"Trust Yourself to God:" Friar Francisco Pareja and the Franciscans in Florida, 1595-1702

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To the Grace and Glory of God. . . .

Table of Contents

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ABSTRACT

Friar Francisco Pareja represented the pinnacle of the achievement for the Franciscans in Florida during the Spanish colonial period. But who were the Franciscans? Why were they, and Friar Pareja in particular, so successful as missionaries?

The bulk of the writing done thus far on the mission system in Florida has concentrated on retelling the lost story of the native peoples who once inhabited the land. The impact of the missions and the Spanish colony weighed heavily on native cultures and the Franciscans role in this has been discussed. However, little has been said about the religious order itself, and the Order of Friars minor is the focus of this manuscript.

Research for this manuscript was conducted at several sites, in particular at the St. Augustine Historical Society and the P. K. Yonge Library at the University of Florida. In both microfilm and in reprints there exists in these locations several of the letters and other documents that were copied from the *Archivo General de los Indias* in Seville. Also, other writings and documents have been collected in journals and other sources accessible through the internet.

Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* in 1613 was the earliest example of a Native American language translated into a European one. This feat was accomplished by a

member of a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church, one that was dedicated to a principle that did not always fall in line with that of the Spanish colonial government. While the Franciscans did aid in cultural destruction, their dedication to their Faith should not be overlooked. Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* was just one example of the Friars' trust in God aiding them in making a lasting impact on Florida's past.

Chapter One:

Introduction

To a large extent, recent scholarly work chronicling the trials and tribulations of the original native population traces the story of the Franciscans in Florida. The literature about the mission system in Florida, in the writing of several gifted historians and archaeologists, helped tell the tale of the natives who did not leave their own written record behind. We know of the Franciscans and why they came to Florida because they could write about their work. The history of the Spanish period in Florida had two excellent stewards in Spain and the Catholic Church, and both of these institutions documented their activities to a great degree. The largest repository of this information, called the *Archivo General de los Indias* and located in Seville, Spain, contains records on most facets of Spain's experience with its colonies in the Americas. From this, and Church documents found in Jacksonville and Cuba, scholars have given readers a picture of native life in Florida, at least during the Spanish colonial period.

The process of piecing together the story of the natives of Florida through Spain's mission system joined together two fields of study some thought separate: archaeology and history. "Although history and archaeology are often considered as distinct and unrelated disciplines, they are, in fact, but different techniques of approaching historical problems," wrote the authors of *Here They Once Stood: The Tragic End of the Apalachee Missions*. To put the matter simply, archaeologists examine physical remains and historians examine documentary remains. A magnum opus for the modern study of missions in Florida, *Here They Once Stood* began this interdisciplinary field of research

almost sixty years ago by bringing together historian Mark F. Boyd and archaeologists Hale G. Smith and John W. Griffin. Perhaps the most telling monument to the lasting impact of their work came when Jerald T. Milanich, himself an archaeologist of Florida missions, called Mark F. Boyd who wrote during the 1940s, "the father of mission studies in Florida."[1]

This era marked the beginning of serious research into Florida missions. *Here They Once Stood* delved into just one aspect of Spain's colonial system in *La Florida*: the missions in the province of the Apalachee. Divided into three sections, one for each author, the book pointed the way for future scholars by combining a rich documentary base with the early findings of archaeologists who excavated the sites of mission San Luis and its surrounding villages.[2] Following their example some fifty years later, historian John H. Hann and archaeologist Bonnie McEwan wrote *The Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis*. Their book covers the same area as the authors of *Here They Once Stood*, but reflects the updated and ongoing research on the missions of Florida. Such works show the degree to which the subject still captures the attention of scholars of early Florida. These writings, again, reflect the story of a "lost" native population of Florida through the rubric of Spain's mission system.[3]

One of the best and most comprehensive of this collaborative effort in researching missions in Florida is the volume edited by Bonnie G. McEwan entitled *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*. The table of contents reads like a "who's who" of scholars in the

[1] Mark F. Boyd, Hale G. Smith, and John W. Griffin, Jerald T. Milanich, foreword, *Here They Once Stood: The Tragic End of the Apalachee Missions* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), xiii-xv.
[2] Ibid.
[3] John H. Hann and Bonnie G. McEwan, *The Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).

field: David Hurst Thomas, Kathleen Deagan, John H. Hann, Brent Weisman, Jerald Milanich, and Clark Spencer Larsen. Together, they look at a wide spectrum of Spanish missions in Florida, a system that stretched from Santa Catalina de Guale on the Georgia coast, to San Luis near modern-day Tallahassee, and south into central Florida. Again, archaeology stands as a valuable tool for researchers who wish to recount the native interaction with the Spanish colony. *The Spanish Missions of La Florida* are heavily weighted towards this methodology. The field of bio-archaeology comprised another field receiving attention in this book. While still examining physical remains, the bio-archaeologist focuses on remains like human waste and bones of animals. Researchers can thus determine different food stuffs used by the natives in the missions, and to also assess how the Spanish colonists impacted their diet.[4]

The book *Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe* comprised another comprehensive look at the Spanish/native interaction in Florida. While not written exclusively about the mission system, it does devote a significant amount of text to a discussion on the large role of the missionaries in the lives of the natives post-contact. As Milanich pointed out, ". . . one cannot forget that the mission system was a part of an insidious colonial empire, an empire that ultimately destroyed the lives of the very people the Franciscans hoped to save."[5] For scholars like Milanich, the part the Catholic missionaries played in the lives of the natives in Florida cannot escape the reality that the missionaries helped wipe out entire *civilizations.* In a later book, Milanich again discusses the mission system in detail. *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish*

[4] McEwan, ed., *The Spanish Missions of La Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993).
[5] Milanich, *Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 166.

Missions and Southeastern Indians related how the Franciscans in Florida partnered with the Spanish colonial government to utilize the indigenous population to support Spain's colony.[6]

While important, the story of the lost people of Florida as told through the remnants of the mission system — both physical and documentary — necessarily focuses on the natives and not the missionaries. This is not to say that works dealing solely with the Franciscans do not exist. During the 1930s, a Friar named Maynard Geiger began researching the members of his Order who came to Florida. Of great value to modern scholars is his *Biographical Dictionary of the Francsicans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*. Granted, Friar Geiger writes as a Franciscan interested in putting his Order's work in Florida in a good light. In a brief preface to the *Biographical Dictionary*, he wrote, "May the day not be far off when Franciscans will be invited to establish themselves once more . . . if for no other reason than because of their spiritual progress in these parts during colonial times." The list of those who served in Florida and Cuba during the time period Friar Geiger wrote about reads as both comprehensive and exhaustive. For every past friar, Geiger provided biographical background, the mission he served at, and what, if any, texts they wrote, as well as where he obtained his evidence.[7]

Friar Geiger also contributed greatly to the study of the missions of Florida by translating one of the earliest works on Spanish Florida, Friar Luís Gerónimo de Oré's

[6] Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999).
[7] Maynard Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1979), 11.

The Martyrs of Florida (1513-1616). Born in Peru, Friar Oré entered the Franciscan Order along with three of his brothers, but he earned notoriety above that of his siblings because of his writings on the work of the Catholic Church in the Americas. Oré also personally traveled to Florida in 1614 and again in 1616, not as a missionary but as an emissary of his Order to check on the state of the missions in Florida. While the tone of the narrative at times becomes somewhat effusive in its praise of God for the good work He allowed the Franciscans to accomplished in Florida, Oré nonetheless provided an early analysis of the missionary effort up to 1616. Geiger's translation of the text included copious notes because, as Geiger put it, Friar Oré ". . . proves to be very cryptic at times in narrating events."[8]

While Friar Geiger produced significant work on the Franciscans, he remained one of the few to document Catholic history in Florida until historian Michael Gannon published *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870* in 1965. Using Friar Oré's starting date of 1513, Gannon traced the history of the establishment and growth of the Catholic Church in Florida up to 1870. Florida holds significance in Church history, as he relates, because it is ". . . the oldest establishment of the Christian Faith in the United States." Half the book he devoted to the Spanish period, the time before Florida became part of the Protestant British Empire and, later, the fledgling United States. Gannon admitted that the amount of history he tackled really needed several volumes for a complete discussion. However, the text does provide clues and inspiration for other historians to dig deeper.[9]

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[8] Luís Gerónimo de Oré, O. F. M., Geiger, O. F. M. trans., *The Martyrs of Florida (1513-1616)* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1981), ix-xvii.
[9] Michael V. Gannon, *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*

Amy Turner Bushnell represents an example of a researcher who "dug deeper." She stands as one of the foremost experts on Spanish Florida. One of her early works, *The King's Coffer: Proprietors of the Spanish Florida Treasury, 1565-1702*, written in 1981, analyzed how the administrators of the Florida colony ran the economy, something which based itself partly in the mission system.[10] Bushnell later published *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, a more in-depth look at the inner-workings of the relationship between the missions and the economy of colonial Florida. For Bushnell, the ". . . Franciscan missionaries supported by royal stipends began to provide a hinterland. . . . Soldiers ensured that the Indian lords of the land would fulfill their sworn contracts of conversion, trade, mutual defense, and allegiance, and the Crown rewarded the chiefs' obedience with regular gifts." Through her extensive research in Spanish documents, Bushnell showed how the missions did not just convert the natives of Florida, but also helped support the colony's position in an international economy.[11]

The field of Spanish Colonial history and the mission system illuminates some excellent scholarship in a wide variety of forms. The two disciplines have combined to create an excellent body of text that covers most areas of the Spanish colony and mission system. Bushnell summed up the tone of the field when she wrote, "The historiography of Spanish Florida has traditionally concentrated on Indians, friars, and soldiers. . . ."[12]

(Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1965).
[10] Amy Turner Bushnell, *The King's Coffer: Proprietor's of the Spanish Florida Treasury, 1565-1702* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1981).
[11] Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida* (Athens, GA.: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 15.
[12] Bushnell, *The King's Coffer: Proprietors of the Spanish Florida Treasury, 1565-1702*, vii.

These are the peoples that interacted with one another during the time of Spanish colonization. And while all the writers listed above are aware that the no other religious order other than the Franciscans ran the mission system in Florida, this fact appears only secondary to these same gifted scholars. Florida did have other missionaries, most notably the Dominicans and the Jesuits, but the Franciscans realized success here where others failed. Why? The answer lies in the Franciscans themselves, and one in particular, Friar Francisco Pareja, stands out as an example of just how well this Order performed its duties in Florida.

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> If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but handed Him over for us all, how will He not give everything else along with Him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Romans 8:31-32.

But how did the Franciscans come to exist? Who was the Order's sometimes enigmatic, but nonetheless influential saintly founder and how did he effect the way in which the Friars behaved later. No one is born a saint, and this certainly applied to Francis of Assisi. Hailing from central Italy in 1181 — in a town described by writer Donald Spoto as ". . . a new Babylon, a place of wild debauchery, where murder and street fights to the death took place on a regular basis. Revenge was considered a right, vendetta almost a sacred duty" — Francis' early life certainly did not predispose him towards a holy and religious existence. In fact, had he listened to his father, Francis would have become a fabric merchant, and taken his place among the growing middle

class of thirteenth century Italy. The life Francis chose for himself early on did not lend itself to saintly descriptions. He dreamed of becoming a knight and following the code of chivalry so popular in Medieval Europe, and in his romps with his friends, Francis showed he preferred partying over business. But a term of imprisonment as a result of a small local skirmish severely altered the young man, and in 1205 he began the work of rebuilding the chapel at San Damiano, a chore that led him into a spiritual life.[13]

Indeed, a spiritual existence meant different things to different people, but for Francis, it meant giving up what luxuries he had in his previous indolent life. It also involved leading an aesthetic existence, and Francis went to great lengths to live as simply as possible, in order to devote himself as much to Christ as possible. However, while in this service, Francis incurred enemies, his own father among them, who felt that his son had taken advantage of the modest wealth of his family in order to rebuild the chapel at San Damiano. In one of the better documented and also legendary moments in Francis' life, he appeared before the bishop and town of Assisi to settle the matter. Once there, Francis disrobed and gave back all the clothes that he had on his person. The act, wrote Donald Spoto, meant ". . . freedom, like that of a naked newborn, without the burden of worldly goods or privileges, without the pleasures and responsibility of possession and fine clothes." Freed also from any remaining attachments to his family, Francis from then on wandered about helping those in need and preaching God's Word to

[13] The story of St. Francis' spiritual awakening at San Damiano bears further analysis, for it shows the way for later missionary efforts. Theologians have speculated on the actual meaning of the vision St. Francis' received in 1205. One thing is certain that his rebuilding of the chapel at San Damiano, his simple dedication to this one purpose, is what began to attract followers to him. Scholars debate whether his vision intended him to rebuild this one holy place, or to help build-up the Catholic Church in general. Donald Spoto saw it both ways, and both he accomplished through this one chapel and his order. Later, his order went on to "build-up" the Catholic Church in other lands as missionaries. See Donald Spoto, *Reluctant Saint: The Life of Francis of Assisi* (New York: Penguin Compass, 2002), 3-40.

whomever and whatever he encountered.[14]

In addition to his preaching, Francis also long dreamed of traveling to Muslim countries and the Holy Land where he thought he could convert all of Islam to Christianity. In 1218, he stepped off the boat in Egypt on a mission, and joined the encampment of the Fifth Crusade as the Christians besieged the port at Damietta. When Francis arrived and witnessed the outrageous slaughter that took place, the mass killings perpetrated in the name of God appalled him. He felt angered and disillusioned by the conduct of the Christians and sought a peaceful end to the hostilities. To accomplish this task, Francis went to the Sultan al-Kamil to preach the word of God, an act Francis believed would have an influence on Muslims and thus bring a conclusion to the destruction. His attempted proselytizing did not have the desired effect, and the Fifth Crusade bloodily continued.[15] The religious order called the Order of Friars Minor, or Franciscans, founded by and named for him, later attempted to emulate Francis' missionary effort hundreds of years later and in far distant lands.

At the founding of the Franciscan order, the Friars dedicated themselves to the concept of poverty in the service of the impoverished. In a time when the Roman Catholic Church saw itself as much of a secular state as a spiritual one, any movement such as that led by Francis of Assisi bordered on sedition in the eyes of the Church. Seen

[14] The "whatever" in this case refers to St. Francis also legendary sermon to a flock of birds. The story relates how, after becoming frustrated with a lackluster reaction to some of his preaching, St. Francis instead found a group of patient avians who seemed pleased to stand by while he talked to them. One of the problems with retelling the life of St. Francis is that it is often difficult to separate fact from theology. Francis wrote little, and those who wrote about him after his death often used symbolism to fill in the gaps of St. Francis' life. Donald Spoto took what little existing primary source documentation there is about St. Francis with a some healthy skepticism. As a theologian, Spoto could see through the symbolism of the source material and thus reassemble a more rational look at St. Francis' life. See Ibid., 51-109.

