

Roman Archives as a Source for the History of Canadian Ethnic Groups¹

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In the last ten years, several historians, in their analysis of the documents relating to Canada in the archives of the Vatican, have frequently dealt with the problem of ethnic relations in the Canadian Catholic Church. In particular, Luca Codignola sketched the ethnic and regional diversification of Canadian Catholicism before 1820.² Roberto Perin placed the ethnic struggle in the center of his book on Rome and Victorian Canada.³ Both of them stressed the role of the Holy See in controlling the evolution of ethnic relationships inside Canadian Catholicism. As a matter of fact, Codignola and Perin consider Rome the “third metropolis of Canada,” because, according to them, Rome strongly influenced the life of the Canadian Catholic Church, thus influencing the whole of Canadian society.⁴ This thesis has been backed, even if indirectly, by Lucien Lemieux.⁵ It is now familiar to Canadian scholars. Therefore I will not go into theoretical details;

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² Luca Codignola, “Conflict or Consensus? Catholics in Canada and in the United States, 1780-1820,” *CCHA Historical Studies*, 55 (1988), pp. 43-59.

³ Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada. The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

⁴ Luca Codignola, “Rome and North America 1622-1799. The Interpretive Framework,” *Storia Nordamericana*, 1, 1 (1984), pp. 5-33; Codignola, “The Rome-Paris-Quebec Connection in an Age of Revolution, 1760-1820,” *Le Canada et la Révolution Française*, directed by Pierre H. Boulle et Richard A. Lebrun (Montréal: Centre interuniversitaire ‘études européennes, 1989), pp. 115-116; Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 39-69; Id., “Rome as a Metropolis of Canada” *Italy-Canada-Research, II, Canadian Studies*, edited by Matteo Sanfilippo, Ottawa, Canadian Academic Center in Italy, 1991, pp. 21-31.

⁵ Lucien Lemieux, *Les années difficiles (1760-1839)* (Histoire du catholicisme québécois, dirigée par Nive Voisine, vol. II, 1), Montréal, Boréal Express, 1989.

I will only describe the kind of information on ethnic groups that flowed from Canada to Rome. Moreover I will give just a survey of this material.⁶

The British conquest of New France posed many problems to the Church and transformed the ethnic composition of Canadian Catholicism.⁷ Before 1763, there were only two well-defined ethnic groups, the French colonists and the natives. But under British rule, the Church was responsible for the Catholics already living in Canada and the Catholic immigrants coming from the former British colonies and from Great Britain itself. Gradually, Irish and Scottish immigrants came to form the majority among Catholics in the Maritimes and they asked for a bishop of their own ethnic group.⁸

A few decades later, the Irishmen became dominant in Catholic Ontario. In 1848, Rev. Kirwan wrote from Toronto to the rector of the Irish College in Rome and described the arrival of the emigrants from Ireland. His letter stressed that the presence of over 40,000 Irish Catholics meant the complete transformation of the ethnic composition of the diocese.⁹ Kirwan asked in vain for an Irish bishop, and his request was repeated two years later by William Walsh, bishop of Halifax. The latter wrote to Rome explaining that the two Canadas and the Maritimes were now too different. The continuation of only one unified ecclesiastical Province would be, Walsh pointed out, as logical as having Scotland and Ireland under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Lyon.¹⁰ Walsh complained about the imposition by the French-speaking hierarchy of French bishops on Bytown (Ottawa) and Toronto. In fact West Canada (later Ontario), Walsh reported, was predominantly Irish and English-speaking.

⁶ Jean-Claude Robert, "La recherche en histoire du Canada," *Revue internationale d'études canadiennes*, 1-2 (1990), p. 26; Nive Voisine, review of Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada*, *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 44, 2 (1990), pp. 281-283; William Kilbourn, "How the Vatican changed Canada's history," *The Globe and Mail*, July 28, 1990; Yvan Lamonde, "'Le gros oeil de Rome voyait à tout,'" *Le Devoir*, September 15, 1990.

⁷ For a more articulated analysis of the Roman vision of Canada, see Matteo Sanfilippo, "L'image du Canada dans les rapports du Saint-Siège, 1622-1908," *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5 (1992), pp. 9-24.

⁸ Luca Codignola, "The Policy of Rome towards the English-Speaking Catholics in British North America, 1750-1830," in Terrence Murphy and Gerald Stortz, eds., *Creed and Culture. The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1830* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), pp. 100-125.

⁹ Archivio di Propaganda Fide (APF), Scritture riferite nei Congressi (SC), America Settentrionale, vol. 5, ff. 1035-1036v.

¹⁰ APF. SC. America settentrionale, vol. 6, ff. 263-264.

These assertions did not go unchallenged by the French-speaking clergy. In 1851, Etienne Chartier, parish priest of Arichat, wrote to Cardinal Fransoni that William Fraser, bishop of his diocese, had chosen as coadjutor John C. McKinnon, a former student of Propaganda Fide. McKinnon, Chartier added, was a good priest, but he did not speak French, although fifty percent of his parishioners were Francophone.¹¹ In Ontario the Anglophones were the majority, but they were not alone. In 1853, Patrick George Madden, another former student of Propaganda Fide, wrote to this Congregation that in the dioceses of Kingston, Toronto and Bytown there were 70,000 Catholics of Irish origin and 30,000 who came from French Canada, Scotland and England.¹²

The ethnic composition of Canadian Catholicism was indeed mixed, at least in the larger cities. Rome had a direct proof of it when, in that same year, Mgr. Gaetano Bedini went to visit the United States and Canada.¹³ In his report, the papal nuncio stressed the presence of Irish, Italian, Portuguese and German Catholics in Montreal. He noted the growing tension between the French-Canadians and the Irish immigrants. Indeed, he described Bytown as an astonishing melting-pot of races and religions.¹⁴

In the following decades, Propaganda Fide focused its attention on the conflict between Catholics of Irish descent and French Canadians.¹⁵ Thus the presence of other Catholic ethnic groups went underrated. However by 1899, Diomede Falconio, the first permanent apostolic delegate, showed in a letter

¹¹ Ibid., ff. 342-343v.

