PP25#v=onepage&q=peinture&f=false>.
- Davis, Natalie Zeamon. 1971. "The Reason of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth-Century France." *Past and Present* 50 (February): 41–75.
- Doucette, Leonard E. 1984. *Theatre in French Canada: Laying the Foundations, 1606-1867*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.
- Douville, Raymond, and Jacques Casanova. 1967. *Daily Life in Early Canada*. Translated by Carola Congreve. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Dubu, Jean. 1980. "Bossuet et le théâtre: Un silence de l'évêque de Meaux." In *Journées Bossuet: La prédication au XVIIe siècle, actes du colloque tenu à Dijon les 2, 3, et 4 décembre 1977 pour les trois cents cinquantième anniversaire de la naissance de Bossuet*, edited by Thérèse Goyet and Collinet, 201–7. Paris: Librairie A.-G. Nizet.
- . 1997. *Les Églises chrétiennes et le théâtre (1550-1850)*. Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble.
- Eccles, W. J. 1982. "Brisay De Denonville, Jaques-René De, Marquis de Denonville." In *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Vol. 2. University of Toronto/Université Laval.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/brisay_de_denonville_jacques_rene_de_2E.html
- Ferreyrolles, Gérard. 1987. *Molière: Tartuffe*. Études littéraires. Paris: Presses Universitaires de la France.
- Fortescue, Adrian. 1912. "Ritual." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13088b.htm>.
- Furetière, Antoine. 1690a. "Défendre." *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.

- . 1690b. “Manifestation.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690c. “Manifester.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690d. “Protest.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690e. “Protester.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690f. “Publication.” *Dictionnaire universel, contenant generalement tous les mots françois, tant vieux que modernes, & les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts....* La Haye: Chez A. et R. Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690g. “Publier.” *Dictionnaire universel, contenant generalement tous les mots françois, tant vieux que modernes, & les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts....* La Haye: Chez A. et R. Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690h. “Réformation.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- . 1690i. “Réforme.” *Dictionnaire Universel*. La Haye: Chez Arnout & Renier Leers. <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k50614b>.
- Gosselin, Auguste. 1898a. *Mgr de Saint-Vallier et son temps*. Évreux: Imprimerie de l'Eure. <https://archive.org/details/mgrdesaintvallie00gossuoft>.
- . 1898b. “Un Épisode de l'Histoire du théâtre au Canada (1694).” In *Mémoires et comptes rendues de la Société Royale du Canada: Séance de mai 1898*. Vol. 4. Toronto: James Hope & Son, Ottasaw; The Copp-Clark Co.
- . 1911. *L'Église du Canada depuis Monseigneur de Laval jusqu'à la Conquête: Première partie, Mgr de Saint-Vallier*. Québec: Tvp. Laflamme & Proulx. <https://ia801409.us.archive.org/2/items/lgliseducan01goss/lgliseducan01goss.pdf>.
- Greer, Allan. 1997. *The People of New France*. Themes in Canadian Social History. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.
- Hubert, Ollivier. 2000. *Sur la terre comme au ciel: La gestion des rites par l'Église catholique du Québec (fin XVIIe-mi-XIXe siècle)*. Religions, cultures et sociétés. Saint-Nicolas, Québec: Les Presses de l'Université de Laval.
- Jal, Auguste. 1876. *Dictionnaire critique de biographie et d'histoire, errat et supplément pour tous les dictionnaires historiques d'après des documents authentiques inédits*. Paris: Henri Plon.
- Laflamme, Jean, and Rémi Tourangeau. 1979. *L'Église et le théâtre au Québec*. Montréal: Fides.
- Lemazurier, Pierre David. 1810. *Galerie historique des acteurs du Théâtre Français, depuis 1600 jusqu'à nos jours*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. Paris: Joseph Chaumerot, Libraire.
- La Charité, Claude. 2011. “Les Deux éditions du Rituel du diocèse de Québec de Mgr de Saint-Vallier, datées de 1703: De l'édition janséniste à l'édition revue et corrigée par la Compagnie de Jésus.” *Revue de Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec* 3: 74–85. doi:10.7202/1027031ar.