[15] Ibid., 159-168.

as radical and potentially dangerous to the established authority in Rome, the Church nonetheless accepted Francis and his followers because of their simple dedication to the poor and sick. Francis' and his follower's adherence to this ministry also helped the image of the Church, then seen by many as corrupt. But official recognition as a religious order meant bringing the Franciscans under the rule of Rome and the Pope, which bothered Francis. He feared that his followers would become corrupted by the influence of the Church, with its grandiose cathedrals and clergy who cared more about lavish vestments than preaching the Gospel. He preferred independence in order to stay focused on spreading the word of God and ministering to the infirm, and these principals, he hoped, would guide his order wherever they went.[16]

Francis also feared Papal recognition of his movement because his Friars might become complacent and settled. He saw his companions as wandering preachers out among the people and traveling to wherever the need presented itself. Catholicism had enough religious orders with monasteries attached to cities and caught up in Medieval society and forgetting their pledge to live a Christ-like existence. Part of the reason that the Franciscan movement became as popular as it did related largely to how differently they behaved than most other clergymen. In a time when the Church wielded the bulk of society's wealth and influence, the followers of Francis clearly did not fit with Catholic norms. In many ways, the Franciscan movement served as a peaceful, but strong, reaction to the Church's grandiloquence. Because of this, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) considered branding the movement as heretical, but due to the Friars' closeness to the very people the Church looked to for support, Rome decided to bring the Franciscans into

[16] Ibid., 84-94.

the fold. Their popularity with the common people came to be an asset when performing God's work as missionaries.[17]

Francis left few clues as to how he meant for this work to be accomplished. Never the scholar, he felt content to be amongst the people, living an impoverished life in service to others. This leading by example proved both inspiring and confusing to Francis' followers. Many scholars believe that Francis could not write, and his attempts late in life to codify the rules of behavior for the burgeoning Franciscans, did not help things. Some have speculated that Francis simply did not possess the administrative mind to properly organize the religious order he founded. With inclusion in the Roman Catholic Church, the need for clear rules and guidelines became paramount. The codification set down by Francis proved too symbolic and unwieldy. Leadership of a continent-spanning religious order fell to others more capable than himself. Not even the simple little prayerful exhortations to God that did survive Francis could impose cohesiveness, despite their beautiful prose. For these reasons, he spent the rest of his life as a virtual hermit while others took over the guidance of the Franciscans.[18] The Friars that survived him made it their mission to follow their founder's example, though many interpreted it in different ways throughout the centuries.

A major part of this mission included one of Francis' favorite activities: preaching. The success of individual Friars in this regard depended greatly on how well they could purvey their message. Generally speaking, the Friars adhered to certain guidelines to follow while they traveled about preaching. One source for topics that they

[17] Ibid.
[18] Lawrence Cunningham, ed., *Brother Francis: An Anthology of Writings By and About St. Francis of Assisi* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972), 3-21, 99-104.

might tackle while out evangelizing comes from the *Fasciculus Morum*. This lengthy document, printed in the fourteenth century, provided a weighty handbook for the Franciscan preacher. Divided into seven parts, it covered such issues as pride, wrath, envy, avarice, sloth, gluttony, and lechery. Considered the "seven deadly sins," the prospective Friar using the text thus had several things he could suggest in his sermons and ministries in order to help them remedy the lives of the faithful.[19] The existence of such texts meant that the Franciscans had become the kind of organized body the Church could look to for ready servants of the Faith.

And although the Friars became an official part of the Catholic Church, as they spread throughout Europe and elsewhere, they remained essentially true to the ideals of poverty and spreading the Word of God. The partnership with the Church helped to direct the wandering ministering of the Franciscans and gave them the support they needed to keep to their mission of helping the poor. As the Age of Exploration dawned, the Order found itself split between those who maintained the aesthetic, independent life that Francis led, and those who fell more in line with accepted norms for Catholic clergy. During the last half of the fifteenth century, some Friars lived in monasteries while still others brought with them their own private incomes and servants upon becoming a Franciscan. For these reasons, the Order split into three complimentary but distinct branches which served different purposes: the Friars Minor, and the Second and Third Orders. While all three branches served in the New World, the Friars Minor provided the bulk of the Franciscan clergy who traveled with the explorers.[20]

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[19] Siegfried Wenzel, ed. and trans., *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth Century Preacher's Handbook* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989).
[20] John Moorman, D. D., Litt. D., *A History of the Franciscan Order: From its Origins to the Year 1517*

Over time, the Friars became involved with expeditions undertaken by other countries who used religion as another form of conquest.[21] During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Order traveled with the Spanish to the New World in order to convert the native populations to Christianity. Florida, among other parts of Spain's New World empire, saw its share of missionaries. Because of the stature of the Spanish Empire, the Catholic Church looked to Spain as Defenders of the Faith. In turn, the Spanish Crown looked to Rome to provide candidates to accompany the expeditions, and to later serve in the colonies. In this fashion, the Spanish also helped spread Christianity throughout places like Florida by bringing missionaries along with their explorations. The Franciscans, many of whom came from Spain, answered the call of their Church to serve in the New World in their desire to follow the example of Francis.[22]

It is difficult to imagine that Francis, itinerant mendicant from Assisi, could have possibly foreseen his Order becoming so synonymous with the Roman Catholic Church. In his own lifetime, Francis lived the life of Jesus as he saw it, and many argued that the

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(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 548-568.

[21] In the case of Catholic missionaries, their goals did not always match up with those of the Spanish explorers. However, Europeans soon realized, as James Axtell points out, ". . . that technological advantage could be turned to spiritual and political profit." In other words, first came a demonstration of technological power, and then pacification through religion. Such a situation worked well throughout North America for both ecclesiastical and secular authorities. James Axtell. *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 12-13.

[22] In 1508 Pope Julius II issued the *Universalis ecclesiae* which empowered the Spanish king the exclusive right to build churches and promulgate Christianity in the Americas. This worked to the advantage of places like Peru and Mexico because the riches plundered from these places poured much of the gold into the royal coffers. However, for Florida where no such wealth was derived, churches were not easily built. However, the institution known as the *Patronato Real de Indias* made it possible for Christianity to come to Florida. In fact Franciscan historian Maynard J. Geiger, O. F. M. posits that without the *Patronato Real*, there would have been no Christianity in Florida. See Geiger, O. F. M., "Background and Terminology in *The Franciscan Conquest of Florida, 1573-1618*," David Hurst Thomas, ed. *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebook, Volume 23: The Missions of Spanish Florida* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991), 237-238.

Church did not do the same thing. But as a part of a global Faith, the Franciscans performed their duties well in the role of missionaries and spokesmen for Christianity. In places like Florida, they helped establish and maintain a mission system which, for better or worse, evangelized a native population over the course of 150 years. As with any cast of characters in a historical saga, there are antagonists and protagonists. Friar Francisco Pareja and the Spanish colonizers of Florida are two that, depending on historical perspective, are viewed in both good and bad lights. From the beginning of exploration, however, both wanted the same thing in regards to the natives: conversion, though with different intents.

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Conversion occurred, of course, only if any natives remained after the Spanish conquistadors visited destruction upon the Florida populations. This gave birth to the infamous "Black Legend," a veritable superstition among other European colonial powers about the evils of the Catholic Spanish. Because expeditions to Florida of the early 1500s did not have the same intent as those of the latter half of the sixteenth century, missionaries could not realize any concrete, successful converts. Explorers like Hernando de Soto, who landed in Florida in 1539, had less patience with Christianization than the missionaries that traveled with him. Patricia R. Wickman clearly showed this attitude when she wrote, "If the natives failed to cooperate fully in their own conversion and assimilation (as so often happened), then the Spaniards believed that they were then justified in waging war against the natives, for the good of their souls as well as for the

benefit of the Spanish Crown."[23] The missionaries who traveled with the conquistadors thought they carried out God's will through the conversion of native populations to Christianity, but in reality the early Franciscans in Florida became accomplices to conquest.[24] A long term effort at evangelization could not happen until Spain decided to settle Florida.

Though Catholic missionaries traveled with all Spanish incursions into Florida, the foundation of St. Augustine marked a new beginning for the missionary on the peninsula. From 1565 forward, the prospective preacher who wished to come to Florida to evangelize the natives now had a European base to work from, albeit one that received minimal attention from Spain. The Franciscan missionaries and the Spanish colonial government worked better together than other religious groups[25] that journeyed to Florida to develop a mutual system for exploitation of converted Christians. Missionaries desired to save the native's souls, but the mission system became as much of an economic endeavor as evangelical. Archaeologist Jerald T. Milanich put it succinctly: "Missions were colonialism. The missionary process was essential to the goal of colonialism: creating profits by manipulating the land and its people."[26] The Franciscan mission system maintained hegemony over the natives while helping to support another level of control: the Spanish colonial military. Through these layered levels, the Friars converted

[23] Patricia R. Wickman, "The Spanish Colonial Floridas," in Robert H. Jackson, ed. *New Views of Borderland History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 212.

[24] The missionaries saw their work as important because conversion to them was a peaceful means of subjugation whereas conquest meant suffering and slavery. However, no matter how much the missionaries preached while in Florida, they were powerless to stop the slaughter that often took place. See V. F. O'Daniel. *Dominicans in Early Florida* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1930), 16-17, 66-67.

[25] These were the Dominicans who traveled with a few of the explorers to Florida and the Jesuits whose period of missionization lasted from 1565-1574. The Franciscans inherited the mission system in Florida which they maintained successfully for the next 130 years. See Gannon. *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*, 20-76.

[26] Milanich. *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, xiii.

many natives to Christianity and unwittingly brought about the destruction of native culture in the process.

The Spanish colonial government relied much on this system of control in order to maintain the Florida colony itself. As the Franciscans commenced their duties in the hinterland among the natives, Spain realized it needed a reliable means of support for the missions. Thus Spain installed a system that included protection from the natives they evangelized, the religious items required for conversion, and maintenance of routes of travel and communication between the missions and the capital at St. Augustine. The establishment of the missions and its support marked the beginning of, as historian Michael V. Gannon posited, "a large-scale, concerted effort to win Florida's native population for the Church."[27] But because St. Augustine only ever achieved a marginal status among Spain's colonies in the New World, the missionaries became responsible for overseeing the "gifts" of agriculture required of the native population for the survival of the colony. These gifts made partners of the Spanish colonial government and the Franciscan missionaries in the exploitation of the indigenous peoples of Florida.[28]

Although the Franciscans acted in unison with the Spanish in the exploitation of native physical resources, this method of usage, called *repartimiento*, did not impose on native populations as in other areas of Spain's colonial empire. Throughout much of

[27] Gannon, *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*, 36.

[28] At its peak in the 1670s, the Franciscan mission system stretched from the Guale lands in present-day Georgia, south to the Timucuas down near where Gainesville is today, and west to the Apalachicola river and the current-day city of Tallahassee, the capital of the state of Florida. Missions tended to be fluid institutions that operated or shut down depending on the mood of the natives they evangelized, or the availability of Franciscan Friars. The missions also situated themselves near logical routes of communication, such as along the coast. On the mainland, the missions clustered around a single road that went out from St. Augustine which is also the present-day path of Interstate 10. See Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida* (Athens, GA.: University of Georgia Press, 1994).

New Spain, South America, and the present-day Southwest United States, using a system called the *encomienda*, the Spanish took advantage of native labor and production. With the *encomienda*, the missionaries oversaw the forced relocation of entire native populations for the benefit of the evangelization effort. In Florida under the *repartimiento*, the native populations stayed on the lands they traditionally inhabited and the missionaries came to them. This presented the illusion of an equitable relationship between the governors and the governed, with the Franciscans as the religious intermediaries in the process of conversion. As Patricia R. Wickman pointed out, "The ability of the Spaniards to control and subjugate them [Florida natives] was predicated to a great degree on a process of negotiation. This process, which proceeded continuously throughout the occupations of La Florida, was viewed quite differently by each of the parties involved."[29]

Despite the Franciscan's complicity with the colonial government in St. Augustine, the Friars justified their cooperation only because they truly thought they performed God's work. Spain provided the Catholic Church the opportunity to spread the Gospel throughout the New World and the Order of Friars Minor responded by traveling to places like Florida. There they could preach to a population that clearly needed knowledge of Jesus, at least in the Franciscans' eyes, and perform a duty that Francis himself felt essential to a religious life. Nearly 400 years after the death of its

[29] Both the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* systems were economically exploitative but with subtle differences. The *encomienda* was so totally brutal and intrusive that the government of New Spain gradually did away with it so that by the beginning of the seventeenth century it was only still in place in present-day New Mexico. Because Florida was also a crown colony, it was more subject to the rules and regulations of the Spanish Monarchy. Ultimately these were discriminatory and unfair to the natives, but they were able to ensure the stability of the *repartimiento* until the collapse of the mission system early in the eighteenth century. See Wickman, Robert H. Jackson, ed. *New Views of Borderlands History*, 2-3, 212.

founder, these itinerant preachers came to Florida to evangelize the Florida natives. In 1573, the first Franciscans landed at the Santa Elena settlement of La Florida, far to the north of St. Augustine. Friar Castillo led the first Friars to arrive in Florida as part of the mission system.[30] Few facts remain about these missionaries and little more about Friar Castillo. Castillo came from Marchena, Spain, and by 1578, the Spanish named him chaplain for the troops who garrisoned the fort at Santa Elena.[31] The scarcity of facts about these Friars is proportionate to the short amount of time it took for the Spanish to abandon Santa Elena, which they carried out in 1587. After Santa Elena, neither the Spanish nor the Franciscans attempted another foray north of present-day Georgia.[32] Though expelled from one place, the missionaries did not ". . . flee to another territory and do penance with God's blessing,"[33] but stayed on in Florida despite their rough greeting.

Spain's government in Florida and the Franciscans worked together to control the native population, and through this partnership they established a mission system that extended throughout much of the northern part of the modern-day state. However, the two parties involved in the lives of the natives often butted administrative heads in disagreements on priorities. The concerns of the colonial government in St. Augustine

[30] Milanich. *Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe*, 167.
[31] Geiger, O. F. M. *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*, 22.
[32] Ibid., 8-10.
[33] The entirety of this quote comes from one of the few documents that Francis ever personally wrote, one that he dictated from his death bed. It reads: "I firmly order all the brothers on obedience that, wherever they are, they are not to dare ask for . . . a church or a convent, not on the pretext of preaching or on account of physical persecution; but if they are not received anywhere they are to flee to another territory and do penance with God's blessing." Rosalind B. Brooke. *The Coming of the Friars* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975), 118.

naturally tended towards military matters, those of the Friars towards the spiritual well-being of the natives. Despite the alliance of Papal and Spanish Royal authorities, colonial defense and spiritual guidance did not always mix.[34] The missionaries traveled to the native villages for the purpose of evangelization, but often the Spanish government required those same natives to move elsewhere. This occurred whenever the planting or harvesting season occurred, or, as in the 1670s, when the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos commenced.[35] Frustration over such policies can be traced in letters between the Friars in the actual missions and the governor in St. Augustine. How could the Franciscans perform their duties when they had no population to administer the rites of Christianity to?[36]

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How does one gauge the Franciscan's legacy in Florida? For previous scholars, this question remained largely immaterial. For archaeologists, the study of physical remains yielded clues to the lives that the natives led while a part of Spain's mission system in Florida. For historians, analysis of documentary sources from the same period gives a picture of how that system worked, and who benefited from it. The fact that Franciscans ran the missions and helped the colonial government in the exploitation of native resources proved enough for researchers in both disciplines. But why the

[34] Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 20-25.
[35] Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, 151.
[36] A number of such letter are collected in the journal *Florida Archaeology* (Number 7, 1993), which historian John H. Hann edited. As often happened in Florida whenever the natives revolted against the practices of the colonial government, the Friars took the side of the natives. See Hann, "Visitations and Revolts in Florida, 1656-1695," *Florida Archaeology*, Number 7, 1993.

Franciscans? Because most scholars have yet to ask this question, it stands as a telling testimony to the breadth and complexity of the study of Spanish Florida. However, this is not to suggest that previous writing on the subject is deficient in any way. Works like *Here They Once Stood: The Tragic End of the Apalachee Missions* have taken their place in the lexicon of Spanish Borderland studies and American History in general. Nonetheless, the answer to the question as to why the Franciscans realized successful and permanent conversions to Christianity where other religious orders did not can only enrich the overall picture of the Spanish colonial experience.