¹² Ibid., ff. 597-598.

¹³ Rome knew quite a lot on Irish immigration into Canada. In the early 1830s, the *Diario di Roma*, a daily Roman newspaper, printed several articles on the subject (April 7, 1832; October 20, 1832; July 23, 1834, and similar articles were published in the *Notizie del giorno*, a supplement to the *Diario di Roma*, (April 26, 1832; May 23, 1833; November 20, 1834). In 1840, a member of Propaganda Fide wrote a lengthy report on the missions around the World, in which he mentioned more than once the problem of immigration. See APF, *Miscellanea Varie XXVIII*, "Stato attuale e cose notabili delle missioni della S.C.P.F. (circa 1849)." On November 6, 1854, a two-page article in the *Giornale di Roma* described the work done by Irish Catholics in West Canada and the Maritimes. This article was fully quoted by Gaetano Moroni in the entries on Upper Canadian dioceses in his huge *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica* (103 volumes, Venezia, Tipografia Emiliana, 1840-1861).

¹⁴ Archivio Segreto Vaticano (ASV), Segreteria di Stato (SS), 1854, rubrica 251, dossier 2, ff. 57-82. On Bedini and European migration to the Americas, see Matteo Sanfilippo, "Monsignor Gaetano Bedini e l'emigrazione verso le Americhe," *Studi emigrazione/Études Migrations*, 106 (1992), pp. 277-28.

¹⁵ APF, Acta, 1865, f. 555, and 1869, f. 424.

his consciousness of the multi-ethnic composition of Canadian Catholicism.¹⁶ In 1901, Falconio sent a report on Canadian Catholic Church to Rome and explained that every ecclesiastical province was different in terms of ethnic composition.¹⁷ The delegate dealt at length with English- and French-speaking groups but also mentioned the increasing presence of Poles, Ruthenians (Ukrainians) and Germans in the North-West.¹⁸ In the same year, Falconio reported on the growth of Protestant missions for the conversions of Roman Catholics in Canada, in which he expressed his concern for the Church's incapacity to provide pastoral care for the European immigrants who settled in Manitoba, British Columbia and the North-West.¹⁹

As the immigration increased in the first decade of the twentieth century, Rome received more complaints from Canadian bishops, priests and members of ethnic groups than in the previous fifty years. Immigration was becoming a great issue that intensified the Franco-Irish strife inside the Church. This confrontation was already complicated by conflicts between Irish and Scottish as well as French Canadian and Acadian Catholics, particularly in the Maritimes.²⁰ The arrival of new immigrants, however, caused new tensions. In the East, the Italians allied themselves with the Irish of Montreal in reaction to the French Canadian clergy.²¹ In the West, Germans were disliked by French Canadian bishops,²² first of all because of their activism within the Liberal Party,²³ but also because they were becoming the third ethnic presence of the region and wanted more control on the local dioceses.²⁴ At the same time, the new immigrants in the Prairies

¹⁶ See Roberto Perin, "La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure: la représentation du Saint-Siège au Canada, 1877-1917," *S.C.H.E.C., Sessions d'étude*, 50 (1983), p. 110.

¹⁷ For Falconio's vision of the linguistic clash, see Matteo Sanfilippo, "Diomede Falconio et l'église catholique en Amérique du Nord," *Rivista di Studi Canadesi/Canadian Studies Review*, 5 (1992), pp. 43-48.

¹⁸ APF, Nuova Serie (NS), vol. 215 (1901), ff. 676-708: 681v.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 619-642: 636v-637v. For the Roman fear of the Protestant growth, see Mark G. McGowan "Rethinking Catholic-Protestant Relations in Canada: The Episcopal Reports of 1900-1901," *CCHA, Historical Studies*, 59 (1992), pp. 11-32.

²⁰ The Scot-Irish conflict had old roots in the Maritimes. See for example APF, Acta, 1844, ff. 225-267. But it was still intense in the Twentieth Century, see ASV, Delegazione Apostolica in Canada (DAC), box 6, dossier 10. For the Acadians and their claims, *ibid.*, box 6, dossier 30, box 8, dossier 2, box 79, dossier 2, boxes 113- 114, box 127, dossier 3, box 178, dossier 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, box 27, dossier 17.

²² *Ibid.*, box 49, dossier 2/1, Stagni to De Lai, December 23, 1911.

²³ *Ibid.*, box 182, dossier 3/1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, box 49, fascicoli 2 e 5, boxes 59 e 81; ASV, SS, 1910, rubrica 283, dossier 7, ff. 77-78v.

from Eastern Europe asked for a clergy of their own and refused the French Canadian assistance. Moreover, Ruthenian Catholics did not side with other groups and clashed against the original inhabitants and the new immigrants of western settlements.²⁵

In the next few years, protests voiced by ethnic spokesmen and concerns expressed by the bishops crossed the Atlantic to Rome. The immigrants asked for ethnic parishes and ethnic schools. The bishops requested help in understanding how to assist their new parishioners. In many cases the immigrants complained because the bishops were not helpful, while the bishops did not know where to find the priests requested by the new groups.²⁶ Donato Sbarretti, the second apostolic delegate to Ottawa, told Rome that the only solution to the problem was to Anglicize all the dioceses where the immigrants were arriving, particularly in the West.²⁷ In a few years, all the immigrants would speak English and thus could be ministered by the English-speaking clergy, who would be also able to convert the Protestants.²⁸ The French Canadian bishops did not agree. In 1907 Adelard Langevin, the archbishop of Saint-Boniface, vehemently complained to Merry del Val, the Secretary of State of Pius X.²⁹ Langevin wrote that in his diocese there were 50,000 Francophones, 30,000 Slavs (under this category he counted Poles and Ukrainians), 10,000 Germans and 7,000 Anglophones. According to him, no group would renounce its own language. Thus it was useless if not suicidal to Anglicize the clergy.³⁰

²⁵ On the Ruthenians, ASV, DAC, box 77, dossier 6, box 150, box 151, dossier 1, and box 178, dossier 2; ASV, SS, 1911, rubrica 280, dossier 2. See also ASV, Apostolic Delegation in the United States, XVIII, dossiers 26, 37, and 56, and ASV, SS 1912, rubrica 280, dossier 1, ff. 176-191, on the difficulties that Ruthenian Catholics met in Canada. For a larger overview, cf. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 165-186, and Mark G. McGowan, "A Portion for the Vanquished: Roman Catholics and the Ukrainian Catholic Church," in Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hyrniuk, eds., *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991, pp. 218-237).

