Transatlantic Correspondence

JONATHAN EDWARDS & MISSIONS
Transatlantic Correspondence

- **Introduction**
  - *Sacra Congregatio de propaganda fide* (1622)
  - *Collegia propaganda fide* (ca. 1621)
  - *Seminarium Indicum* (1622-1632)

- **17th Century Background**
  - Academic
  - Trade
  - Missions

- **18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence**
  - Republic of Letters (*Respublica literaria*)
  - Missions
Transatlantic Correspondence

Introduction

- Sacra Congregatio de propaganda fide (1622)
  - Jesuits missionaries
  - Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris (1658-63)
- Collegia propagandæ fide (ca. 1621)
- Seminarium Indicum at Leiden University (1622-1632)

_African American Religion: A Documentary History Project_
Prof. David W. Wills, UMass Amherst

Part One: African-American Religion in the Atlantic World, 1441–1808
  Volume 4: The Atlantic World, 1670-1735
  Volume 5: A World of Revivals and Revolutions, 1735-1770
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A published letter *On the Success of the Gospel among the American Indians* (Utrecht, 1699) written by Increase Mather (Cambridge, New-England, Rector of Harvard College) to Johannes van Leusden, Professor in Hebrew at Utrecht in the Netherlands. This letter first was published at London in 1688. In the subsequent Utrecht editions letters by Herman Specht and Adrianus de Mey from Ceylon, and by Franciscus Valentijn from Ambon, reporting on the progress of the Gospel among the Eastern Indians to the same Van Leusden were added.

A first Utrecht edition of 1693 was mentioned in the German translation from Mather’s letter, published at Halle in 1696, but was never seen. The first recorded Utrecht edition was from 1697.

Boston – Utrecht – Halle
Transatlantic Correspondence

- 17th Century Background
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- Dutch
- Elmina, 1637
- Loango, 1652
- Amsterdam
- Curacao, Suriname, 1657
- Eehina, 1637
- Congo
- Ceylon, 1648
- Recife, 1653
- Cape of Good Hope, 1652
- Portuguese
Transatlantic Correspondence

17th Century Background

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Minutes of the Classis Meeting of Brazil (Recife, Pernambuco), 1636-1644 to classis Amsterdam
  Discussions of attempts of missionary work to “convert Portuguese, Indians, and to a lesser extent blacks.”

Francesco da Roma, Breve Relatione...della missione de Frati Minori Capucini...al regno del Congo (Rome, 1648).
  Capuchin missionary to Congo (1643-48) who carries letters of the king of Congo to the Prince of Orange in Holland and the Pope.

Rev. Abraham Oudewater (Elimina) to Classis Amsterdam, Aug. 14, Report of a Dutch Reformed minister on his missionary work in Elmina (1671)

Letter Dutch ship captain refusing to allow Franciscan missionaries for Loango, Angola on board (October 10, 1672)

Rev. van Dissel, a Protestant pastor and missionary on Curacao writes to Classic Amsterdam that in April 1727 a freed slave was baptized in Leiden, Holland and permitted at the Lord’s Table.

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- 18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence
  - Republic of Letters (*Respublica literaria*)
    - Transatlantic Republic of Letters
    - Jonathan Edwards & the *Spectator*, the *Guardian*, the *Englishman*, the *Reader*, and more
  - Missions
Transatlantic Correspondence

- 18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence
  - Missions
    - Cotton Mather (Boston)- August Herman Francke (Halle)
    - George Whitefield
    - John Wesley
Hampshire Association to Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London (1734)

Hatfield, Sept 10th, 1734, “And inasmuch as it is more immediately from your Lordship that Missionarys are authorized & sent from England to us, we think no person so proper for us to apply ourselves unto, and humbly beg leave to acquaint your Lordship so far of the state of our Country & Province, & also of the Colony of Connecticut, bordering upon us, with respect to religion, that you may be sensible that the sending of Missionaries hither does not answer the good & noble professed design of the royal Charter of the Society for the Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, nor, as we suppose, of many of the generous Donors to that Society, and that they are neither necessary nor profitable, but as to many instances, rather injurious to the interests of the Kingdom of Christ & the good of his Majesty’s subjects in these parts.... Relying on your Lordship’s candour, & assuring you that we have not any personal views nor Interest that has moved us to address you, but from a real desire that the donations from the Honorable Society, in their several Missions, may not be misapplied, & from a sincere regard to the peace & prosperity of our Churches,

We are your Lordship’s most humble servants, WM WILLIAMS, Modr.

Jonathan Edwards, Scribe, In the name of the Associated Ministers of the County of Hampshire.
18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence

- Missions
  - Jonathan Edwards, A Humble Attempt (1748)
    - Through Edwards’s correspondence with a group of revivalists in Scotland, he was able to transmit news of awakenings and religious concerns abroad. One measure that the Scots implemented as a way of furthering the revival spirit was to institute regular, agreed upon days of prayer that would be observed by participating churches throughout the land. Edwards’s friends proposed that churches in the colonies join in, and Edwards eagerly agreed to pass on the idea. A Humble Attempt was the result.
  - The HA has been associated with the growing interest of eighteenth-century evangelicalism in the missionary enterprise.
May 20, 1749, “As to the affair of preaching the gospel to the Indians, Mr. [Elihu] Spencer went the last fall, far into the western wilderness; to the Oneidas, one of the tribes of Indians called the Six Nations, living on Susquehanna River, towards the head of the river, to a place called by the Indians, Onohquauga, about 180 miles southwest from Albany on Hudson’s River...As to the mission in New Jersey, we have from time to time had comfortable accounts of it. And Mr. John Brainerd, who has the care of the congregation of Christian Indians there, was, about three weeks ago, at my house...”
February 24, 1751/2, “And as to instructions in religion, very little has been done among those people by the missionaries of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. And that Society have been vastly imposed upon (as appears by printed accounts of the Society which come over [hither]) by the representations of the Society. The Iroquois themselves have often in my hearing complained greatly of their negligence...”
Transatlantic Correspondence

- 18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence (Edwards)

Edwards to Scotland

Scotland to Edwards
Transatlantic Correspondence

- 18th Century Transatlantic Correspondence
  - Missions
    - Jonathan Edwards (Northampton) - John Erskine (Edinburgh) - Gisbert Bonnet (Utrecht)
      - Faithful Narrative (1740, 1742, 1750) *
      - Life of David Brainerd (1756) *
      - Freedom of the Will (1774)
      - History of the Work of Redemption (1776)
      - Religious Affections (1779)
      - End of Creation (1788)
      - Original Sin (1790, 1792)
      - Wisdom of God (six sermons on Eph. 3:10, 1791)