To begin to address this issue, one needs to naturally begin with a look at the life of Francis himself. It is difficult to imagine that Francis could have conceived of his Order of Friars Minor playing the role of world-wide spokesmen of the Catholic Church that they did over the centuries. However, if they did stray somewhat from Francis' simple vows of poverty, the Franciscans proved dedicated to his ideal of service, both to the Spanish Crown and the Faith. This is not to say that the two masters that the Friars in Florida served agreed. Yet many of the missionaries cared about one thing: their ministry to the natives. Their letters and writings testify to their concern for the Christian education of the natives. The work of the Franciscans reflected the dedication which gave them their staying-power during the colonial period. Their record in Florida remains as a monument to their service and example of St. Francis.[37]

Not all Friars maintained the zeal of service exemplary of Francis, but their record overall remains one of the better ones in Spanish colonial history. However, it is not

[37] The attitudes of the Friars towards the natives and their work can be traced in the letters they wrote both to the governor and the King of Spain. Sometimes when the natives felt abused by the colonial government, they rebelled, and the Franciscans often took their side. A large collection of these letters can be found in Hann, "Visitations and Revolts in Florida, 1656-1695," *Florida Archaeology*, 1993.

enough to say that the Franciscans treated the natives well and the Spanish treated the natives poorly, or vice versa. The Franciscans concern for the well-being of the native population did not serve only the colonial interest, but frequently made them stand out as a lone voice in defense of their converts. Individual cases help to best judge the work of the Franciscan Order in Florida. One intriguing example of service is found in Friar Francisco Pareja. He stood as a character that garnered passing attention from scholars at best, despite his contribution to the mission system. In Bonnie G. McEwan's *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*, Friar Pareja received one mention, and that one spelled incorrectly. Amy Turner Bushnell devoted a little more text to Friar Pareja in *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, but she concerned herself more with how Friar Pareja fit into the mission system than how the religious order he belonged to affected him as a missionary.[38]

This is not to say that Friar Pareja has not received the attention that he deserves given his impact on the founding and guidance of the mission system in Florida. Friar Geiger wrote of Pareja:

> Born at Auñón, Spain. Was a member of the Province of Castile and came to Florida with Fray Juan de Silva and companions in 1595. In Florida he spent most of his missionary years at San Juan del Puerto and became scholar par excellence of the Timucuan language. He made many expeditions into the interior of Florida. From about 1609 to 1612, he was custodio [custodian] of the [F]riars in Florida and at the Chapter of San Buenaventura de Guadalquini, Georgia, he was elected provincial of the Province of Santa Elena, December 1616.

Despite the lack of dates for birth and death and brevity, the passage gave a

[38] McEwan, *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*, p. 118. Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 71, 74, 97-98, 103.

comprehensive list immediately following this of all of Friar Pareja's writing. These include several catechisms written in both Spanish and Timucuan, as well as Friar Pareja's most famous piece: the *Confesionario*. It also displayed the importance of Pareja to the missions of Florida while he served there.[39]

Though modern scholars are certainly aware of Friar Pareja's *Confesionario*, in depth analysis has, again, resulted in looking at the text for what it says about Timucuan culture and not for what it says about Pareja's role as a Franciscan. The title of Jerald T. Milanich, William C. Sturtevant, and Emilio F. Moran's translation of the document practically says it all: *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*. That said, the authors do acknowledge the importance of Friar Pareja himself when they wrote, "Frey Pareja seems to have been the spokesman for the Franciscans during his entire stay in Florida, at first in an unofficial capacity and later as an official of his Order." But again, for Milanich, Sturtevant, and Moran, they concerned themselves less with what the document says about Franciscan activities than what it says about Timucuan society and culture. Admittedly, the *Confesionario* gave great detail in this regard.[40] In order to better understand the Franciscans in Florida, Friar Pareja's masterpiece needs a different type of analysis, one that incorporates whatever way the religious order he belonged to influenced his work.

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[39] Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*, 85.

[40] The authors of this analysis of Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* have misspelled the word as "Confessionario." This is a mistake possibly picked up from Friar Geiger's *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)* where it is also spelled with an extra "s." This could have very easily been a simple typo because Friar Geiger most certainly could read and understand Spanish. The word should be *confesionario* which means "confessional" in Spanish. Henceforth, the word shall appear as *Confesionario* no matter how modern scholars use it, unless it appears in a title spelled wrongly. See. Milanich, William C. Sturtevant, eds., Emilio F. Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography* (Tallahassee: Division of Archives, History, and Records Management, Florida Department of State, 1972), 8.

To date, modern scholars have looked at Spain's Florida colony as a story of economic exploitation and thoughtless genocide at all levels. This narrow view ignores the intent of good men of the Catholic Faith to serve God. Friar Francisco Pareja and his brethren expanded on the example that Francis set down for his Order, while at the same time living as closely to its precepts as they could. Francis could never have fit the description of "scholar par excellence" that described Friar Pareja, but Pareja's service in Florida as a missionary certainly stands as exemplary. As such, the writings and life that Pareja led in Florida can be used as a sort of litmus test by which to measure the entire history of the Spanish mission system in Florida. Through this lens, the role the Roman Catholic Church played during the colonial period is better understood. For the Franciscans and not the Jesuits or the Dominicans managed to convert entire native peoples of Florida. Granted, this meant the collapse and destruction of one civilization and the ascendancy of another. In addition, the Franciscans found themselves partnered with yet another administrative body: the Spanish government. In conjunction with their co-colonizers, the Friars dedication to their Order's precepts had to morph to fit their particular situation. The documents found in places like the *Archivo General de los Indias* give a picture of just which master they served when performing their duties on the missions. Yet when the Spanish left Florida in 1763 after their defeat in wars far away — because of the efforts of Friar Pareja and those that followed him — those native populations that remained from the mission system left with their Christian brothers as good Catholics.

Chapter Two:

Friar Pareja's *Confesionario*

Certain publications trumpet Friar Francisco Pareja simply for his scholarly work and not for his performance as a Franciscan missionary in Florida. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* wrote about the Spanish Friar the following: "Father Pareja is noted for having published the first books in the language of an Indian tribe within the United States, the Timuquanan. . . ."[41] This sort of thing excites linguists. Though the Timucua people live on in certain place names in Florida, there are no actual native speakers of their language surviving today.[42] Researchers are left with documents like Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* that gave a picture of native words from a Eurocentric viewpoint, with sentence structure mirroring that of the Castilian Spanish of the translator. Because of the fact that Timucuan, with the exception of a few words, bears little resemblance to other dialects spoken by neighboring peoples — like the Muskogean and the Creek — deciphering the language becomes more complicated. However, it is hoped that further research into the *Confesionario* will enrich the understanding of Timucuan society.[43]

Friar Pareja and his contemporaries had to rely on the *Confesionario* and other items such as catechisms to help their understanding of Timucuan culture. While the Catholic Church received due credit for the education that it gave its clergy, the actual missionaries in the field ministering to prospective converts needed tools that could appeal to their audience. Simply showing a cross and muttering a prayer in Latin usually

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[41] See *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11478b.htm.
[42] Hann, *A History of the Timucuan Indians and Missions*, 325.
[43] Joe McClain, "Linguists research Timucua, a language with no speakers," *William & Mary News*, October 20, 2005.

did not have the desired affect on the natives of Florida. Such demonstrations, though well-meaning, sometimes ended violently for the preacher, as happened on numerous occasions during the exploration of Florida.[44] However, if the missionary survived his initial contact with the indigenous population, communication often remained rudimentary at best.[45] The common form of communication as described by the Spanish in their interactions with the natives consisted of the use of signs. Friar Andrés de San Miguel, upon his arrival among the Guale in the southern part of modern-day Georgia, found out about the quirkiness of communication with the natives: ". . . they gave the Indians to understand by signs how we had gone out with the sloop in search of that river. With that, the Indians departed leaving our companions consoled with the fire and other things that they gave them."[46] Of course, this sort of occurrence hardly happened to just the missionaries. The accounts of the explorations of Florida are rife with Spanish giving "the Indians to understand by signs" the intentions of the conquistadors and the missionaries.[47]

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[44] One extreme case of the death of a clergyman and the hands of the natives of Florida occurred in 1549 in Tampa Bay to Father Luis Cancer de Barbastro. Upon arrival, practically as soon as Father Cancer's boat touched the beach and he got out, the natives of the area swarmed the Dominican Brother, dragged him to the top of a hill, and killed him. This violent reaction probably had much to do with the pillaging of the conquistador Hernando de Soto who marched through this same area a decade earlier. For an account of the life of Father Cancer, see Rev. V. F. O'Daniel, O. P., S. T. M., Litt. D., *Dominicans in Early Florida* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1930), 60-69. For a complete account of the de Soto expedition to Florida which also contained Dominican preachers, see Lawrence A. Clayton, Vernon James Knight, Jr., and Edward C. Moore, eds., *The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543, Vols. 1 & 2* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1993).

[45] Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, 81-83.

[46] Friar Andrés de San Miguel, Hann, trans., *An Early Florida Adventure Story* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 60.

[47] Father Antonio Sedeño of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) summed up the situation in early Florida when he wrote, ". . . attempts have been made to learn the language [of the natives] (although it is difficult and barbarous), and to teach the things of our Holy Faith in it, making it known to them that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him, along with other mysteries, preparing them to understand (as much as has been able to) the glory and the punishment of hell etc." After exploration and colonization, the missionary took up the task of converting communication by signs into a real understanding of native language. See David Hurst Thomas, ed., Felix Zubillaga, S. J., ed., Margot Dembo, trans., "Selected Letters from

Miscommunication persisted as long as missionaries relied on rudimentary ways of expressing themselves to the native population in Florida. This problem presented the missionaries with two solutions in order to move past the imprecise way of speaking through signs: either the missionary could teach the native Spanish or Latin, or the missionary could learn the native language. Often the missionary chose to learn the native language. It proved much easier for one person to learn a native tongue than for several to learn a European one, even though native dialects not only differed greatly from their neighbors, but also varied structurally from the European languages. Because many of the missionaries traveled to places like Florida past the stage in their life when learning is achieved easiest, gaining knowledge of Timucuan did not come without difficulty.[48]

When a missionary lacked knowledge of a certain dialect, the Friars needed texts in order to perform their duties. They wanted things like hymnals, catechisms (teachings), and other Church documents translated into languages like Timucuan in order for the Franciscans to better facilitate their preaching and administering of the sacraments. The necessity of producing such works in some ways did not reflect the example set by St. Francis of Assisi who aspired to many things but not the life of the scholar. Francis instead focused on spoken word and following the path of Christ and besides, he could barely write.[49] Of course, where he conducted his activities, there existed little need for such scholarly translations. Therefore, in order for the Franciscans in Florida and elsewhere to follow Francis' missionary work, people like Friar Pareja had

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Monumenta Antiquae Florida, 1566-1572)," *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebooks, Vol. 8: Ethnography of the Indians of Spanish Florida* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991), 4.

[48] Axtell, *The Invasions Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America,* 81-83.

[49] Spoto, *Reluctant Saint: The Life of Francis of Assisi.*

to sacrifice some of their other duties in order to make the sum of their ministry work that much smoother.

And from all accounts, Friar Pareja's work in translating Timucuan into Spanish far surpassed anything else written during the Franciscan mission experience in Florida. The timing of his writings could not have come at a more providential moment. He arrived in Florida in 1595, only twenty-two years after the first Franciscans, and during the early stages of the mission system. Among the Guale and the Timucua — the two native peoples living in closest proximity to St. Augustine — there occurred disagreements between the Spanish and the natives over perceived abuses on the part of the colonial government, and they sometimes ended in violence. The colonial government in Florida needed effective missionaries in order to control their native population which by the end of the sixteenth century still outnumbered the small contingent of colonists. Certainly such entanglements that occurred had deeper motivations than simple miscommunication. But with the use of native language, the missionaries could pacify through the medium of religion. By 1630, Pareja had not only written three catechisms in Timucuan, but also a book on Timucuan grammar and pronunciation, and treatises on the pains of Hell, the joys of Heaven, and the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[50]

However, the one document that has garnered the most attention from scholars is Friar Pareja's 1613 *Confesionario*. Modern attention to this document has emphasized it as an analysis of Timucuan culture, instead of employing the *Confesionario* as an

[50] Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)* p. 85. For a discussion of the revolts of the late 16th century, particularly among the Guale, see Hann, *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 68, 147-151.

example of Franciscan missionary work. Historian John H. Hann in his glossary of terms for *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions*, defined the *Confesionario* as such:

> A guide written by Fray Francisco Pareja containing questions and counsel in Spanish and Timucua, side by side, to serve as an aid to friars who were less skilled than he in the Timucua language to enable them to hear the confessions of natives who did not speak Spanish.[51]

The existence of such aids made it possible for the mission system established by the Franciscans in Florida to flourish. Without them, Christianity could not have the effect on the natives that it did. Friar Pareja led the Franciscans in Florida in such work, and he set an example of scholarship that all Florida Friars followed for the next 100 years.

As an ethnographic resource, the importance of the *Confesionario* looms large. As Jerald Milanich and William Sturtevant pointed out, "Pareja's works are by a considerable margin the earliest surviving texts in any North American Indian Language." However, this statement needs qualification of sorts. Though it does stand as "the earliest text in any North American Indian Language," the language under discussion is Timucuan and that label does not represent the diversity of the culture. Sometimes scholars have divided the Timucua among "salt-water" and "fresh-water" sub-cultures. Others have divided them further with names like Ocale, Potano, and Yustega. The *Confesionario* contained only one dialect of Timucua, when each of these various peoples that became lumped together as one native people each had their own variation. For Milanich and Sturtevant, the value of Friar Pareja's work lay in what it said about the Timucua, despite the fact that it covered only one sub-set of their culture.

[51] Ibid., 334.

Instead, greater emphasis should be given to what the *Confesionario* says about the work of Franciscan missionaries.[52]

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Friar Pareja wrote his *Confesionario* for one purpose: the sacrament of confession. In years past, the act of reconciliation played a pivotal role in the lives of Catholics. Considered a prerequisite for taking communion, going to confession used to have the status of a weekly ritual among the faithful. The need for confessing one's sins before the taking of the Host remained a foundation of Catholic religious practice and teaching for hundreds of years. And the fact that Catholicism then, as it does today, placed such emphasis on the importance of receiving the Host added gravitas to the act of confession.[53] But confession's connection to communion did not make it the only reason why confessing one's sins had such significance for Catholics. Priests and missionaries preached the importance of absolution through the recounting of wrongs as a major part of the path to Heaven. Both then as now, Catholics believed that unless one shed the weight of sin, one could not rise to meet God.[54]

The "weight of sin" certainly concerned Friar Pareja when he wrote his *Confesionario*. All aspects of Timucuan society received scrutiny under the microscope

[52] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*, 3-15.
[53] In the 1970s, the reforms of the Second Vatican Council began to de-emphasize the importance of confession before receiving communion. They instead installed a prayer for the forgiveness of sins into the liturgy of the Mass in order to absolve people of their sins prior to receiving the Host. Pierre-Marie Gy, O. P., *The Reception of Vatican II Liturgical Reforms in the Life of the Church* (Milwaukee: The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology, Marquette University Press, 2003), 46.
[54] *Catholic Encyclopedia* online, http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11618c.htm.

of Pareja's writing. However, this also changed the orientation of the act of confession so prominent in Catholic teaching. Instead of the Friar listening to the sins of the penitent, the *Confesionario* suggested questions that could be asked, thereby drawing the words out of the native in a leading way. Basically anything that the natives did as a part of their own culture became sinful in the eyes of the missionaries. Then, following a series of questions on various subjects of Timucuan culture, the *Confesionario* gave advice on how the natives might end their barbarous activities and pursue a more Christ-like existence. Thus, Christianity came to replace Timucuan identity.[55]

Specifically the Timucuan received scrutiny based on the Seven Deadly Sins. The fourteenth century *Fasciculus Morum* defined these as: pride, wrath, envy, avarice, sloth, gluttony, and lechery. These sins also have a foundation in the Old Testament's Ten Commandments, something that Friar Pareja used at several points in the *Confesionario*. Also known as the capital vices, Franciscan missionaries preached that these "crimes against God" led souls astray from the path to Heaven, sound Catholic teaching for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[56] Pareja followed a similar mode for his approach to Timucuan society. Many of the "offenses against God" dealt with in his text fell in some form under one of these sins. And because of the seriousness that the Catholic Church placed on these sins, the entire Timucuan culture became doomed to eternal damnation if they did not convert to Christianity. Such powerful concepts as an eternity spent with the Devil had deep ramifications in the hearts and minds of the natives

[55] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*, 23-39.
[56] Wenzel, *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook*, 1. For a discussion of the seven deadly sins, see *Catholic Encyclopedia* online, http://www.newadvent.org/summa/208404.htm.

of Florida.[57]

Also in the *Confesionario,* Friar Pareja broke down Timucuan society into hierarchies understandable to both him and the missionaries that used his guide in Florida. Each strata dealt with in the document contained a list of questions pertaining to the different functions that each of these people might perform given their station. For instance, the *Confesionario* had questions to hunters whether they prayed to their gods before their hunts, or ceremonies they acted out after they caught their prey. Again, for the Franciscans, almost invariably these activities boiled down to the influence of the Devil, whether the natives knew it or not. The advice given by Friar Pareja gave suggestions to the natives as to how to rely on God in order to resist the temptations of the Devil ever present in pagan native's lives.[58]

> I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me. You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them. For I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:1-6.

