

2008

Specialized Catalogues: 17-18 Centuries (Read-Me)

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CATALOGUE DU PERSONNEL. XVII^e et XVIII^e SIECLES.

One of the great contributions to the history of the Congregation of the Mission is its personnel catalogue of the 17th and 18th centuries. This was an early work of Pierre Coste (1873-1935), published in French in 1911. His goal was to present the names and relevant biographical information concerning every Vincentian who entered the Congregation up to the suppression of the Congregation in France in 1792. In the introduction, he carefully noted his sources and their value. As will be seen, however, this monumental work was not without its flaws: principally omissions, misspellings, typographical errors and incomplete or incorrect information.

This edition is based on the exhaustive work of Claude Lautissier and his collaborators, who first prepared a digitized version. The editor then sought to remedy the flaws already noted in several places. Many researchers have contributed to the updating of this catalogue, beginning with Coste himself. His handwritten corrections, along with those of several other archivists of the Congregation in Paris, have been included here, generally in green for ease of recognition. Other omissions have been filled in thanks to the patient work of Polish Vincentians. The difficulty of transcribing Polish names led to numerous errors, and the eras of persecution suffered by these confreres prevented full information from reaching Paris. Italian names, particularly from Lombardy (Turin), were often sent to Paris in a Latinized form. Where known, these have been given also in standard Italian.

Corrections in blue have been taken from the sources identified at the end of the list. Those in red and violet refer to corrections made by the editor and by Roberto Lovera in Turin.

The material is presented in tabular form. Since many duplications exist because of variant spellings of names or aliases, (as noted in this edition), a separate study has been made to determine the complete number of entries. The total is 8628 members of the Congregation who entered up to 1792. Coste listed an additional 215 duplicated names. Much work remains to be done to break down these totals into more meaningful divisions: according to their state in the church as priests, brothers, students; according to the year and place of entry, etc. In some cases, there is only incomplete information.

Further data and corrections will be gladly received and entered into this massive and foundational work.

John E. Rybolt, C.M.
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July 2009