²⁶ In 1905, Propaganda declared that the real problem was the lack of clergy for the immigrants (APF, NS, vol. 333 (1905), ff. 552-563).

²⁷ ASV, DAC, box 19, Sbarretti to Merry del Val, May 25, 1909

²⁸ For Sbarretti's position, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Un diplomate du Vatican en Amérique: Donato Sbarretti à Washington, La Havane et Ottawa (1893-1910)," *Annali Accademici Canadesi*, 9 (1993), pp. 5-33.

²⁹ ASV, SS, 1907, rubrica 282, dossier 6, ff. 79 and 81-84.

³⁰ Six years later, Langevin wrote to Francesco Pellegrino Stagni, third apostolic delegate to Canada, that his diocese numbered 97,816 Catholics and several Polish, French, English, German, Flemish and Ruthenian parishes (ASV, DAC box 77, dossier 14).

Sbarretti tried to gain the upper hand in 1908 by establishing the Canadian Church Extension Society while Langevin was in Europe. One of the goals of the Society was to train English-speaking priests for western dioceses. When Langevin came back to Canada, Paul Bruchési, archbishop of Montreal, informed him about what had happened, and the archbishop of St-Boniface lost his temper. In January 1909, Langevin wrote a very bitter letter to Patrick Fergus McEvay, who had been instrumental in the founding of the Church Extension Society. Langevin complained about the formation of the Society without his consent. Moreover, he declared that he had never had the need for English-speaking priests; that the real problem was how to help the Ruthenians (Ukrainians), the Poles and the Hungarians. To strengthen his protest; Langevin sent a copy of his letter to Cardinal Merry del Val, but the cardinal did not dare to answer.³¹

Around 1910 the discussion on the need for Anglicization was superseded by the fear of Catholic immigrants losing their Faith. In 1909, an article in the *New Freeman* of St. John, NB, made Sbarretti apprehensive:³² the newspaper hinted that Protestants were proselytizing among Catholic immigrants during the ocean crossing. Sbarretti wrote to Bégin, the archbishop of Québec, and asked for information. The latter answered that English, French, Italian, Belgian, Scot, Galitian, German and Irish Catholics landed in the port of Quebec. But “ils ne font guère que passer du bateau sur les trains de chemin de fer. Ils s’en vont tout de suite dans l’Ouest des États-Unis ou du Canada.” Therefore it was impossible to control the immigrants at Québec. Bégin told the delegate that the only way to preserve the faith of the immigrants was to accompany them from their nation of origin to the place where they wanted to settle.

Sbarretti further questioned the archbishops of Halifax and Toronto and W.D. Scott, Federal Superintendent of Immigration. Thus the delegate verified that the largest number of the Catholic immigrants went to the North-West. In addition, he came into contact with the Rev. George W. Hudson, secretary of The Catholic Emigration Association of Great Britain. Hudson, who was linked to Alfred E. Burke, the president of the Canadian Church Extension Society, convinced Sbarretti that a Catholic priest should be on every ship leaving for Canada. In February 1910, the delegate wrote on this subject to the bishops of Quebec, Montreal, Halifax and St. John NB, but they answered evasively.³³

³¹ ASV, SS, 1908, rubrica 283, dossier 13, ff. 45-56.

³² The following description is based on documents in ASC, DAC, box 110, dossier 2.

³³ *Ibid.*, box 110, dossier 4.

The archbishops of Canada debated the problem of Catholic immigration in their meeting of 1911. Paul Bruchési stated in the proceedings that many European Catholics immigrated into Canada every year. But the Church could not minister to them, because they stayed for a few days, even a few hours, in the towns where immigrants landed: Halifax, St. John NB, Quebec and Montreal. After this short pause, they spread all over the country. The archbishops concluded that the only way to control the Catholic immigrants was to follow them from Europe to Canada.³⁴ Thus they asked Edward McCarthy, archbishop of Halifax, to write to Thomas Whiteside, archbishop of Liverpool. In his letter McCarthy proposed having an English speaking priest on the steamers from Great Britain to Canada. The priest would help the migrants, find out their destination, and give them a letter to the local pastor.³⁵

One month later, A.E. Burke wrote from Rome to Alfred A. Sinnott, secretary of the Apostolic Delegation in Canada, to tell him of his meeting with the archbishop of Liverpool. Although Whiteside had not yet received McCarthy's letter, he had nevertheless declared his cooperation with such a project.³⁶ Later, Whiteside confirmed his agreement by writing to the archbishop of Halifax.³⁷

In the meantime, several Canadian Catholic associations decided to help the Catholic immigrants in Canada, but with the support of an international network. On January 27, 1912, *The New Freeman* reported that the Catholic ladies of the recently-established St. Monica's Society had been authorized to open a Catholic bureau in the immigration buildings at St. John, New Brunswick. The newspaper commented that this bureau would be useless if it were not coordinated with thorough work on the ships leaving Europe: it was there that Protestants tried to convert the Catholic emigrants.³⁸

St. Monica's Society was only one of the associations designed to help the Catholic immigrants. In 1912, Mgr. Bégin, the archbishop of Quebec, called the Rev. Philippe H.D. Casgrain, then parish priest in the diocese of Regina, to be the immigration chaplain at the port of Quebec.³⁹ Casgrain was

³⁴ Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/1, f. 4.

³⁵ Ibid., ff. 11-12.