This is the sum of the First Commandment in the Bible and the logical starting point for Friar Pareja's *Confesionario*. He began with the general heading, "Ceremonies, Omens, and Superstitions That Are Still Used By Some." Here the Devil, as always in

[57] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography,* 3-22.
[58] Ibid., 23-39.

the text, is at work in Timucuan society, for anything not of God automatically became of the Devil. Friar Pareja intended this opening section for general questions on Timucuan culture, practices he thought permeated Timucuan society still, despite thirty years under Franciscan guidance. So when the *Confesionario* asked, "Having walked in some village of infidels, have you neared where they make some ceremonies with the intention of learning them, or some prayer, or something else that is made of the Devil?" Pareja thought that there still existed some predilection on the part of the Timucuans towards the religion they knew before the arrival of Christianity.[59]

Timucuan leadership is next addressed. For the Spanish colony and the missionaries, the cooperation of the chiefs of the native peoples comprised a vital component of the mission system in Florida. As often happened, the missionaries convinced the leader of a group to convert to Christianity. Due to the power dynamics under which native society operated, that leader's people soon followed suit. The Spanish and the missionaries usually went to whoever led a native group first and concentrated their conversion efforts on the leaders, relying on the native hierarchy to let Christianity trickle down. The *Confesionario* demonstrated the ceremonial power which the chiefs, or *caciques* as the Spanish called them, enjoyed over their people's lives. Friar Pareja posed questions in regard to how the *caciques* functioned as both civic and religious leaders. Therefore, when the chiefs came for their confession, they received questions on the role they played in the community's hunts, farming, and religious practices. Once a chief saw the role he played in his people's daily activities as evil, the

[59] Ibid., 23-25.

Franciscans' work became that much easier.[60]

Friar Pareja did not routinely follow the social order from the top down. Because queries to "those that dig and sow" and hunters followed questions for the chiefs and leaders, did not mean that they fell just below the *caciques* in the Timucuan social hierarchy. Instead, Pareja moved on to the more mystical aspects of these everyday activities. For instance, the *Confesionario* posed this question to hunters: "Having shot a deer and not having killed it, have you prayed to the arrow, believing that thus praying again it will die the next time you shoot it?" Pareja also discussed omens of war in this section, and different ceremonies the Timucuans used when preparing to go into battle. Always, however, Pareja exhorts the natives to turn away from their beliefs in multiple deities and the mystical properties of nature, and instead to rely on God for all their needs. As the *Confesionario* advised warriors, "Know, my son, that no matter how much you bathe or rub yourself with this herb, that it will not prevent the arrow from wounding you unless God protects you."[61]

From warriors, the *Confesionario* moved on to one of the more fascinating sections, the treatment of Timucuan women. In modern times, the Catholic Church's anti-abortion stance is well documented. The same is true for its anti-birth control views. These same issues seem to have concerned Friar Pareja writing in the early part of the seventeenth century. The main aspect of women's lives discussed in the *Confesionario* dealt with child bearing. Pareja queried early in his treatment of women, "Have you eaten charcoal, or dirt, or bits of pottery, or fleas, or lice?" In their footnotes, Milanich

[60] Ibid., 25-26. For further information on how the Spanish used the native leadership to help ease the acceptance of Christianity among the peoples of Florida, see Milanich, *Labroing in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, 104-112.
[61] Ibid., 26-28.

and Sturtevant noted the prevalence of geophagy (the traditional practice of eating dirt for nutrients) among native North American peoples. This practice also sometimes includes pregnant women who did such things in order to nourish their babies. Pareja certainly considered these acts sins for he called them "abuses."[62]

Another clue to the Franciscan's concern with the Timucuan use of abortion and other forms of birth control is clearly shown in the following section heading: "To Make Graver The Sin of Abortion And Of The Good Taken Away From The Child, And So On." Pareja advised:

> Daughter, to make another woman have a miscarriage is a grave sin for it is homicide, and because it deprives that unborn child of such a great benefit as it is to receive the waters of the Holy Baptism, through which he could go to enjoy the eternal richness and be united with the powerful God and His saints and angels, and much more than this you make it lose; you and your kin lose the prayers that he could have said from heaven if he had died a Christian, and because you killed him, he went into limbo where he will always be sad without light and contentment, without seeing God, disconsolate and sighing.

When pregnant themselves, Timucuan women, in order to cause the death of the unborn child, took to drinking certain potions, or squeezing their bellies. One of the factors, as quoted above, that the Franciscans employed to help end native abortions came in the dual nature of this sin. Not only did the unborn child go to Hell because of not receiving Baptism, the parents went with them because of the murder of their child. The Devil also tempted midwives with greed — one of the Seven Deadly Sins — during births. According to Pareja, Timucuans sometimes let the birthing mother suffer until she agreed

[62] Ibid., 28-29.

to whatever price the midwives wanted for their services.[63]

Going along with questions about abortion, the *Confesionario* devoted attention to a woman's chastity before marriage. Once again, modern antecedents of the Catholic Church's uncompromising attitude towards sexual promiscuity before marrying are found in Friar Pareja's writing. Apparently, Timucuan culture, especially the women, delighted in sensual behavior and titillating dress, at least in the eyes of the Franciscans. Some things that the native might have thought innocent, Pareja felt led to sin. This viewpoint is evidenced in such questions as: "Have you physically fondled another person or have you embraced or kissed or held hands with evil intent?" How the Franciscans knew the intent of such actions is not known, but certainly it fell within the realm of unacceptable physical contact given the sexual mores of the time. Pareja did write more bluntly in other places, as one question asked whether the woman had touched a sexual organ and explained to her lover that this is where she wanted to be pleasured. Another wanted to know specifically how many times the woman had intercourse prior to her wedding.[64]

In keeping with the theme of sexual deviance, Friar Pareja also talked about many of the same issues regarding men and boys. When the *Confesionario* asked if a native had "gone around," the question really wanted to know whether sexual intercourse had taken place, due to where such questions fell in the text. The raunchiness of the queries posed to women is surpassed by the lewdness of those to the men. The amount of attention given to this subject would not surprise the modern reader, given the sex scandals that the Catholic Church has gone through in the United States in recent years.

[63] Ibid., 28-30.
[64] Ibid., 36-37. For more information on what was considered acceptable sexual practices during the 16th and 17th centuries, see Hann, *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions*, 112-114.

However, like their modern counterparts, the Franciscans of the Spanish colonial period in Florida did not take such matters lightly. The significant portion of Pareja's text devoted to stamping out sexuality demonstrates this point. Some of the questions on this point seem ridiculous when read in this day and age, "Have you had intercourse with your mother-in-law?" And others, deadly serious, "Within the church have you had intercourse?"[65]

Another aspect of Timucuan culture that Pareja devoted a significant portion of the *Confesionario* to dealt with subject of sorcery. For the Franciscan missionaries, no other aspect of native society had a more direct connection to the Devil than magic. The peoples of Florida received a double dose of this consternation over magical practices from both the Spanish Inquisition and the Catholic Church. Begun in Spain during the expulsion of the Moors in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Inquisition sought to root out all heresies and sorcery certainly fell under that category. Many of the questions in the *Confesionario* are general in their approach to native magic: "Are you a sorcerer?" or "Did your spell work?" required only simple answers. But others showed more specific knowledge of Timucuan magic ways like, "Have you taken the skin of the poisonous snake or of the black snake and with black *guano* and other herbs have you tried to bewitch someone or have you bewitched them or have you wished to do so?" The Franciscans thought this behavior had the influence of the Devil behind it, but Pareja admits that ". . . they do not have any treatises or pacts with the Devil, as our sorcerers do." The only cure for this, wrote Pareja, lay in a total subservience to the will of God,

[65] Ibid., 38-39.

and if the native could not accomplish this, nothing would work.[66]

Another mysterious portion of the *Confesionario* dealt with "The Game." Friar Pareja, although, did not leave any clues as to what exactly this game meant. Questions such as, "Have you played so long that you lost all that you had in your house?" suggest that this might have involved gambling of some kind. Games of chance, according to Pareja, led to sinning in the name of greed and avarice, two of the deadly sins. The manner in which the natives played the game also gave the Franciscans pause. Not only did the Timucuans do wrong by gambling, but they made matters worse by cheating. Possibly, the game in question might have referred to a "ball game" played by most of the native peoples of north Florida. Years later, in 1676, Friar Juan de Paiva wrote about the native "ball game" that villages played against one another on a regular basis. Sometimes this settled political disputes, and occasionally they played for fun. In addition, the game also had religious and ceremonial functions in native society. If "The Game" referred to by Friar Pareja in the *Confesionario* simply meant some form of gambling, it probably would not have garnered the attention that it did. Because of the religious ceremonies surrounding the "ball game" that Paiva wrote about, Pareja's game could also mean the same thing. Gambling also made up a large part of Paiva's "ball game," and this fact further corroborates, in this manner, a possible relationship between Pareja's and the Apalachee "Ball Game."[67]

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[66] Ibid., 31-32. A larger discussion of the Spanish Inquisition and the heresies that fell under it can be found in John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe, Volume One: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1996), 112.

[67] Ibid., 32-33. For an in-depth analysis of the "ball game" manuscript written by Friar Juan de Paiva, see Hann, *Apalachee: The Land between the Rivers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1988), 328-353.

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Friar Maynard Geiger wrote glowingly of the work of the early Franciscans in Florida to which Friar Pareja and his *Confesionario* belonged: "The many missions established by 1618 evince the extent and the success of their labors. To their personal virtues of patience, self-denial, and long-suffering must be added their industry in learning the native languages, in instructing the neophytes, in overcoming their idiosyncrasies, in supervising their activities, and in meeting their temporal and spiritual needs."[68] Certainly the *Confesionario* showed how the Franciscans could overcome the Timucuans "idiosyncrasies" and supervise their "activities." Although the Friars saw it differently, the mission system in Florida maintained control of the native population through the dual layers of the colonial military and Christianity. By making the sacrament of confession into an interrogation like the *Confesionario* did, one wonders whether people like the Timucua performed their religious duties willingly? But whether the natives led Christian lives by choice or only by coercion, Friar Pareja and his order stayed.

During the time the Franciscans spent as missionaries in Florida, the *Confesionario* survives as an example of their Order's work. As mentioned, scholarly activities did not comprise an ideal that the Friars normally aspired. But as a Franciscan text, Pareja's writing fell within the tradition set down by the fourteenth century *Fasciculus Morum*. The two pieces overlap each other in the topics the two authors covered: the Seven Deadly Sins. They represent a continuity on the part of the

[68] Thomas, ed., Geiger, O. F. M., "Background and Terminology in *The Franciscan Conquest of Florida, 1573-1870* (1936)," *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebooks, Vol. 23: The Missions of Spanish Florida*, 260.

Franciscan Order as to the concern on the part of their early preachers and later missionaries to help others become better Christians. Service also remained the key. The goal of serving others lay at the heart of the Franciscan ministry, both at its founding and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Francis did not write much; his Friars later on found it necessary to produce documents to aid them. Yet the work produced by those on the missions in Florida also served another purpose.[69]

The *Confesionario* and other texts helped them greatly with language barriers. As historian David J. Weber pointed out, such writings ". . . facilitated the Franciscans' effort to enter into the private worlds of the natives without the intermediary of a translator — to redefine Indians' values and to alter their rituals. . ." When backed by the might of colonial Spain, the peoples of Florida had little choice in whether they accepted the teachings of Christianity or not. Therefore, writers like Friar Pareja could impose their moral system on the natives because they had authority not only from St. Augustine, but also through the native's own social hierarchy. Because, when beginning a mission, the Franciscans started by converting the *cacique*, people like the Timucua had no outlet in their own cultures to seek refuge from Christianity. No alternative existed in Spanish Florida. Besides, as much as possible, the Spanish often made it economically attractive for the *caciques* to lead their people into conversion. In effect, a bribe with a religious twist.[70]

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[69] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*. For more on the history of the Franciscan Order and influence of St. Francis on the Order's ideals, see Cajetan Esser, O. F. M., *Origins of the Franciscan Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970).

[70] David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 108-110.

Interestingly, Milanich and Sturtevant saw the *Confesionario* as providing a way for the Franciscans to administer the sacrament of confession.[71] However, this sacrament is not supposed to work the way Pareja presented it. Those wishing to confess their sins normally went to say what they thought they had done wrong, and the Priest told them prayers they needed to say for penance. This practice still goes on today in the Catholic Church. But because of differences in language and culture, the act of confession became something different in Florida, as evidenced by Friar Pareja's writing. In some respects, the mission system came down to a battle for native souls and the *Confesionario* acted as a weapon in an ongoing spiritual conquest which lasted for over a century in Florida. Eventually, the mission system collapsed because of the ascendancy of the British to the north, but not before the Franciscans realized success because of the efforts of their Friars. Even Pareja wrote during his stay in Florida that the Timucua had little recourse to their old ways and the young Christians among them considered their elders provincial. And while only those aspects of Timucuan culture that conflicted with Christian teaching changed under the Franciscans, the overall indictment of the native culture found in the pages of the *Confesionario* ran deeply.[72]

However much this text condemns native cultures, one can not overlook the missionary zeal that stirred the Franciscans to accomplish the task of converting the natives to Christianity. Not only did the *Confesionario* help the Friars root out any aspect of Timucuan culture deemed heretical, it also reinforced the existing social ordering. The twist that it introduced into the lives of the natives, with the aid of the mission system,

[71] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography,* 21.
[72] Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields if the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, 130.

placed the Spanish and God at the top of the order. Consider the following passage:

> In none of these things should you believe nor trust that with the prayers of the Devil you will get the prey; instead pray the things of God, and He being served, with His will you will hunt them, having left the prayer of the Devil you can hunt and trust yourself to God.[73]

"Trust yourself to God," Pareja advised the hunters, and not the Devilish ways on which the Timucuan previously relied, and used for thousands of years. No longer could the Timucua turn to their elders, their spiritual leaders, or whatever other cultural medium that expressed their native identity, for those belonged to the Devil. Instead, as newly converted Christians, the peoples of Florida under the Spanish mission system had a new master to serve. If they worshipped the same God as the Spanish and the Franciscans, then the evangelized natives in missions like San Juan del Puerto — Friar Pareja's mission — became pacified through religion.

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Therefore, after viewing Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* through the lens of what it says about Pareja as a Franciscan, what remains in the text of Timucuan culture? Because Friar Pareja wrote from a European perspective and education, what can we glean about the Timucua based on the manuscript? Milanich and Sturtevant pondered these questions when they wrote: "For example, one may doubt whether sexual behavior and sorcery were as prominent in Timucuan lives as they plainly were in Pareja's mind." To further complicate the issue, they acknowledge a lack of comparable data on other

[73] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*, 27.

southeastern native peoples.[74] In addition, the *Confesionario* provided a Eurocentric snap-shot of a Florida people that had lived under Spanish rule and the mission system for roughly half a century. While clues exist in other writings by Pareja and his fellow Friars about the amount of change the Timucuans had undergone, the *Confesionario* itself provided few clues for this process. Afterall, Pareja dedicated his text to a specific task, that of aiding his fellow Franciscans draw out confessions from the natives.