- Li, Shenwen. 2001. *Stratégies missionnaires des jésuites français en Nouvelle-France et en Chine au XVIIe siècle*. Saint-Nicolas, Québec: Les Presses de l'Université de Laval/L'Harmattan.
- Melançon, François. 2004. "The Book in New France." In *History of the Book in Canada: Beginnings to 1840*, edited by Patricia Lockhart Fleming, Yvan Lamonde, and Gallichan, 1:45–55. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.
- Molière. 1971. "Le Tartuffe ou l'imposteur, comédie par J.-B. P de Molière." In *Oeuvres complètes*, edited by Georges Couton, 1:831–984. Paris: Éditions Gallimard.
- Mullett, Michael. 1987. *Popular Culture and Popular Protest in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. London, New York, Sydney: Croom Helm.
- Navickas, Katrina. 2012. "Protest History or the History of Protest?" *History Workshop Journal*, no. 73:302–7.
- Notice descriptive et historique sur l'église et la paroisse Saint-Eustache de Paris, dédié à Monseigneur Sibour, Archevêque de Paris, sénateur, etc., etc., offerte à la fabrique de cette église par l'auteur*. 1855. Paris: Les Marchands d'Objets de Piété, à la porte de l'Église; Dentu, Libraire, Palais-Royal, Galerie Vitree.
- Olier, Jean-Jacques. 1656. *Explication des cérémonies de la grande messe de paroisse*. Paris: Jacques Langlois.
- . 2009. *L'Esprit des cérémonies de la messe: Explication des cérémonies de la grand'messe de paroisse selon l'usage romain*. Edited by Claude Barthe and Michèle Debaecker. [Perpignan]: Tempora.
- Phelan, Peggy. 1993. "The Ontology of Performance: Representation without Reproduction." In *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, 146–66. Florence, KY, USA: Routledge.
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/sfu/reader.action?ppg=8&docID=10097439&tm=1424468317300>.
- Plante, Guy. 1970. *Le rigorisme au XVIIe siècle: Mgr de Saint-Vallier et le sacrement de pénitence (1685-1727)*. Gembloux, Belgique: Éditions J. Duculot, S.A. Gembloux.
- "Protest, v." 2017. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/view/Entry/153192?rskey=zlykte&result=2&isAdvanced=false>.
- Rambaud, Alfred. 1982. "La Croix de Chevrères de Saint-Vallier, Jean-Baptiste de." In *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Vol. 2. University of Toronto/Université Laval.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/la_croix_de_chevrieres_de_saint_vallier_jean_baptiste_de_2E.html.
- Rousseau, Louis. 2007. "Pastorale et prédication." In *Les Sulpiciens de Montréal: Une histoire de pouvoir et de discrétion, 1657-2007*, edited by Dominique Deslandres, John A. Dickinson, and Ollivier Hubert, 215–40. Montréal: Éditions Fides.
- Saint-Vallier, Jean-Baptiste de la Croix de Chevrères de. 1703a. *Rituel du diocèse de Québec: publié par l'ordre de Monseigneur de Saint Valier, évêque de Québec*. Paris: Simon Langlois, rue Saint Etienne des Grès, au bon Pasteur.
http://archive.org/details/cihm_34892.

- . 1703b. *Rituel du diocèse de Québec, publié par l'ordre de Monseigneur l'évêque de Québec*. Paris: Chez Simon Langlois. <https://archive.org/details/ritueldudiocesed00sain>.
- . 1703c. *Statuts, ordonnances et lettres pastorales de Monseigneur de Saint-Vallier, évêque de Québec pour le règlement de son diocèse*. Paris: Chez Simon Langlois. <http://troy.lib.sfu.ca/record=b2103600~S1a>.
- Slack, Paul. 1984. "Introduction." In *Rebellion, Popular Protest and the Social Order in Early Modern England*, edited by Paul Slack. Past and Present Publications. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Stevenson, Jill. 2013. *Sensational Devotion: Evangelical Performance in Twenty-First-Century America*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Têtu, H., and C.O. Gagnon, eds. 1887. *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec*. Vol. 1. Québec: Imprimerie Générale A. Côté et Compagnie. <https://archive.org/details/mandementslettre01glis>.
- Thirouin, Laurent. 1997. *L'Aveuglement salutaire: le requisitoire contre le théâtre dans la France classique*. Paris: Champion.
- Tronson, Louis. n.d. ca. 1656-1700. "Entretiens." Paris. Ms. 50. Archives of the Society of Saint-Sulpice, Paris (SS).
- Trudel, Marcel. 1968. *Introduction to New France*. Toronto, Montréal: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada.

About the Author

Joy Palacios is an assistant professor of religious studies in the Department of Classics and Religion at the University of Calgary. She holds a Ph.D. in Performance Studies from the University of California, Berkeley and her research interests concern the religious practice, culture, and literature of the French Counter-Reformation, with particular attention to the tensions between the church and the theater. Her current book project examines the link between the reform of Catholic worship through seminary education during the 17th and early 18th centuries and the rise of clerical animosity toward actors in early modern France. She has published in *Liminalities*, *Performance Matters*, and *Past and Present*, as well as in a number of edited collections.