³⁶ Ibid., ff. 5-6.

³⁷ Ibid., ff. 9-10.

³⁸ "Canada and the Immigrants," *The New Freeman*, January 27, 1912, p. 4.

³⁹ This decision alerted Burke who wrote to Stagni proposing one of his men for this job. ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/1, ff. 21-22 and 23. It would be interesting to study the competition between the Church Extension Society and the Catholic Immigration Association. For the frame of reference, cf. Mark McGowan, "'Religious duties and Patriotic Endeavours': The Catholic Church Extension

the secretary, and later the director, of the Catholic Immigration Association of Canada, founded in 1912 under the patronage of Quebec's Lieutenant Governor François Langelier, the Apostolic Delegate to Ottawa, and the archbishops of Quebec and St. Boniface. Casgrain was extremely active,⁴⁰ above all in the West.⁴¹ At the end of 1912, he tried to work among the Ruthenians and met their new bishop, Budka, when the latter landed at St. John, New Brunswick.⁴² At the same time, Casgrain was also trying to set a foot in Ottawa.⁴³

In 1913, Cardinal De Lai wrote to Casgrain asking for a report on the activities of the Catholic Immigration Association. In his report to Sinnott, Casgrain explained his attempt to persuade the Knights of Columbus to establish homes for the reception of Catholic immigrants in London, Sudbury, Port Arthur, Winnipeg and Regina.⁴⁴ In the report, Casgrain presented a few statistics about immigration into Canada.⁴⁵ Between April 20 and November 20, 1912, he wrote, 26,955 Catholic immigrants landed at Quebec: 11,353 were Ruthenians; 5,318 English, Irish and Scottish; 4,729 Poles; 1,193 Italians; 1,177 French; 776 Germans, 574 Belgians; 1,845 from other nations. In addition, thousands of Catholics entered Canada through Halifax, St. John, Portland and New York. However, Casgrain could only control those landing at Quebec. During the examinations at this port, he directed the immigrants to Catholic settlements, instead of allowing them to disperse themselves at random all over the country.

Casgrain added that he wanted to establish Catholic information bureaus and homes for the reception of Catholic immigrants in the principal cities. He also wanted to organize classes among them to teach them English. In fact, he feared that ignorant immigrants could be easy prey to Socialist agitators. It was therefore the duty of the Canadian Catholic clergy, with the welfare of the country at heart, to educate the immigrants properly.

Society, French Canada and the Prairie West, 1908-1916," C.C.H.A., *Historical Studies*, 51 (1984), pp. 107-119.

⁴⁰ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/1, f. 34.

⁴¹ Casgrain travelled extensively in the Prairies and compiled a Catholic immigration map of Western Canada showing resident priests and missions occasionally visited. See ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/1, ff. 25-26; and P.H.D. Casgrain, "The Catholic Immigration of Canada," *The Catholic Record* (London, Ontario), August 31, 1912, p. 5.

⁴² ASV, DAC, box 150, dossier 4/2.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, box 131, dossier 2/1, f. 51.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 54.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 56-57: Casgrain, Report of the Catholic Immigration Association of Canada, December 28, 1912.

On October 15, 1913 Casgrain sent Stagni a new report.⁴⁶ He stated that his Society was endeavouring to concentrate the Catholic immigrants in groups sufficiently numerous to form parishes, if possible of the same nationality.⁴⁷ Experience had proved to him that the chief cause of disaffection among Catholics was isolation with its inevitable result, mixed marriages. These marriages could destroy the salutary influence of the Church over the immigrants, especially those of Slavonic origin, transforming them into a prey for the Socialists and eventually into a menace to the Canadian community. Hence it was of supreme importance that the immigrants should remain Catholic.

In December 1913, Casgrain left for Rome,⁴⁸ where he met Cardinals Merry del Val and De Lai, as well as Mgr. Sbarretti, former Apostolic Delegate to Ottawa.⁴⁹ Casgrain asked for an Eastern European priest to check the immigrants at Winnipeg's railroad station. De Lai wrote to Stagni asking his opinion.⁵⁰ Stagni agreed with Casgrain. He feared that Langevin was not able to deal with the immigrants coming from Eastern Europe to the Province of Manitoba.⁵¹ Finally, De Lai wrote to Langevin suggesting the need for a priest for the East Europeans coming to Winnipeg.⁵² There is no record of Langevin's answer.

Casgrain, however, was deeply annoyed by the behaviour of Langevin. On June 3, 1913, he sent Stagni a very nasty memorandum on the spiritual assistance given to the Catholics in the Protestant General Hospital of Winnipeg.⁵³ Two Catholic immigrants had died there without assistance. When Casgrain complained, Langevin blamed the two dead men because

⁴⁶ ASV, DAC box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 213-214.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, ff. 214-219. Later the report became the core of P.H.D. Casgrain, *The Catholic Immigration Association of Canada* (Quebec, 1913), 32 pages. This booklet also lists the correspondents of the Association in Newfoundland (St. John's), Nova Scotia (Halifax, Lourdes, Antigonish, New Glasgow, Sydney), New Brunswick (St. John, Chatham, Newcastle, Bathurst, Dalhousie, Campbellton), Quebec (Quebec and Montreal), Ontario (Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton), Manitoba (Winnipeg and Brandon), Saskatchewan (Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Prince Albert), Alberta (Medicine Hat, Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, Lethbridge), and British Columbia (Vancouver, Victoria). The Association also had correspondents in Great Britain, Belgium and Austria.

⁴⁸ ASV, DAC, box 231, dossier 2/4, ff. 232-233.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 235-237; ASV, SS 1914, rubrica 12, dossier 7, ff. 167-194.

⁵⁰ ASV, DAC, box 231, dossier 2/4, ff. 239-240.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 241-242.

⁵² *Ibid.*, ff. 248-249.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, box 77, dossier 16

they went to a Protestant hospital.⁵⁴ Casgrain pointed out in his report that the two immigrants did not choose to go to a Protestant hospital. They were sent there by their employer who paid for their maintenance in the hospital.