Other studies have filled in the gaps left by the *Confesionario*. Archaeologists can determine how the Timucuans morphed from a nomadic people to a sedentary one. This point is crucial in determining the level of control the mission system exerted over native populations in Florida. In order for the missionaries to perform their duties properly, they needed an immobile society where they could set up their *conventos*, build Churches, and administer the sacraments.[75] Archaeologists can also demonstrate the way Christian burial practices became more and more common in native society. Researchers have found native burials both pre- and post-Christianity and comparison of the two can yield answers to how the natives responded to Christianity. As in the *Confesionario*, excavations of burials uncovered on church sites revealed a hierarchy among the natives, with those higher up in native society found interned closer to the altar than the others.[76]

But perhaps the most telling testament to the effectiveness of Friar Pareja and his

[74] Ibid., 39. The lack of comparable data that the authors cite as a reason why the *Confesionario* is so vital ignores some rather important mission documents, such as Friar Juan de Paiva's "ball game" manuscript, which will be discussed in more detail later.
[75] Bushnell, Thomas, ed., "The Sacramental Imperative: Catholic Ritual Sedentism in the Provinces of Florida," *Columbian Consequences, Volume 2: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands East* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), 475-487.
[76] While written about a village of the Apalachee, it should be noted that the Franciscans, as much as possible, tried to impose a uniformity of worship on the native peoples of Florida. For more information on burial customs both before and after the introduction of Christianity into Florida, see Rochelle A. Merrinan, McEwan, ed., "Archaeological Investigations at Mission Patale, 1984-1992," *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*, 244-286.

Franciscans in the battle for native souls came 150 years after the 1613 publication of the *Confesionario*. When Spain handed Florida over to the British as a result of the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years' War, all those that remained of the native population under the Spanish mission system, including the Timucua, left for Cuba.[77] Of course, with each succeeding year, the work of the Franciscans in the mission system became easier and easier. Diseases introduced by the Europeans, rebellions, changes in life ways, and cultural interaction served to make native distinctiveness more and more a memory. When Friar Pareja wrote his *Confesionario*, the mission system had just begun to take root throughout the northern part of Florida. The missionaries needed texts in order to make sense of these bizarre cultures that confronted them. However, with each passing generation, native society resembled more a Christian one than anything else. Such is the lasting testimony of the *Confesionario*, for the process of integration and aculturation that it helped inaugurate in Florida.

[77] For a discussion of the end of the mission system, the loss of Florida to the British, and the depopulation of the natives under Spanish colonial rule, see Charles W. Arnade, Gannon, ed., "Raids, Sieges, and International Wars," *The New History of Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), pp. 100-115.

Chapter Three:

Friar Pareja and Spanish Florida

The study of documents like the *Confesionario* and other evidence of the Spanish mission system in Florida helps illuminate the story of Spanish Florida. What they do not offer is what it all meant for the individual Franciscan Friar to work as a missionary. How did these men organize and administrate the mission system? What spiritual province did Florida belong to? By asking questions such as these, the role of the Franciscan order in Florida becomes clearer. These topics also dovetail with documents such as those of Friar Francisco Pareja. Of course, other scholars have addressed these issues, but they have normally approached the Florida missions from different perspectives. Whether talking about Spanish colonial might or the oppression of native peoples, missions studies have tended to look at missions for what they say about the indigenous population, and not for what they say about the work of the Order of Friars Minor. The Friars did not always side with the Spanish government on matters of colonial policy, nor did they always defend the natives whom they oversaw in the missions. The tenets of the Franciscans hold clues as to why the Franciscans behaved as they did, and why they realized success in Florida.

The Spanish expeditions there helped introduce Franciscan missionaries because of Spain's role as defenders of Catholicism.[78] While the conquistador fought the native

[78] In 1508 Pope Julius II issued the *Universalis ecclesiae* which empowered the Spanish king the exclusive right to build churches and promulgate Christianity in the Americas. This worked to the advantage of places like Peru and Mexico because the riches plundered from these places poured much of the gold into the royal coffers. However, for Florida where no such wealth was derived, this institution known as the *Patronato Real de Indias* made it possible for Christianity to come to Florida. In fact Franciscan historian Maynard J. Geiger, O. F. M. posits that without the *Patronato Real*, there would have been no Christianity in Florida. See Maynard J. Geiger, O. F. M., "Background and Terminology in *The Franciscan Conquest*

with weapons, the missionary fought the native with religion. The weapons, however, complicated the situation for the missionary because the Spanish used them in order to intimidate native populations. Franciscans had a different method of conversion through the more subtle medium of religion. This entailed the Friars traveling out to native villages deep in the interior of Florida. Occasionally Spanish soldiers accompanied them, but more often they traveled alone. One they arrived amongst the native people, the Franciscans set about preaching the Gospel and building the structures necessary for the spiritual guidance of their converts. And because of the solitary Friars' simple purpose and dedication, they affectively began the process of cultural change there.[79]

The fact that Florida received spiritual direction in the New World from Cuba and Spain further complicated the situation. The Roman Catholic Church divided the world — and still does today — into spiritual provinces or dioceses. Each diocese had a Bishop who acted as arbiter of spiritual matters for every clergy member working in his province. Though Cuba lies only 90 miles off the coast of Florida, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at least, Florida's Bishops rarely ventured to the backwater colony. On the few occasions that he did make it to Florida, he came to catch up on confirmations which required his blessing in order to make them official. However, the Franciscans themselves also had a spiritual leader in Florida, someone who did not quite have the power of a Bishop but could nonetheless provide guidance for the mission system. Inevitably, although, power struggles took place as to who had the final say for religious matters in the colony: the missionaries or the lay clergy. Often this boiled down

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of Florida, 1573-1618," David Hurst Thomas, ed. *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebook, Volume 23: The Missions of Spanish Florida* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991), 237-238.

[79] Gannon. *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*, 39-40.

to a competition for resources, and in who took precedence in the eyes of the Church: the natives on the missions or the Spanish colonists.[80]

The task of directing the human resources allotted to the missions fell to the commissary general of the Franciscan Order. In sorting out the entangled web of political and spiritual politicking that took place between the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church, Friar Maynard Geiger wrote, ". . . during the colonial period when the great work of Christianizing the Indies [including Florida] went on, an amazing amount of business went on between the royal palace and the *Gran Convento* [italics mine] de San Francisco de Madrid, where the offices of the commissary general of the [Franciscan] Order were located." Many of the decisions of the commissary general depended greatly on the decrees of the king. The Franciscans in Florida and the New World also relied on Spain for the supply of materials necessary for the spiritual guidance of the natives. And because Florida never gained the importance of other Spanish colonies, as time went on, this back and forth exchange between the Royal Court and the Franciscan Administration increasingly influenced the specific Friars that got sent to Florida.[81]

One of the first things needed in discussing those Friars is an understanding of terms. It is not enough to simply call those who worked on the missions missionaries. A term like "Franciscan" begins to get more specific, but tends to stagnate mission studies by using a blanket term for all the clergy in Florida. Yes, the order had certain ideals by which they lived, but some followed them better than others. Fortunately for the Spanish, some excellent examples of Franciscans graced the missions of Florida, Friar Pareja

[80] Kapitzke, *Religion, Power, and Politics in Colonial St. Augustine*), 124-146.
[81] Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba*, 12-13.

among them. In contrast, some have suggested that over time, the quality of the people sent by the Catholic Church to Florida diminished severely over the years. Also, the Friars in Florida did not all belong to the same branch of Franciscans. In the city of St. Augustine, the Third Order Franciscan, a lay branch which ministered to the Spanish residents in the city parish, resided at the *convento* of San Francisco in the capital of the colony. This sect of the Order served more like modern-day Priests in a well defined parish, that of the town of St. Augustine.[82]

The missionaries elsewhere needed some kind of organization in order to get the Friars where the Spanish government thought necessary, a process separate from the needs of St. Augustine. This need for direction became more and more apparent as the mission system spread from the peoples immediately surrounding St. Augustine to those to the north and west. Friar Pareja participated in this early growth and helped to direct the Franciscans in Florida. When he arrived in 1595, he ranked no different from any of the other Friars that traveled with him. However, due to his work at San Juan del Puerto near present-day Jacksonville and his knowledge of Timucuan, he earned the appointment of Provincial for the Order of Friars Minor in Florida. In this position, Pareja carried out the directives of the commissary general back in Europe, as well as reporting on the activities taking place in the missions. Based on this information, the commissary general made the decision on what types of Friars he sent to Florida and in what quantity. The Provincial did not, however, have any authority over the lay clergy in

[82] Robert L. Kapitzke, *Religion, Power, and Politics in Colonial St. Augustine* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 124-146. More information on the *convento* of San Francisco can be found in Edward R. Joyce, *St. Francis Barracks: A Contradiction of Terms* (St. Augustine: St. Augustine Historical Society, 1989). What was once a center of religious life in colonial St. Augustine, became quarters for British, Spanish, and American soldiers. Today it is headquarters to the Florida National Guard.

St. Augustine, despite the relationship between the two branches of the Franciscan Order.[83]

Several other distinctions existed among the Franciscans who operated in Florida. Perhaps second in importance to the position of Provincial which Friar Pareja held came the *Pro-ministro*. This particular official represented the voting interests of the Florida Provincial, and thus the mission system, in Order elections for positions such as the commissary general. On the missions themselves, the *Doctrinero*, a Friar in charge of a particular mission, reported to the Provincial. He directed the actual application of Christian doctrine on the missions. Friar Pareja also held this post at San Juan del Puerto. Missions also included two kinds of lay ministers, or non-ordained clergy. The first of these, known as *Donados* or one who actually donated himself to God, wore the habit of the Franciscan, assisted them in their duties, but could leave at any time. Often Spanish men did this for a time as an act of penance. Another similar group of people, the *Criados*, more literally acted as servants for the Franciscans on the missions. When a member of the colony became a Criado, he did so in order to serve God but without the strictures of becoming an actual member of the clergy. These brothers also wore the habit of a Friar but likewise did not take vows.[84]

In the mission system of Florida, this myriad of regular clergy and lay-brothers operated two types of missions. The *Doctrinero* resided in the *doctrina*, the main site for a mission. These could typically be found in major native villages and they often adopted the name of the native group associated with the particular location. Friar Pareja's *doctrina* did not follow this pattern of native village name distinction, for San Juan del

[83] Ibid., 15-16, 85.
[84] Ibid., 15-17.

Puerto referred more to its strategic location at the mouth of the St. John's river than to the Timucuans living near there. However, the names of other *doctrinas* give clues as to which native peoples had significance in the eyes of the Spanish because of the location of a *doctrina* among them: Santa Cruz de Cachipile, San Ildefonso de Chamini, and San Pedro y San Pablo de Potuhiriba. This blend of Catholic saint names and native tribal names repeated itself throughout the whole mission experience in Florida. The other term used for the missions, *visita*, referred to the places that the *Doctrineros* visited only occasionally. Because of the scattered nature of native settlements in Florida, some places could only receive Friars periodically. When the missionary did make the trek to a *visita*, he did so in order to perform baptisms, hear confessions, and celebrate mass on a certain Saint's feast day.[85]

The entire mission system in Florida, with its *doctrinas* and *visitas*, also had a name: *repartimiento*. This system worked for the spiritual benefit of the natives, but also for the economic and agricultural good of the Spanish colony. The *repartimiento* remained unique throughout Spain's New World Empire. Most other mission provinces in the Americas utilized the *encomienda* system. In the *encomienda* the missionaries and the Spanish forced entire native populations to relocate to a place where they felt it more beneficial for agricultural purposes. Under *repartimiento*, the Franciscans traveled to wherever the natives had villages located. Though this may seem less intrusive, it does not mean that the system in Florida imposed no changes on the native's lifestyle. Like other indigenous peoples in the Spanish Empire, those in Florida previously led a

[85] For information on the names of *doctrinas* and where they were located with respect to St. Augustine, see Ibid., 125-126. For a discussion on the differences between *doctrinas* and *visitas* see Gannon, *The Cross in the Sans: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*, 49-67.

nomadic existence. The villages that they established had seasonal uses and they occupied them accordingly. When the Spanish and the Franciscans arrived, the Europeans forced the natives to remain in one location in order to keep better track of the multitude of differing peoples. This more sedentary way of living also affected the food ways of the natives in the types of game they consumed and the crops they raised. They also had to share the bulk of their products with the Friars in their missions and the colony as a whole.[86]

The material that went into the day to day running of the missions made up another aspect of the Franciscan system in Florida. As mentioned previously, the Spanish as well as the Catholic Church kept meticulous records of their activities in the New World. Because of this dedication to keeping track of the work and items in the missions, we have lists of what the missionaries used in the *doctrinas*. One of the more important items on these lists include bells. In 1681, the Franciscans listed ninety-two bells for calling the faithful to mass. Not only did they use bells for this purpose, but also to keep time. Life in both Spanish colonial towns and on the missions followed the sound of the bell, with a toll for every hour of the day. Another significant portion of the 1681 list comprised vestments and sacramental vessels. While the normal garb for the Friars consisted of a black tunic, tied with a rope, and perhaps a hat for adornment, they wore different, more festive garments for the celebration of mass. As for sacramental vessels, the Franciscans inventoried some forty-seven silver chalices for the blood, and twenty-seven cloths (*panos*). The list goes on to include several silver, gold, or jewel-encrusted articles, remarkable possessions for a backwater mission province like

[86] Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 58-60.

Florida.[87]

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As discussed, the missionaries and the Spanish colonial government worked together to exploit the natives of Florida through the mission system. The Franciscans and the colonial governors collaborated in the use of native labor that rarely contributed to the material benefit of the natives who actually did the work. Historian David J. Weber described the *repartimiento* as, ". . . a time-honored institution by which Spanish officials distributed native men to work on a rotating basis at tasks deemed to be for the public good." The "public" in this case meant the good of the Spanish colonists, and the missionaries helped to "distribute" the native labor like a commodity. In fact, the Castillo de San Marcos, one of the last remaining symbols of Spain's colony in Florida at St. Augustine, completed construction through this system. This partnership worked well as long as the natives bowed down to Spanish and Franciscan authority, or the missionaries felt that the work did not impede Christianization. But occasionally disagreements occurred when the Franciscans felt that the Spanish misused the *repartimiento*.[88]

One of the main causes of entanglements between Franciscan and the Spanish authorities happened because of the spotty leadership of the colony. Throughout the New World, the King of Spain generally appointed the governors of each individual territory.

[87] Hann, "Church Furnishings, Sacred Vessels, and Vestments Held by the Missions of Florida: Translation of Two Inventories," *Florida Archaeology*, Number 2, 1986, 148-150.
[88] Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 126. Information on how the Spanish used the *repartimiento* in order to build the Castillo de San Marcos, see Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, 3.

Some had more power than others, such as the Viceroys of Mexico and Peru who ruled their lands like monarchs. Florida had two contradictory positions in the eyes of the Spanish Crown. On the one hand, because of its status as a royal colony, it had closer ties to the King than most other colonies. On the other hand, Florida never contributed gold and silver to the royal coffers and thus rarely received talented administrators. Certainly, the very first governor, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, had the experience necessary to lead his fledgling colony. However, Menéndez spent much of his time away from Florida after he founded his colony, staying on only long enough to defeat the French and explore the shore line. During Friar Pareja's twenty years in Florida, the colony had no less than thirteen governors of varying capabilities.[89]

The list of governors detailed by Amy Turner Bushnell demonstrated the tenuous nature of colonial leadership. Some of the names and how they left office tell the tale: Pedro Menéndez de Avilés II (1570-1571, killed), Hernando de Miranda (1576, deserted), Pedro Menéndez Marquez (1577-1578, resigned), Gutierre de Miranda (1589-1593, deposed by mutiny), Rodrigo de Junco (1592, drowned), Francisco de Salazar (1593-1594, arrested), Benito Ruiz de Salazar Vallecilla (1645-1646, suspended), Diego de Rebolledo (1654-1658, arrested), Juan Marquez de Cabrera (1680-1687, deserted), and Francisco del Moral Sánchez (1734-1737, arrested).

Most of these governors served as the result of royal appointment, and they acted with the official sanction of the Spanish monarchy. Others served on an interim basis or

[89] A lengthy discussion of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the founding of the Florida colony can be found in Eugene Lyon, *The Enterprise of Florida: Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the Spanish Conquest of 1565-1568* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1976). For more on the differences between the viceroys and other Spanish colonial governors, see Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez *Latinoamérica: su civilazación y su cultura* (Boston: Thomson Heinle, 2000), 69-70. For a complete list of the governors of Florida during the Spanish period, see Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 212-213.

gained the post as a result of election by the proprietors of the colony. Of course, this is not to say that all of these governors failed; some executed their duties with success.[90] However, enough problems existed with the kinds of men sent by Spain to govern Florida to suggest the existence of rivalries for power between the missionaries and the colonial government.

The Franciscans felt strong in their charge from God and the Church that it enabled and emboldened them to question the authority of the royal appointees. The strength of the language they used in their complaints showed vehement righteousness when they thought government decisions impeded their progress. Thus, when the Franciscans on the missions wrote letters to the monarch, it caused hostility between themselves and the governors. By going over the heads of the government in St. Augustine, the Franciscans often alienated the governors. This is something Friar Pareja did himself in some instances when he thought the policies of Governor Ybarra unjust.[91] Though the Spanish Crown had the ultimate authority of the Catholic Church in Christian matters in the New World because of the *Patronato Real de Indias*, the clergy jealously guarded the power they wielded in the lives of the natives. Often the Franciscans cited spiritual and scriptural reasons for why they disagreed with the actions of the colonial government. When this happened, the governors countered by calling for a visit from the Bishop of Santa Elena in Cuba. A visit by Bishop Altamirano to Florida in 1609, prompted his notary to write the following to the King: "And that in addition to being, as it is, a great service to God, it would be a service to His Majesty, and to the good of the

[90] Ibid.
[91] Francisco Pareja, O. F. M., "Carta de Fr. Francisco Pareja," Box 2, Folder 11, St. Augustine Historical Society.

souls who thus would receive the Sacrament of Confirmation." Such words reflect not only the spiritual benefit received by all parties involved in the conversion of the natives, but also the unwillingness of the Bishop to come down on either side of the frequent conflicts between the governors and the missionaries.[92]

The letters of the Friars to the King of Spain left out little of how they felt towards the governors of Florida. Take, for instance, a letter by the Franciscan Provincial and his fellow Franciscans from 1657 to King Phillip IV about Governor Diego de Rebolledo:

> We, the provincial minister and definitors of this province of your majesty, Santa Elena of Florida, state that the father provincial, on considering the wretched state in which these provinces find themselves today and on seeing that they are headed toward extinction at full tilt (and even though the damage goes back many years, originating from the misgovernment by some of those who have been in charge, for the last three years that don Diego de Rebolledo has governed them by decree of your majesty [the problem] grows greater every day because of his misgovernment, lack of experience, and rejection of advice), found ourselves obliged to give a report to your majesty. . . .

The mission system in Florida did not become "extinct" for another fifty years, but any threat to the Franciscans' work provoked paranoia on their part. One possible motivation for this attitude towards seeming imminent doom might have come from fear of English aggression. The Spanish knew of Cromwellian England's invasion of Cuba and some feared that Florida would come next.[93]

In response to the charges of the Friars, fear of impending doom, and their suspicions of native rebellion because of the actions of the government, Governor

[92] Diego Davila, "Relation presented to His Majesty in his Council of the Indies, of the Pastoral visit that the Bishop Altamirano made to the Provinces of Florida," Box 2, Folder 20, St. Augustine Historical Society.
[93] Hann, trans., Francisco de San Antonio, O. F. M., "Visitations and Revolts in Florida, 1656-1695," *Florida Archaeology*, Number 7, 1993, 7.

Rebolledo wrote:

> My Reverend fathers . . . I received a letter from your paternities . . . in which you give an account of the fears that you have that the natives . . . are resolved to or are going to revolt for the causes and the reasons that you specify. And in responding to your paternities what may be necessary, I make known to you that the principal motive by which all my actions are guided all the time that I have been in this government has been looking toward the services of both majesties and the peace and tranquility of the natives, having given a demonstration of it in the punishment of those who have attempted to practice the opposite, seeing to it that they are well treated, recompensed, and paid for their work, as they always have been in this presidio or since I have been in charge of it, because I am very zealous for the obligations of my office, and this being so, I would be very much pained that they should receive any offenses from the soldiers who live in the province, because this would be contrary to my will and orders that I have given for their good treatment and for the administration of royal justice, which is evident from the regulations that I left posted in each council house.

Governor Rebolledo's lengthy response continues on to detail how he has treated the native population well, and how his increase of soldiers in certain areas would not affect the work of the Franciscans. He also invoked his authority, citing the "two majesties," God and the King in that order. Whether what Rebolledo had to say had any truth to it — which is doubtful — is evidenced by the fact that the King ordered his arrest the next year in 1658.[94]

Whenever the Bishop of Santa Elena decided to visit, a flurry of letters went back and forth between officials of the Franciscans on the missions, the government of St. Augustine, and the royal court in Madrid. For a small and insignificant colony like

[94] Ibid., 19.

Florida, the visit of a Bishop had the weight of a head of state. And because of the close ties of Church and state within Spanish society in general, all manner of grievances between all three parts of Church, colony, and the Crown took these occasions to list the problems they had with one another. Such bickering sometimes made it difficult for the Bishop to perform the actual duty-bound functions that he came to Florida to do: give baptisms, confirmations, and to marry people. Other visits to the missions conducted by other officials, such as that of Antonio de Argüelles in 1677-1678 and Joaquín de Florencia in 1694-1695, came about in order to investigate the divisions between the government and the Franciscans.[95] However, disputes over power and jurisdiction over the natives did not comprise the only source of contention between the missionaries and the colonial government. Mixed into such disputes over power came differences of opinion as to the sides taken when the natives decided to revolt. As we shall see, the partnership between the missions and St. Augustine split when the Franciscans sided with the natives in rebellion.

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At one time or another during their interaction with the Spanish colonists, every native Florida people rebelled against European rule. Some resisted right from their initial contact with the Spanish. Hostile reception on the part of some native peoples in Florida, whether to Spanish explorers, colonizers, or missionaries, influenced where the Franciscans later established missions. For this reason, all missions attempted among the

[95] Ibid., 5-6, 147-150.

Calusa in the southern portion of the peninsula by the Jesuits, and those with the Tocobaga in the Tampa Bay area by the Dominicans, failed.[96] Therefore, the missionaries concentrated on the more receptive peoples located across the broad northern part of Florida: the Timucua, the Guale, and the Apalachee. The early stages of interaction — before the coming of the Friars — called *rescate*, involved mutual trading between the natives and the Spanish. Once this economic relationship became firmly established, then the Spanish sent missionaries in order to begin the process of conversion. However, as mentioned previously, the onset of the mission system often forced major cultural sacrifices on the natives. When this became too great for them to bear, the natives rightly rebelled.[97]

In order to trace the reasons for rebellion, a look at each of the three main peoples that lived in the mission system is helpful. For the Timcuans, like other native groups, the history of their interactions with the Spanish see-sawed between times of peace and unrest over the course of 200 years. The Timucua lived near St. Augustine and thus, because of their proximity, the missionaries had easy access to them. Though the Timucua initially resisted missionization by the Jesuits, the Franciscans gradually became part of Timucuan life and culture. As the archaeologist John H. Hann noted, two of the first leaders to convert to Christianity did so because their villages were close to St. Augustine and thus in close proximity to a potential ally. The missionaries also had the

[96] A history of the attempts to convert the Calusa to Christianity cand be found in the translations of early documents done by Hann, ed. & trans., *Missions to the Calusa* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 230-320. Despite the hostility shown to the expeditions of Perdo Menéndez de Avilés and the Jesuits, later in the 1700s, the Bishop of Cuba revisited the idea of evangelizing the recalcitrant Calusa. For a complete story of the Dominican Order in Florida, see O'Daniel, O. P., S. T. M., Litt. D., *Dominicans in Early Florida*.

[97] For more on the process of *rescate* moving into missions and *repartimiento*, see Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 127-128.

reassurance of Spanish military assistance in the event of resistance, something the Timucuans acknowledged. From missions like Nombre de Dios, Santa Maria de la Sena, and San Antonio, the Friars persisted in their preaching and the pacification of any part of Timucuan society they thought heretical.[98]

Typically, when the Timucuans and others rebelled against the Spanish/mission-induced collapse of their society, the Franciscans often blamed the colonial government. Though the Timucuans lived nearest the colonial center of power and military, the Friars often comprised the sole European population among the natives. Thus, when the people the missionaries administered to took up arms against the military, the Friars sided with the natives in order to save their own necks. The choices for many of the Friars became limited in times of unrest: join with the natives in their discontent or die. And because of their lone missions among the peoples of Florida, the fact that the Franciscans rarely had to face such a decision stands as a testament to their work, however bad things sometimes became. Friar Pareja himself witnessed a revolt and wrote disparagingly of the colonial government's role in provoking the backlash among the natives. All together, the records speak of only one major incident with the Timucua which occurred in 1656, but a fear of an outbreak of violence continued in the minds of the Spanish based on other earlier demonstrations of native unrest.[99]

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[98] By heretical it is meant anything they felt went against the teachings of the Bible, but it was a wide ranging rubric under which much of native culture was deemed "heretical." Also, as with other cultures that underwent missionization, once the Friars obtained the fealty of a *cacique*, they thought the rest of those under his rule would fall into line. For more see Hann. *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions*, 137-173.

[99] Friar Pareja detailed the incidents surrounding a revolt among the Guale. The missionaries and the Spanish feared that the Guale revolt of 1597 would spread to the Timucua since the Guale had attacked some of the missions among the Timucua. Instead, the opposite occurred, with the Timucua cementing their allegiance with the Spanish and the missionaries to a greater degree. For a history of the Timucua's reaction to the Guale rebellion, and the Timucuan's own rebellion, see Ibid., 147-151, 200-205. For Friar

Though called a "revolt," the incident that occurred among the Timucua in 1656 really had more posturing to it than actual fighting. The Friars among the Timucua feared that the policies of Governor Rebolledo had provoked the natives. Also, the Franciscans felt that they too had received mistreatment from the governor's mismanagement of the colony. In their letter to the King of Spain, the Friars lumped themselves together with the natives in their struggles in the missions. As their letter showed:

> We cannot omit making it known also to your majesty the feeling that all this province has about the said governor don Diego de Rebolledo because of the abusive way for more than two years he has treated all of the religious sons of St. Francis [the Franciscans], ministers of God, and chaplains of your majesty, to whom, because of serving him and so that he may achieve the goal of his very holy and Catholic zeal that your majesty has for the welfare of the souls of these natives, they have left their parents, their fatherlands, and the correspondence of their peoples, subjecting themselves to the miseries and toils that they endure and are well known throughout their conversion.

However hard Governor Rebolledo worked "in opposition to what God commands," the Timucua revolt ended relatively peacefully and the missions continued.[100]

One of the bloodier incidents for both the Franciscans and the natives took place among the Guale in 1597. Along with the Timucua, the Guale received the first Franciscan missionaries in 1573. The Guale challenged Spain's ability to exert dominance through the mission system. They also had close ties to other bellicose people near them, namely the Yamassee and the Mocama. Though the Guale located their

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Pareja's words regarding the Guale and the Timucua during the 1597 revolt, see Pareja, O. F. M., "Carta de Fr. Francisco Pareja," Box 2, Folder 11, St. Augustine Historical Society.

[100] Hann, Francisco de San Antonio, O. F. M., "Visitations and Revolts," 25-27.

settlements along the Atlantic coast and thus within reach of St. Augustine by boat, the fierce character of the people made them difficult to control, much less evangelize. Several rebellions took place amongst the Guale people throughout the late 1500s and early 1600s, the more spectacular of which occurred, as mentioned, in 1597 and forced the Franciscans out of their territory for some time. So quarrelsome, in fact, did the Guale behave that after their rebellion, wrote anthropologist John E. Worth, the Spanish forced the Guale to shift the center of their political power farther south and thus more within the realm of Spanish influence. So that by the mid-sixteenth century, Spain managed to reestablish hegemony over the Guale and their missions which later served as a buffer against Spain's British enemies to the north.[101]

Although Friar Pareja blamed Spanish mismanagement in an attempt to regain control as the main cause of the outbreak of hostilities with the Guale, others did not have such a charitable view towards the actions of the natives. Friar Luís Gerónimo de Oré acknowledged that the new governor, Gonzalo Méndez de Canzo, contributed negatively to the situation, using this as a possible explanation for why the Guale ultimately acted "barbarically." Friar Oré detailed the onset of the rebellion as such:

> Gonzalo Méndez de Canzo succeeded him [Domingo de Avedaño, the previous governor, according to Oré] in the government, by a royal *cédula* [order] and it was he who governed the presidio when the Indians of Guale killed the religious. As soon as he learned of it he tried to inflict a general reprisal on the province of Guale. One hundred Spanish soldiers and two hundred friendly Indians went out [for this purpose]. And when they entered towns, they found the houses of the fathers burned, and many others destroyed and tenantless. Nor were there any Indians present who might impede their progress. They overran

[101] John E. Worth. *The Struggle for the Georgia Coast: An 18th Century Spanish Retrospective on Guale and Mocama* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 9-25

> these towns. From an Indian whom they apprehended they learned that the whole population was where Father Avila "the resurrected one" as the Indians called him, was in captivity. Through his good efforts, the governor rescued him and freed him from that miserable slavery in which the barbarous Indians held him.