The ill will between Casgrain and Langevin was a minor problem in a welfare organization that on the whole seemed to be taking shape rather well. In 1913 the archbishop of Halifax, Mgr. McCarthy, became vice-patron of the Catholic Emigration Association of Canada. On February 27 of that year, he announced to Stagni the formation of the Ladies' Auxiliary to meet Catholic girls arriving on steamers and to direct them to the Catholic Hostel under the charge of the Sisters of the Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. In addition, the Halifax branch of the Association had been fortunate in securing the services of a Polish priest and a Polish layman, who, besides Polish, spoke also Ruthenian as well.⁵⁵ In 1913 Bruchési established the Catholic Immigration Home in Montreal for the protection of the Catholic immigrants. The intention was to meet not only all immigrant steamers but also the trains coming from New York.⁵⁶ Rome greatly appreciated this effort: Merry del Val and Stagni gave their blessing to Francis J. Singleton, the chaplain of the Home, in 1913 and 1914.⁵⁷

In 1913 two English women tried to do something for women immigrating to Canada. Elisabeth Walmsley described favorably what was being done by the Church Extension Society and the Catholic Immigration Society. However, she proposed improvements to the system assisting women immigrating to Canada from the British Isles.⁵⁸ Therefore Walmsley suggested that the British Catholic Women's League cooperate with Canadian associations and individuals: the Ladies' Auxiliary of St. John NB, Casgrain in Quebec, St. Anthony's Villa in Montreal, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Church Extension League in Toronto, and the Catholic Immigration Society of Western Canada in Winnipeg. Already in February of the same year, Mabel Hope reported to Stagni on the work for the Catholic Women's League Emigration Society of London, England.⁵⁹ The objects of the Society were a careful selection of suitable emigrants, the gathering together of the emigrants under Catholic auspices prior to their departure, and their

⁵⁴ More than once, Langevin stressed that those who worked or were scattered among Protestants lost their faith through their own fault. See for example the above-cited letter to McEvay in ASV, SS, 1908, rubrica 283, dossier 13, ff. 52-56.

⁵⁵ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 109-111.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, box 131, dossier 2/3, f. 182.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 180 and 183, and dossier 2/4, ff. 256-261.

⁵⁸ E. Walmsley, "Emigration of Catholic Women to Canada. How they are assisted," *The Tablet*, April 5, 1913, pp. 530-532.

⁵⁹ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 71-75.

supervision on the voyage. The Society asked that Canadians provide for the reception of the immigrants by Catholic agents (as far as possible ladies), the establishment of Catholic Hostels and employment Bureaus, and the organization of a system of Catholic correspondents in the chief centers of immigration. Stagni responded by blessing the Society.⁶⁰ On April 15, 1913 Cardinal Francis Bourne, archbishop of Westminster, wrote to Stagni to introduce Hilda Saunders, who was going to Canada as representative of the Catholic Women's League.⁶¹ Stagni commended her to the Canadian Roman Catholics.⁶²

For researchers, 1913 is a pivotal year not only because of all the above-cited initiatives, but also because in that year the Consistorial Congregation sent to the Apostolic Delegate a circular letter and a questionnaire on Catholic immigration into Canada to be distributed to the Canadian bishops.⁶³ The answers from the Canadian bishops provide an accurate survey of the Catholic immigration, diocese by diocese.

A few dioceses were not touched by the immigration: this was the case of the Maritimes and of the Province of Quebec, outside Montreal.⁶⁴ The above-cited letter of Mgr. McCarthy, dated February 27, mentioned that no more than a dozen immigrants could be found throughout the archdiocese of Halifax. Thomas Barry, bishop of Chatham, attested that in his diocese there were twenty Italian families and some Syrians. They spoke English or French and tended to integrate themselves into the local parishes.⁶⁵ Mgr. Le Blanc, bishop of St. John NB, found only twenty Poles and Italian immigrants in his diocese. The St. Monica's Society took care of them, but their immigration was only temporary.⁶⁶ According to Mgr. J.-S.-H. Bruneault, in the diocese of Nicolet there were only ten Syrians, two Jews and two Chinese.⁶⁷ F.-X. Cloutier, bishop of Trois-Rivières, listed fifty-two temporary immigrants:

⁶⁰ Ibid., f. 76.

⁶¹ Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/3, f. 175.

⁶² Ibid., f. 176.

⁶³ Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 59, 61, and 62-63.

⁶⁴ Anyway, there were Catholic immigrants in these dioceses, even if bishops did not write about them, answering the questionnaire. In 1913, the bishop of Joliette did not answer the questionnaire, but we know from other reports to Rome that between 1912 and 1921 there were Catholic Syrians, Poles and Italians in that diocese (ASV, S.C. Concistoriale. Relationes, dossier 410, 1912 and 1919). In 1913 the archbishop of Ottawa too did not answer, but he wrote on this subject in 1914 and 1920, describing the Italians, Syrians, Ruthenians, and Poles in his diocese (ASV, S.C. Concistoriale. Relationes, dossier 589, 1914 and 1920).

⁶⁵ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 90-91.

⁶⁶ Ibid., ff. 103-105.

⁶⁷ Ibid., f. 101.

twenty-five Poles, ten Germans, eleven Italians, three Dutch, and three Belgians. All of them were Catholics, but the Italians, three Poles and one Belgian did not go to church.⁶⁸ A.-X. Bernard, bishop of St-Hyacinthe, wrote that a few Syrians lived in St-Hyacinthe and in Sorel, but they were completely integrated.⁶⁹ Labrecque, bishop of Chicoutimi, advised Rome on the temporary nature of immigration into his diocese: Italians, Poles, Bulgarians, and other Europeans had worked for a few months, and then left.⁷⁰

Other dioceses were heavily affected by Catholic immigration. Emile Legal, archbishop of St-Albert, reported that the immigration into his diocese started in 1884, when the CPR began to build the railroads.⁷¹ For the first decade the immigrants were of French or English descent. After 1895 an increasing number of immigrants from Central Europe arrived. These immigrants formed Ruthenian, Polish, Bohemian, Slav, Hungarian and Romenian communities that in 1913 numbered from 15,000 to 18,000 inhabitants. A few thousand more came from Germany and Italy.⁷² The European immigrants could be divided in three categories: farmers, miners and day laborers. The first group (Germans, Poles, and Ruthenians) settled in the region surrounding Edmond. The miners worked for the CPR and often, as in the case of the Bohemians, were influenced by Socialist propaganda. The labourers earned good wages and tended to work only until they could buy land.