Because of the scope of the Guale revolt of 1597, the Spanish and the missionaires dealt with that particular native group more harshly than others. But, despite further problems, the Guale remained part of the mission system for its duration.[102]

The Apalachee made up the last of the native peoples of Florida to receive Franciscan missionaries. The Spanish had encountered the Apalachee during earlier expeditions to Florida. These previous meetings made the Apalachee suspect that the Spanish brought nothing but death and destruction to their land. Scholars John H. Hann and Bonnie G. McEwan related that, "The Apalachee had given a most hostile reception to the two Spanish expeditions that invaded their territory in 1528 and 1539." However, in 1597 despite the unrest going on among the Guale, relations between the Spanish and the Apalachee improved when Governor Gonzalo Méndez de Canzo sought to make amends for past abuses. One method don Méndez de Canzo employed for this purpose included the establishment of missions as a way to open up economic relations. The Franciscan missionaries soon followed and built missions which they named San Damian, San Martín, and San Francisco. The Friars located their chief mission among the Apalachee at San Luis, near present-day Tallahassee. San Luís also functioned as a second capital for the Florida colony, main mission among the natives there, and as the

[102] Ibid. For a relation of the Guale revolt of 1597 through the eyes of the Franciscans, particularly Friar Luís Gerónimo de Oré, see Oré, O. F. M., Geiger, O. F. M. trans., *The Martyrs of Florida (1513-1616)*, 95.

base of Spanish power in the panhandle.[103]

The Apalachee revolt of 1647, perhaps the most violent of all the revolts of the native peoples, also began in the gravest of manners. Because of the fact that the Apalachee actually invited the Franciscans into their territory, the Friars on the missions there sometimes took a harder stance in converting the natives, rather than the gradual approach taken amongst the Timucua for instance. Because of this, the leaders of the Apalachee rebellion planned a daring strike against the Spanish. They lured deputy-governor don Claudio Luís de Florencia along with some of his family south to mission San Antonio de Bacuqua and away from San Luís, and there the Apalachee murdered the entire party. Violence in the territory of the Apalachee erupted against both the missions and the Spanish settlements. Of the eight existing missions that existed at the time of the rebellion, seven fell to the destruction of the rebels. However, the surviving Friars received aid from loyal Christian Apalachees and returned to rebuild the same missions, often with the help of the very natives who burned them down to begin with. Also, the Timucua assisted in the pacification of the Apalachee rebellion. Within a matter of months, the violence ended and the missionaries returned.[104]

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The Franciscans on the missions of Spanish Florida differed greatly from their roots in central Italy. By the time they arrived in Florida, they had gone from the band of wandering preachers that surrounded St. Francis of Assisi, to an organized body with

[103] Hann and McEwan. *The Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis*, 11-51.
[104] Ibid., 35-39.

provincials and directors — a bureaucracy, in other words, capable of handling the task of converting entire native populations to Christianity. The Franciscans had a simplicity about them that worked as a balance to the myriad of cultures that comprised the native peoples of Florida. As Friars, they took vows of poverty and thus they took a different attitude towards ownership than did their Spanish colonial counterparts. For instance, after the Apalachee Rebellion of 1647, the Friars persuaded the governor to dismantle the hacienda once owned by the deceased deputy-governor don Claudio Luís de Florencia and to return the land to the Apalachee. They also convinced the government to remove all soldiers from the Apalachee land, leaving the Friars as the only Spaniards — other than the settlers at San Luís — among that particular native people. And while not all Franciscans performed such acts of charity during their work as missionaries, they certainly did enough things right for the natives to allow them to stay on for as long as they did, even though they still played a major part in the process of exploitation and control.[105]

Problems with the natives made the Franciscan mission effort as much of a battle as the conquest of Florida. The Franciscan missionaries and the Spanish colonial government worked better together than other religious groups[106] that journeyed to Florida to develop a mutual system for exploitation of converted Christians. Missionaries desired to save the natives' souls, but the mission system became as much of an economic endeavor as evangelical. As archaeologist Jerald T. Milanich put it, "Missions

[105] Hann, "Visitations and Revolts," 5-6.
[106] Again, these were the Dominicans who traveled with a few of the explorers to Florida and the Jesuits whose period of missionization lasted from 1565-1574. The Franciscans inherited the mission system in Florida which they maintained successfully for the next 130 years. See Gannon. *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870*, 20-76.

were colonialism." The Spanish needed missionaries in order to fulfill their goals of colonialism: profits, however paltry at times.[107] The Franciscan mission system maintained control over the natives while helping to support another level of control: the Spanish colonial military. Through this layered system of control, the Friars converted many natives to Christianity and brought about the destruction of native culture in the process. As Friar Maynard Geiger put it, the missionary ". . . would effect a spiritual and peaceful conquest." It is difficult to picture St. Francis wanting his order to participate in a conquest of any kind, but that is just what the Franciscans became involved with in Florida.[108]

[107] Milanich. *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*, xiii.
[108] Oré, Geiger, O. F. M., trans. *The Martyrs of Florida, 1513-1616*, xv.

Chapter Four:

Friar Pareja's Writing Versus Other Mission Documents

The repository for all of the Spanish records during the colonial period in Florida, including many of those regarding the Franciscan mission system, are housed in the *Archivo General de los Indias* in Seville. The documents contained there are, naturally, in Spanish. However, translations exist for many of those that pertain to Spain's Florida colony. The task of translating these documents required special knowledge on the part of the various researchers like John Hann who attempted such an endeavor. The language of these documents differs from modern Spanish spoken throughout the world. As with English, certain phrases and words fell out of use in Spanish, or came to mean different things over the passing centuries. Thus the existence of a number of these surviving letters and accounts translated into modern English remains a great source for historians of Florida, and worth elucidating. The translations of many of these documents are archived in a number of sites around Florida. Two of the best places for these are the St. Augustine Historical Society and the University of Florida's P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History.

Also these documents list most everything that came and left the territory, and much of the activity that took place, in effect record of both the colonial and missionary aspects of Spain's Florida settlement. Of course, not everything survived the centuries, but enough did to give scholars a picture of the entire history of Spanish Florida. The dual administration of the government's bureaucracy and the Catholic Church laid the groundwork for future scholarly study. Because Florida had such close ties to the King

back in Europe, that lack of autonomy meant that Florida, in some ways, received micromanagement from its government. Certainly, the minutiae of the every-day stuff documented in the records in the *Archivo General de los Indias* testifies to the importance Spain placed on keeping accurate records of their colonial enterprise. The same proved true for the Franciscans in Florida. Every evangelized native under the mission system received a Christian name and a place in the parish books. In addition, the Franciscans kept lists of the materials they had on hand for the purposes of converting the natives, in all their missions.

A review of these documents reveals another layer of colonial control in Florida. When searching for documents among the bundles (called *legajos* in Spanish), many of them fall under the heading *Santo Domingo*, colonial capital of the island of Hispañola (modern-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Santo Domingo contained the *audencia*, a governing body that decided certain colonial policies for the island colonies and Florida. For instance, the *audencia* determined the trade rates for different commodities, as well as setting prices for religious services for the Franciscans on the missions. This further demonstrates the deep relationship that the colonial government and the Friars had in regard to running Florida. Even more divisions among these documents exist which include the *Contaduría*, containing inventories of equipment and ship cargoes, the *Escribanía de Cámara*, recording the governors of Florida and the terms they served, and the *Patronato*, relating documents regarding the explorations of Florida. From such sources as these, scholars have painted a varied picture of Spain's first permanent colony in the United States.[109]

[109] A discussion of the *Archivo General de los Indios*, what it contains and how it can be accessed, as well

The picture presented in the *Archivo General de los Indias* of that first permanent European colony is not always a unified one. As mentioned, a large portion of the literature produced by the Spanish during their occupation of Florida dealt with religious matters. Specifically, the Franciscan missionaries concerned themselves with the souls and the treatment of the natives of Florida. Their concerns, and those of the colony's officials in regard to the activities of the missionaries, survive mainly in the form of letters, which flowed back and forth between missionaries, and also between the missionaries and the colonial officials, with the intent of managing as best they could the daily lives of the native peoples. The Franciscans also recorded accounts of their personal experiences on the missions and their contact with the various indigenous groups of Florida, and their attempts to instill Christian culture on the native population. Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* and Friar Paiva's description of the Apalachee ball game comprise two notable examples of this.

These letters, accounts, and documents contain much conflict and confusion. Often the goals of the Spanish colonial government at St. Augustine did not coincide with those of the missionaries. Confusion reigned as to who produced what and for whom, and also in regards to the actions taken by both parties. Being a Crown Colony, Florida did receive governors and fell more under the control of the King of Spain than did other Spanish colonies. The missionaries knew this, and when the colonial government carried

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as where translations of its documents are stored can be found at Worth, http://www.lostworlds.org/gbo_spanish_archival.html, 2006. More information on the *audencia*, as well as another form of colonial control for Florida in the form of the fact that Florida fell under the territory of the Viceroy of Peru, see Chang-Rodríguez, *Latinoamérica: su civilazación y su cultura*, 70-71. Interestingly enough, the fact that Florida had this relationship to colonial Peru has not received much attention in scholarly works of the Spanish period. Also, evidence of the application of the policies of the *audencia* is found in Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 87.

out acts that the missionaries thought detrimental to the natives, they often complained directly to the king. Though colonial political power came from the same source for both spiritual and temporal officials, the Franciscans also took orders from their Church Superiors back in Europe, adding still more confusion.[110] Yet taken together, these documents offer a unique picture into the life of the Florida colony which in many ways revolved around religion. They also helped the Franciscans to replace the native culture with a Christians one.

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Over the years after Friar Pareja left Florida in 1628 until the collapse of the mission system in 1704, other Franciscans produced works that attest both to their work as missionaries and to the lives of the natives. Letter writing aside, the Friars scribed treatises like the *Confesionario* which detailed ways to evangelize the indigenous population by examining their varied culture. Two men stand out in the whole of the Spanish colonial experience in Florida: Friar Pareja and Friar Juan de Paiva. Though belonging to the same order and having the same goals of ministry to the natives, the two clergymen lived at very different times, places in the colony, and held different positions. The accomplishments of Pareja need no review here, but those of Paiva, because they do not equal those of Pareja, need illumination in order to present comparisons. Friar Paiva, if the opening of his treatise on the Apalachee "Ball Game" is true, served as pastor of the San Luis de Talimali mission, the chief Spanish settlement outside of St. Augustine.

[110] Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, 16-18.

Though Friar Paiva never rose above this rank, the San Luis mission and his "Ball Game" manuscript had great importance both then and now.[111]

Not much is known of Friar Paiva. Scholars have said little about him outside of the fact that he served as pastor of the mission San Luis de Talimali. Friar Geiger's extensive list of the Franciscans that served in Florida also remained brief in describing Paiva. What little is written by Geiger appeared as follows:

> Missionary at San Luis de Talimali, Florida, about 1676. He has left in writing a description of a ball game of the Apalachian Indians entitled: "Origen y Prinsipio del Juego de pelota que los Yndios apalachinos Y Vstacanos an estado Jugando desde su Ynfidelidad asta El año de 1675.

This description of Friar Paiva, aside from its brevity, has several discrepancies with modern studies of his manuscript. First of all, Geiger referred to Paiva as *Paina*, but for whatever reason scholars have dropped the "n" in favor of the "v." Also, Geiger left the title of the "Ball Game" manuscript in the original Spanish which, when translated, appears basically the same except for one glaring difference: the year. In John H. Hann's translation of the manuscript, the year that appears in 1676 versus 1675 in Geiger's. In addition, all other modern researchers have referred to Paiva as the pastor of San Luis de Talimali except for Geiger, who leaves this fact out. Yet, despite the variations between Geiger's biography and modern references to Friar Paiva, the fact remains that Paiva's "Ball Game" manuscript stands in the same light as Friar Pareja's earlier *Confesionario*

[111] The opening of the "Ball Game" manuscript reads as follows: "Origin and Beginning of the Game of Ball that the Apalachee and Yustagan Indians Have Been Playing since Pagan Times until the Year 1676. The Reverend Father Friar Juan de Paiva, pastor of the doctrina of San Juan de Talimali, brought it to light. May it be for the honor and glory of God. Amen." See Juan de Paiva, O. F. M., Hann, trans., Appendix 2, *Apalachee: The Land between the Rivers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1988), 331. For more on the role that the San Luis mission played in colonial Florida, see Hann and McEwan, *The Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis*.

as a Franciscan work, both by comparison and contrast.[112]

Before moving on to a discussion of similarities and differences between Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* and Friar Paiva's "Ball Game" manuscript, two major differences should be dealt with. The first of these is the fact that Paiva wrote more of a narrative versus the categorical style of Pareja's writing. The reasons for this stem from the purpose for which both men wrote their particular works. Meant as a manual for other Friars, the *Confesionario* had little use for anything other than what the missionaries needed to hear in order to prescribe their solutions to the Timucuans. The "Ball Game" manuscript acted more as a report of the state of the Apalachee missions in 1676. Whoever read Paiva's account of the ball game found lengthy descriptions of a native tradition that functioned at many levels of Apalachee society. The other major divergence between the two is the fact that while Friar Pareja wrote with a working knowledge of at least one Timucuan dialect, Friar Paiva had to rely on translators in order to represent and interpret the ball game. Therefore, though Paiva certainly lived amongst the Apalachee, he could not have recorded their traditions first hand because he did not understand the language. This should not take away from the value that the "Ball Game" manuscript has as an example of the kind of work that the Franciscans performed in Florida.[113]

Friar Paiva set the disapproving tone he took with the Apalachee ball game early

[112] Ibid. For Friar Maynard Geiger's description of Friar Juan de Paiva, or *Paina* as written by Geiger, see Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*, 84.
[113] Ibid. As before, a translation of the *Confesionario* can be found in Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., *Francisco Pareja's 1613* Confessionario*: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography*.

and often with his constant reference to the demonic origins of the tradition. The opening paragraph of the manuscript leaves little doubt of Paiva's intent:

> In the pagan times of this Apalachee nation there were two chiefs, whose experiences I am going to recount, who in their [time of] blindness lived close to one another as neighbors. One was named Ochuna nicoguadca, who they say is Lightning Bolt. And the other Ytonaslaq, a person of banked fires. And in his understanding both [are] the names of demons, which they have held as such, especially for Ytonanslalaq.

According to Paiva, these two legendary men acted as the progenitors of the Apalachee ball game. The traditions surrounding why the natives played the game came from the story of Ytonaslaq's great-grandson who, as prognosticated by Ochuna nicoguadca's shamans, was destined to kill Ochuna nicoguadca. Ytonaslaq ordered his great-grandson, named eslafiayupi, to prepare to kill his rival chief by collecting arrowheads from a deep sinkhole, gathering arrow shafts from a canebrake filled with poisonous snakes, and to kill an eagle and bring back its young. When eslafiayupi presented himself to Ochuna nicoguadca, the chief found that he could not kill the youth who his shamans predicted would kill him — so stirred by the young man's brave actions was Ochuna nicoguadca — and instead they played the ball game. Of course, because the Apalachee played a game that, according to Paiva, originated with a demon, such traditions needed to end in the eyes of the missionaries.[114]

Likewise, the *Confesionario* contained several references to demonic practices among the Timucua. For Friar Pareja, the seriousness of the supposed offenses of the Timucua came down to the influence of the Devil himself, rather than the simple demons

[114] The name Ytonaslaq appears in three different forms throughout the manuscript, as well as do other names. However, for the purposes of this particular passage, Ytonaslaq's is noteworthy. Not only is it spelled as shown already, but also as Ytonanslalaq, and itonanslac. See Hann, Ibid., 331-332.

that Friar Paiva recorded the Apalachee believing in. In many cases, Pareja saw the workings of the Devil as existing subconsciously among the natives. He wrote that, ". . . when asked about such things they say with a look of surprise I do not know how this is done, they answer; and it is true, they do not have any treatises or pacts with the Devil, as our sorcerers do." This differs greatly from the conscious decision of the Apalachee to continue a practice that originated with a demon they once venerated. However, whether the Timucua and the Apalachee meant to follow the Devil, both Paiva and Pareja saw the Evil One's presence amongst the natives.[115]

Friar Paiva followed his description of the origins of the ball game with an account of how the Apalachee actually played the ball game. Apparently the number of players for both sides of the game varied, but normally each team had somewhere between 40 and 50 players. They gathered together, as Paiva put it, ". . . like a clump of pine-cones, naked as when their mother bore them, except for a deerskin breechcloth that covers their private parts, and, [with] their hair braided." Once they are huddled around one another as such, another threw a deer-hide ball approximately "the size of a musket-ball, [or] a little larger" into their midst, and there proceeds a mad scramble for control of the ball. So desperate did their exertions to gain control of the ball become, that often one of the players swallowed the ball, after which the other time violently forced that person to vomit it back up. After someone emerged from the resultant pile, ball in hand and limbs intact, the object the game became to kick it at highly decorated poles posted as either end of the area on which they played. If the ball actually stuck to the pole, the

[115] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., Ibid., 32.

team that kicked it in this manner gained two points. Each time a team successfully struck the pole, they earned one point. The first team to earn eleven points won. After all these violent exertions in "the midday sun," Friar Paiva expressed his dismay: "What damage must not be done to these bodies [from this]! And they resuscitate them by dint of a bucket of water. What kind of remedy is this, when they have their pores open in this fashion? How can these wretches stay alive thus? Accordingly, they are destroying themselves and this nation is being extinguished."[116]

Friar Pareja also concerned himself with Timucuan practices of injuring and healing themselves. A series of questions in the *Confesionario* shed light on this: "Have you injured anyone with herbs? Have you ruptured someone? Have you injured someone in the legs or feet? In curing someone, have you placed in front of the sick person white feathers and new chamois and the ears of the owl and arrows which are stuck in, and then said you will take out the evil and sickness?" Another practice that Friar Pareja saw as detrimental to the well-being of the natives came in the form of abortion. Indeed, eating "charcoal, or dirt, or bits of pottery, or fleas, or lice. . . ." could not have benefited the health of the Timucuans much. Such strange injuries and ways of treating them must have appeared beyond comprehension for the Friars on the missions. As shown in both the *Confesionario* and the "Ball Game" manuscript, when the natives acted in ways the missionaries did not understand, the Franciscans reacted by deeming such things heretical. And because of their heretical nature, when a Timucuan tried to cure another with "white feathers" and "ears of the owl," they needed pacification

[116] Hann, Ibid., 333.

through the word of God.[117]

While Friar Paiva's "Ball Game" manuscript did maintain a narrative style throughout, he did also list certain Apalachee traditions surrounding the game in a *Confesionario*-like way. Paiva recounted a series of rules for how the players prepared to play the game, the ceremonies attached to raising the game-poles, the rules of the game, and also what he saw as the ramifications for native society if they continued to play the game. Throughout, these lists demonstrated the abuses the Apalachee performed on one another when they played. One particular ceremony that took place the night before they raised the poles for the game regarded sexual practices among the Apalachee, an especially important topic for the Franciscans in Florida. As Paiva wrote:

> That the night before the day that they had to raise the pole, there was permission so that anyone whatsoever could touch and fondle, etc. anywhatsoever woman that was present, whether married or single, when she came to dance that night. The which was not to defend herself, because if she did not consent, they considered it certain that all the games that were played on that pole that they were raising, they would be destined to lose. For which reason the leading men went about solicitous, begging them not to defend themselves, that they might have pity on them and on their husbands and brothers, etc., because they would lose what they had. Of this they assured me, that they had done this to themselves. With all [this], I ask [you], Whose counsel is this? Oh powerful God!