Concerning religion, Ruthenians, Galitians, and Slavs showed “une foi vive et une dévotion sincère.” However, in the opinion of the bishop, they were ignorant and therefore could be led astray by schismatics and were easy victims for Methodists and Presbyterians. The problem was that the diocese did not have priests to serve all the groups of immigrants. The situation was difficult, above all in rural areas.

⁶⁸ Ibid., f. 116.

⁶⁹ Ibid., ff. 134-135.

⁷⁰ Ibid., ff. 142-143.

⁷¹ Ibid., ff. 96 and 97-99.

⁷² Two years earlier, Legal gave different statistics to the Delegate. The bishop wrote that the immigrants formed half of his flock and that Germans were more numerous than Galitians, Poles and Slavs (ibid., box 11, dossier 1). It is important to remember that it is sometimes hard to follow the statistics given by bishops, because they were not able to distinguish between groups that seemed to them to pertain to the same stock. In 1900, Legal wrote to Cardinal Ledochowski, the Prefect of Propaganda Fide, about the Poles in his diocese, but he did not distinguish between Poles and Ruthenians. See APF, NS, vol. 195 (1900), ff. 112-119.

Albert Pascal, bishop of Prince-Albert, stressed that in his diocese the immigration was permanent.⁷³ All the immigrants tried to have a homestead of 160 acres and worked in towns only to earn the money they needed to settle. He listed 32/33,000 Ruthenians, 12,500 Germans and Austrians, 10,000 francophones, 6,000 Poles, 4,000 anglophones, 600 Hungarians, 100 Bohemians, and 50 Italians. Fortunately, the Ruthenians had their own bishop. The others, above all when they lived in the countryside, were grouped by nationality and religion. Pascal explained that this pattern was due to the work of the immigration agents and to the policy of Abbé Casgrain at Quebec directing Catholic immigrants to these settlements. Therefore, the immigrants formed their own Catholic associations and tried to build their parishes. But the diocese did not have enough priests. Thus the Church could help only the Anglophones, the Francophones and the Germans.

Olivier Elzéar Mathieu, bishop of Regina, sent a report with a letter that stressed his difficulties: “Nos diocèses sont si étendus; nos catholiques sont si dispersés; les nationalités sont si nombreuses et chacune a sa mentalité différente!”⁷⁴ In his diocese, the immigration was permanent and the immigrants formed ethnic communities where their language was preserved, even if their children learned English at school. The largest communities were composed by 15,000 Germans coming from Russia and by 12,000 Ruthenians, but the diocese counted also 2,000 Poles and 2,500 Hungarians. Even if it were possible to create ethnic parishes, the 40 secular priests of Regina would have to know at least two languages, because every parish was a mixed parish.

Mathieu stressed the importance of the work done by Casgrain at the port of Quebec, but he asked for help from Rome and from the Canadian Government. He told Stagni that the schools for Ruthenians were directed by Protestants and that public schools endangered the faith of the students. He favored the formation of national associations to control the regrouping of nationalities, the teaching in ethnic schools and the preservation of the language and the faith of every single national community.

Adélarde Langevin, archbishop of St. Boniface listed 30,000 Ruthenians (Ukrainians), 20,000 Poles, 1,500 Germans (from Germany and from the United States), 600 Flemish, 300 Italians, 153 Syrians.⁷⁵ Most lived in dense ethnic communities in both the countryside and in cities like Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage-la-Prairie, and Kenora. The two larger groups, the Poles

⁷³ ASV, DAC box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 137-140. According to Pascal, Germans and Ruthenians had greatly augmented the number of Catholics in the former Apostolic Vicariate of Saskatchewan (ibid., box 81, dossier 6/1).

⁷⁴ Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 149 and 150-157.

⁷⁵ Ibid., ff. 187-199.

and the Ruthenians, were centred in the cities, as well as in the rural villages of Gimli, Brokenhead, Beauséjour, Sifton, and Ethelbert, and in the agricultural colonies of Stuartburn, Hun's Valley, Shoal Lake, Kent, and Sandy Lake. There was an Italian community in Winnipeg. The Flemish were in the parishes of Bruxelles, St-Alphonse, Swan Lake, St-Boniface and St-Amalie.

To offer pastoral care for these immigrants, Langevin had only a handful of priests: seven Ruthenian, five Polish, two Flemish, and one Syrian. In addition Father Anzalone, OMI, took care of the Italians of Winnipeg. The lack of national priests was a problem, because of all the immigrants "pauci ... linguam loci plene callent." In fact, these communities continued to use their own languages, in their homes as elsewhere. The development of the ethnic presses in Manitoba demonstrated this fact. There were, Langevin pointed out to Rome, Polish, German, Ruthenian, English and French language newspapers published in the diocese.⁷⁶

Langevin stressed that the immigrants were poor and not well educated on their arrival. But the farmers after a few years "vitam faciliorem ducunt," while the urban immigrants "acquirunt domum et fundum, multamque pecuniam pro labore recipiunt." They were equally ill-prepared regarding their religion: "valde ignari hic veniunt." However, eventually, these immigrants received instructions from the local clergy.

Protestant propaganda represented the real danger to the Roman Catholicism of these immigrants. Presbyterians and Methodists had four schools in Winnipeg, where Polish, Ruthenian, Hungarian, Syrian, and German children were taught. In addition, the Protestants sponsored three Ruthenian newspapers. Last, but not least, the Italians "sunt negligentes et frequentant raro sacramenta," and very few of them sent their children to Catholic schools.

Mgr. Bruchési sent a very long report on Montreal.⁷⁷ In his diocese there were 12,000 Italians, 5,000 Ruthenians, 1,500 Poles, 1,000 Lithuanians, 1,000 Syrians and Greeks, 500 Germans, and 200 Chinese. They lived in the city of Montreal: most of them permanently, and a few only during a few months out of the year. All of them were workers: "Les Italiens, les Ruthènes, les Polonais et les Lithuaniens travaillent surtout aux travaux de rues, au terrassement des voies ferrées et dans les manufactures; les Syriens se livrent au colportage; les Grecs au commerce de fruits et les Chinois au

⁷⁶ Already in 1908, Langevin wrote to Rome on this subject. ASV, SS 1908, rubrica 283, dossier 6, ff. 230-232.

⁷⁷ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 119-131.

blanchissage.” According to Bruchési, their cultural level was very low and consequently “l’instruction religieuse y laisse beaucoup à désirer.”

The Protestants and the Salvation Army tried to convert the immigrants. For the Italians, the possibility of conversion was great because two Protestant ministers came from Italy. To serve the needs of the Italian community, Bruchési had founded two Italian parishes in Montreal. For the Poles and the Lithuanians, the archbishop had only one Polish priest, who also spoke Lithuanian, and one French priest, who spoke Polish. Another French priest came from New York to help the Chinese. A Basilian Father from Mount Liban took care of the Syrians and the Greeks, but the Germans did not have any priest of their ethnic group. The immigrants from England, Scotland and Ireland found all they needed in the ten English parishes of Montreal. To assist the new arrivals, Mgr. Bruchési announced the foundation of a Bureau d’immigration catholique that was under the charge of the parish priest of St-Patrick.

Bruchési also reported that the children of Catholic immigrants went to the Catholic schools, where the Italians, the Ruthenians and the Syrians could have special classes in their own language. Moreover the Franciscan Sisters keep a school solely for the Italians. But he added that fifty Italian children and ten Polish went to Protestant schools. As always, the problem was that the diocese did not have enough priests for all the foreign groups. In conclusion, Bruchési too asked for help from Rome.⁷⁸

Some dioceses had a less urgent situation. In Hamilton, wrote Mgr. Dowling, lived 4,415 immigrants: 2,000 came from Italy, 1,700 from Poland, 265 from Galitia, 250 from Syria, and 200 from Hungary.⁷⁹ Most of them were already Canadian citizens, and they were well off. They had integrated into the Catholic population without difficulties, even if the Italians and the Poles still needed priests of their own language, or at least priests who could speak their language. Dowling specified that there were two Italian parishes and two Polish, in addition ten priests spoke Italian and three Polish students were attending Seminary. In conclusion, there was no lack of Catholic parishes for the Catholic immigrants in Hamilton, Ontario.

In Northern Ontario, Elie Latulipe, Apostolic Vicar of Temiskaming, had under his jurisdiction 400 Poles, 300 Italians, 100 Syrians, 100

⁷⁸ In 1920, Bruchési wrote to Rome that, in his diocese, there were 13,400 Italians, 2,500 Poles, 1,000 Lithuanians, 500 Germans, 200 Chinese, 5,00 Ruthenians, 50 Rumanians, 70 Armenians, 1,060 Syrians. He specified also that there were two parishes for the Italians and two for the Poles. Lithuanians, Chinese, Ruthenians and Syrians had one parish each. ASV, S.C. Concistoriale. Relations, dossier 484/2, 1920.

⁷⁹ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/2, ff. 144-145.

Ruthenians, 30 Germans.⁸⁰ They worked “aux travaux publiques” and were good Catholics. Unlike in other Canadian dioceses, these immigrants were not grouped in national communities; they merged therefore into the local parishes, where a few priests spoke Italian and German.

M.J. Spratt, bishop of Kingston, served 643 Italians, 205 Poles, 27 Ruthenians and 25 Syrians. All of them were temporary migrants and worked for the CPR or in the building industry.⁸¹ They had no interest in religion, even if three diocesan priests spoke Italian and others came from Toronto or Pembroke to preach to the Poles, Ruthenians and Syrians.

“In diocesi Antigonicensi,” stated James Morrison, bishop of Antigonish in Nova Scotia, “adsunt 2236 immigrati, quorum circiter 1500 sedem stabilem non habent, et plus minusve 1100 linguam loci non plene callent, quamvis aliquanto, et ut exteri habentur. Hic non recensentur Rutheni qui proprium ordinarium habent.”⁸² Morrison counted 770 Italians, 324 Poles, 259 Bohemians, 186 Austrians, 151 Lithuanians, 137 Belgians, 112 Germans, 108 Syro-Maronites, 97 Frenchmen, 60 Hungarians, 14 Russians, 6 Bulgarians, 6 Romanians, and 6 Danish in his diocese.⁸³ Only the Italians, Poles and Syro-Maronites had their own priests, and the Italians and Syro-Maronites had their own parishes. In addition thirty diocesan priests spoke French, ten Italian and two German. The main problem was that the immigrants were dispersed among coal mines and steel factories and their presence was only temporary. In the opinion of the Catholic clergy, they were poor and frugal, and they did not have much time to go to churches, but normally they were good Catholics with the exception of the French and the Belgians. In any case the Protestant propaganda was not effective.

In British Columbia, the diocese of Victoria, wrote Alexander Mac-Donald, had 450 Italians, 100 Belgians, 100 Austrians and 50 Frenchmen.⁸⁴ They worked in the city of Victoria itself. Most of them, especially the Italians, were temporary immigrants. Only the Austrians and some French went to church, and Methodist propaganda had little success.

At the beginning of 1914, Rome therefore had a complete overview of the Canadian situation. The winds of war did not allow the planning of a more efficient organization for helping the Catholic immigrants. On the other hand, immigration decreased in the next few months. On January 14,

⁸⁰ Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 200-201.

⁸¹ Ibid., ff. 207-208.

⁸² Ibid., box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 166-170.

⁸³ Five years later, Morrison told Rome that the number of the immigrants has increased (ASV, S.C. Concistoriale Relationes, dossier 56, 1919).

⁸⁴ ASV, DAC, box 131, dossier 2/3, ff. 211-212.

1915 Casgrain sent his last report to Stagni⁸⁵ and gave the statistics for the years 1912-1914.⁸⁶ The decline of immigration was noticeable:

	1912	1913	1914
English, Irish and Scots	5318	5712	2254
French	1177	5712	705
Germans	776	1476	501
Italians	1193	7608	909
Belgians	574	952	563
Poles	4629	4323	1267
Ruthenians	11353	11859	4149
Other nationalities	1845	2876	606

In his report, Casgrain suggested how to reform the Canadian immigration system,⁸⁷ but the war and subsequent quotas on immigration changed everything. Burke, Casgrain, Singleton and dozens of priests, sisters and laymen had done a tremendous amount of work that remained unfinished.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, their efforts were not in vain. A positive result of their work was the survey of immigrant presence across Canada, which alerted Rome on the needs of Canadian dioceses. Generally, Rome answered this cry for help.

Burke and many others were primarily concerned with the destiny of British immigrants. The delegates and Cardinal Merry del Val stressed that all the immigrants were important, but, in the end, they helped the English-speaking clergy to anglicize the western dioceses. I mentioned the foundation of the English-speaking Church Extension Society and the letter of protest written by Langevin, but we can not forget that even Casgrain was anglicized after many years in the British army. Moreover, we should remember that the creation of the dioceses of Calgary and Winnipeg was the

⁸⁵ Ibid., f. 263.

⁸⁶ P.H.D. Casgrain, *Second Annual Report of the Catholic Immigration Association of Canada* (Quebec, 1914), p. 7.

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 8-22.

⁸⁸ After the war, Casgrain resumed his activity and, on September 29, 1921, affiliated his Association to the St. Vincent de Paul, with the blessing of Rome (ASV, DAC, box 134, dossier 1/2).

first step in breaking the French Canadian monopoly on the Church in the West.⁸⁹ This step was a long-overdue change, according to Stagni, because of the incapacity of bishops like Langevin to deal with the needs of the immigrants.⁹⁰

At the end, the necessity of enforcing the assistance to the immigrants was the device used by the English-speaking clergy to convince Rome to lessen the French Canadian grip on the Church in the West.⁹¹ Rome was aware that suggestions from English-speaking priests were not disinterested. And this awareness was instrumental in convincing the apostolic delegates and the cardinal Secretary of State to help Neil McNeil, archbishop of Toronto, when the latter decided to campaign against the already mentioned Father Burke.⁹² Nevertheless, the Holy See decided in the first two decades of the XXth Century that the English-speaking monopoly on the Roman Catholic Church outside the province of Quebec was the only way to melt together all the new ethnic groups and to defend them from the Protestant propaganda.⁹³ In 1921, Pietro Di Maria, the new Apostolic Delegate, wrote

⁸⁹ Ibid., box 11, dossier 1, and box 99, dossier 2. The Francophones understood quickly the role of these dioceses (ibid., box 99, dossier 12). See also Robert Choquette, "John Thomas McNally et l'érection du diocèse de Calgary," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa*, 45, 4 (1975), pp. 401-416; Raymond Huel, "The Irish French Conflict in Catholic Episcopal Nominations – The Western Sees and the Struggle for Domination Within the Church," *CCH.A., Study Sessions*, 42 (1975), pp. 51-70.

⁹⁰ Modern French-speaking scholarship tried to reevaluate Langevin, but there is not any agreement among the historians. See Robert Choquette, "Adélarde Langevin et l'érection de "archidiocèse de Winnipeg," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 28, 2 (1974), pp. 187-207; Robert Painchaud, "Les exigences linguistiques dans le recrutement d'un clergé pour l'Ouest canadien, 1818-1920," *S. CH. E. C., Sessions d'étude*, 42 (1975), pp. 43-64; Gilbert-Louis Comeault, "Le rapport de M^{gr} L.-P.-A. Langevin avec les groupes ethniques minoritaires et leurs répercussions sur le statut de la langue française au Manitoba," ibid., pp. 65-85; Robert Painchaud, *Un rêve français dans le peuplement de la Prairie* (Saint-Boniface: Les Éditions des Plaines, 1987), pp. 203-226; Robert Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 158-187.

⁹¹ Matteo Sanfilippo, "Essor urbain et création de nouveaux diocèses dans l'Ouest: la correspondance des délégués apostoliques 1902-1918," *Atti del 9o Convegno internazionale di studi canadesi*, forthcoming.

⁹² ASV, DAC, box 73, dossier 1/6-7, box 131, dossier 1; ASV, SS 1912, rubrica 251, dossier 7.

⁹³ For the Roman siding against French Canadian bishops, see Sanfilippo, "L'image du Canada," and Claude Fohlen, "Saint-Siège et Canada au début du XXe siècle," *Études Canadiennes/Canadian Studies*, 33 (1992), pp. 45-58. The fact that Italian immigrants generally chose to speak English does not have an irrelevant role in that decision. On Rome and the Italian migration to Canada, see Matteo Sanfilippo, "La delegazione apostolica a Ottawa e gli immigrati italiani 1899-1922," *Il Veltrò*, 34, 1-2 (1990), pp. 4565; Giovanni Pizzorusso, "La Nuova Serie dell'Archivio di Propaganda Fide e la storia degli italiani in Nord America," ibid.,

that it was necessary to stop the forced Anglicization of the West, but it was too late.

pp. 67-84; Matteo Sanfilippo, "Monsignor Pisani e il Canada (1908-1913)," *Annali Accademici Canadesi*, 6 (1990), pp. 61-75; Silvano Tomasi, "Fede e Patria the Italica Gens in the United States and Canada, 1908-1936. Notes for the History of an Emigration Association," *Studi Emigrazione/ÉtudesMigrations*, 103 (1991), pp. 319-340.