This kind of sexual debauchery offended the celibate Franciscans in Florida, and motivated them to produce works that showed what people like the Apalachee did when left to their own devices.[118]

[117] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., Ibid., 28, 32.
[118] Hann, Ibid., 339-340.

Friar Pareja in like fashion dedicated a portion of his *Confesionario* to listing the sexual customs of the Timucua. The sexuality of the Timucua received attention earlier, however it bears repeating when compared to what is written in the "Ball Game" manuscript. The promiscuity of the Apalachee written about by Friar Paiva is on par with that found in the *Confesionario*. As with the specific descriptions found in the account of the ball game, Friar Pareja queried: "Have you consented in your house or in another part that some kinsman or other person meet to have intercourse? Have you consented that someone have sexual rights to your spouse? After you were married, have you had intercourse with some kin of your spouse? Have you had relations with any married woman? Have you had intercourse with your mother-in-law?" Of course, these questions dealt with heterosexuality. Friar Pareja also concerned himself with alternate sexualities, such as this question to women: "By chance, have you had intercourse as if you were a man?" or, more directly for men, "Have you had intercourse with another man?"[119] For the Franciscans, whether such things functioned as an ordinary part of native society or had a specific use revolving around the ball game, sins of the flesh comprised a major obstacle for conversion to Christianity.

One more point of divergence between the "Ball Game" manuscript and the *Confesionario* came in the form of the tone. Because the missionary focused on the conversion of natives and the subsequent salvation of their souls, both treatises condemn native culture for its so-called heresies and devotion to the Devil. However, where Friar Pareja remained impersonal, Friar Paiva injected his opinion into his manuscript at many

[119] Milanich and Sturtevant, trans., Moran, ed., Ibid., 36-39.

places in the text. For instance, when a lightning bolt set fire to one of the game poles, Paiva saw divine intervention. As he wrote: "As though by the just judgments of God Our Lord, a lightning bolt fell that year [1671] and burned that of San Luis. And another year, another fell and burned that of Bacuqua, it having happened two years before that another had fallen in Patale and burned another pole." Some are more direct than simply projecting the influence of God onto a few normal bolts of lightning. When discussing the couriers the Apalachee send between villages in order to begin the ball game, Paiva opined, ". . . they looked liked the devil himself. As for me, I say that each time that I saw them, they represented the image of the devil."[120]

Friar Pareja took a more impersonal approach than did Friar Paiva to his work of evangelizing the Timucua, as is evident in the advice that he gave at the end of his series of questions. Arguably, the *Confesionario* served as a sort of religious inquisition, with the confessional becoming an interrogation room. However, Pareja focused more on the loving nature of the graces God offered to those who obeyed his commandments, rather than the horrified tone of condemnation that characterized Paiva. Note the language Pareja used when he advised native sorcerers about the nature of the sins found in the methods they employed to heal the sick:

> Another counsel by which one can undeceive those who cure in this way, that what he shows in the palm of his hand after having placed one [there], as if a leech sucking with its mouth (that usually is a little piece of coal, at other times a small lump of dirt and other unclean things, things alive or as if alive) that it cannot be, since no hole is left in the body through which that can exit, and naturally there was deception and some substance where that was, or else the Devil must have managed it subtly, and this can be believed since from as hard a part as the forehead and arms

[120] Hann., Ibid., 333-334.

> and head and spine or back of the neck it is not possible, it is a secret that has not been comprehended until now.

As mentioned, one of the reasons for the difference in tone between the *Confesionario* and the "Ball Game" manuscript had to do with the reasons why the two men wrote their prospective pieces. But it also said much about their styles as missionaries. Paiva witnessed an event that he felt had gone on for too long amongst the Apalachee. Pareja, on the other hand, focused more on the saving power of God, or the subtleties of the influence of the Devil in native life.[121]

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Another example of the care the Franciscans gave to the natives of Florida came in the form of their intercessions on behalf of those they ministered to on the missions. As seen with the Friars response to governor's like don Diego de Rebolledo, the missionaries did not always agree with the policies of the colonial government. Often the complaints of the Franciscans demonstrated a genuine concern for the natives. As Friar Juan Gómez de Engraba to Friar Francisco Martínez:

> [I bring to your attention] the hardships and persecutions of the poor Indians of Florida, where I have been stationed for forty-six years, and, that during this time, as I have seen and experienced, that have been such loyal vassals of his majesty and so obedient to the royal crown, and this, since the time of Hernando de Soto, the discoverer of the land of Florida. [And I would have you see] the point to which their lot and misfortune have arrived, [and], that this Creole governor from Cartagena has oppressed them to come from this province of Apalache [sic], which is one hundred

[121] Milanich and Sturtevant, eds., Moran, trans., Ibid., 32.

> leagues from the *presidio* of St. Augustine, loaded down as if they were mules and horses.

For a Franciscan that served in Florida for the better part of a half a century, the rosy outlook of the *esprit de corps* of the natives in the mission is surprising. Surely Friar Engraba witnessed revolts among the natives, including the 1647 Apalachee revolt previously discussed. Yet such an oversight stands out as typical for the Franciscans in Florida who, unlike other missionary orders who ventured into Florida, did not waver in their devotion to their ministry.[122]

Yet perhaps the Franciscan's devotion led them to paint a picture of things that did not match up with reality. The memorial of Friar Francisco Alonso de Jesús to the King of Spain in 1631 spoke to both the effusiveness of the Franciscans when they described their work in Florida, and also the practical needs of running a large mission system. Of the latter, Friar de Jesús wrote that on the thirty-two established *doctrinas* throughout the colony, only twenty-seven Friars staffed them. Yet these few missionaries accomplishment much amongst a large native population, one that certainly outnumbered the Spanish. According to Friar de Jesús, 20,000 baptisms had taken place during his stint in Florida, including 50,000 more receiving the teaching and preparations necessary before the sacrament of baptism. But one wonders at the language he used when describing the readiness of the natives to accept Christianity into their lives. As he posited: "They are a most pious people toward their deceased, and thus they practice various ceremonies and superstitions relative to them, which they renounce and abandon

[122] Hann., "Translation of Governor Rebolledo's 1657 Visitation of Three Florida Provinces and Related Documents," *Florida Archaeology*, Number 2, 1986, 127. In his biographical dictionary of Franciscans in Florida and Cuba, Friar Geiger had trouble deciding on the true identity of Friar Engraba. Engraba falls under the heading **Gómez de Palma, Juan**. Geiger is unsure whether Palma and Engraba are the same men. See Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans of Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*, 58.

with great ease on receiving our Holy Catholic Faith." If the peoples of Florida were so eager to convert to Christianity, why then did violent and nonviolent unrest take place?[123]

In spite of the resistance of the natives, the Franciscans persisted in their missionizing with a measure of success. Again, they made do with less personnel than other mission provinces in the New World, but maintained what they had in the *doctrinas* for the purposes of presenting the Faith to the natives. Friar Blas de Robles, provincial minister of the Franciscans in 1681, expressed this attitude after listing the sacramental materials present in the missions of Florida:

> That which is listed [my lord] is that which is in existence and serviceable rather than that which is worn out with time, and that the rest, which is less finely wrought and of less value is in no small amount, though all of it is an indication of the care and zeal of the religious and of what they strove to have in their churches for the adornment and worship of God.

This "care and zeal" exhibited by the Franciscans in Florida did much to help their inclusion into the lives of the natives. Because of the Order's association with the bureaucracy of the Spanish government and Catholic Church, the Friars had to adapt their activities to work within a colonial framework. The Franciscans did materially benefit from such a partnership, but that did not concern them so much as spreading the teachings of the Gospel.[124]

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[123] Hann, trans., "Memorial of Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesús," Box 2, Folder 29, St. Augustine Historical Society. In order to get an idea of how few Friars Florida had compared to other areas, take the 1680 inventory of the Franciscans in the New World. By 1680, Franciscans had been present in Florida for just over 100 years. However, the province of Santa Elena (Florida) had the fewest number of Franciscans in it, just below the province of the Holy Trinity (Chile), with 96. Consider that at the same time the ten provinces of the Holy Gospel, Holy Faith, St. Gregory, St. Francis, St. James, St. Joseph, Holy Name, Sts. Peter and Paul, Conversion of St. Paul, and St. Didacus (all then part of Mexico or New Spain) had over 2500 Franciscans working there. See Thomas, ed., Geiger, O. F. M., "The Franciscan Conquest of Florida, 1573-1618," *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebooks, Vol. 23: The Missions of Spanish Florida*, 247.

[124] Hann, "Church Furnishings, Sacred Vessels, and Vestments Held by the Missions of Florida:

Even members of the colonial government, despite their frequent quarrels with the Franciscans, acknowledged the dedication of the Franciscans to their ministry in Florida. Governor don Pablo de Hita Salazar remarked in a 1680 letter to the King Charles II of Spain that, when the Friars briefly abandoned the missions amongst the Apalachee, the natives there wished for the return of the missionaries as soon as possible. According to Governor Salazar, the Franciscans needed, ". . . to learn [the] tongues and language of the nations where will be begun new conversions as first activity and as I may desire what this concerns so much to the service of both Majesties and that the principal object of the coming of said Religious alone has been in the first place to this effect. . . ." Governor Salazar, because of the necessity that he saw of having the missionaries, had to mention both "Majesties" — God and country — but he understood that they really sought to serve God in their duties in Florida.[125] In the end, however much the Franciscans contributed to the downfall of native civilization, their desire to serve should not be forgotten.

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> Being a missionary wasn't about fixing their problems so much as about working together and learning from one another. These people had much to offer me and indeed I feel very enriched and blessed by the many wonderful things I learned, sometimes painfully. . . . Oh, yes, the friars and others did much to try to alleviate the sufferings and help overcome terrible injustices. . . . But they in turn helped open our eyes to whole dimensions of life and faith and love that we never knew before.

Translation of Two Inventories," *Florida Archaeology*, Number 2, 1986, 148.
[125] "religious in Apalachecola," Box 2, Folder 61, St. Augustine Historical Society.

These words did not come from seventeenth-century Florida, but instead from twentieth-century Bolivia.[126] Yet similar sentiments are found throughout the history of the Franciscans in Florida, and Friar Pareja helped initiate such writing with his *Confesionario*. Scholars have argued about the purpose of the *Confesionario*, but it still stands — along with other documents like the "Ball Game" manuscript — as a testimony to the missionary's work as Franciscans.

But how does the work of the Franciscans mesh with that which the Order's founder, St. Francis of Assisi, performed? As mentioned previously, one of Francis favorite activities involved traveling amongst the people, preaching the Word of God, and helping the poor and the afflicted. In this regard, the missionaries of sixteenth and seventeenth century Florida faithfully measured up to the example set forth by Francis. However, Friars like Pareja and those that came after him, also functioned as scholars of native culture in a way that Francis never had the opportunity or need to do. The missionary's texts and letter writing served well their purposes in Florida, because they felt it helped them in their attempts to save the natives' souls. Had Francis had a need to learn another language, or write to a monarch about injustices he witnessed, he might well have done so. Therefore, in this manner, the Franciscans of Spanish Florida worked with the unique conditions that the land presented to them. And to further illustrate how far the Order had come since the days of Francis, consider the fact that Francis himself never celebrated a Mass. He certainly preached at them, but never did he "emcee," so to speak, his own Sunday service. However, his Friars in Florida routinely performed Mass.

[126] Kevin M. Cronin, O. F. M., ed., John Anglin, O. F. M., "Faith Such as This," *A Friar's Joy: Magic Moments From Real Life* (New York: Continuum, 1996), 51.

Yet, unlike the western part of the United States where Franciscans also served as missionaries during the Spanish period, Florida has no surviving missions from the colonial period. This has more to do with building material than anything else, and the locations of the waddle and thatched roof churches where they celebrated Mass are today the guess work of archaeologists. But the legacy of the Franciscans of Florida lives on in the pages of the *Confesionario*, the letters of the Friars, and the reports of people like Friar Paiva. Because of their work, the proof of which survives in these texts, the native peoples of the Florida colony over time became unrecognizable from their Spanish invaders/neighbors. Unrecognizable because, when the Spanish turned the colony over to the British in 1763, those natives still living under the remains of the mission system left with their Catholic brothers and sisters.

Chapter Five:

Conclusion

In the end, the collapse of the mission system in Florida had little to do with the Franciscans, save for their affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, but it had much to do with religion. Since the early 1600s, Florida became closer and closer to the sphere of influence created by the British colonies to the north. The Spanish and the English rivaled one another in power and status in Europe throughout much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Apart from the major forces of economic competition, the fact that Spain maintained its allegiance to Rome during the Protestant Reformation and England formed its own church — the Anglican — only served to fuel the animosity between the two nations. With the establishment of several English colonies along the Atlantic seaboard of North America, the time for conflict between the two New World Empires approached. When the English founded the Carolina settlement in 1676, hostilities with Florida became a matter of when, not if. All the while, the Franciscans went about their duties as missionaries even as their eventual destruction neared.

Overall, the process of evangelization and exploitation had developed systematically over 150 years despite the problems the Franciscans dealt with during that time. In reality, though the Franciscans professed peace, the cultural destruction they brought to Florida devastated the natives as the frequent conflict present in the mission system attested. Disease and turmoil during the span of the missions took their toll, reducing a population of several hundred thousand at the time of first European contact,

to approximately 26,000 counted by the Friars in the missions just prior to the system's collapse.[127] Due to the expansive nature Spain's New World empire and its increasing inability after 1588 to protect it with a powerful navy, far flung territories such as Florida suffered from neglect. In the realm of world politics, as Spain gradually faded, England gained more power and wealth.[128] A testament to the waning of Spain's influence in the New World was its failure to keep the English from settling on the North American continent to the north of their colony at St. Augustine. It did not take long before conflict broke out between the Protestant English and the Catholic Spanish, which eventually devastated the mission system in Florida.[129]

Thanks to 150 years of assimilation and the presence of the Friars, at the onset of the eighteenth century what remained of the native population found themselves caught up in war. By the early 1700s, the English had solidified their holdings to the north and along with their Creek allies, commenced raids along the string of missions in north Florida. The historian Charles W. Arnade encapsulated this loss of Spanish influence in the area surrounding St. Augustine: "Spain," Arnade wrote, "failed to maintain its total hegemony," something they held on to through the use of the Franciscan mission system.[130] When Queen Anne's War started in Europe in 1703 among France, Spain, and England, it provided the impetus for Colonel James Moore, who was also governor of the

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[127] Hann, "The Missions of Spanish Florida," Gannon, ed. *The New History of Florida*, 78-79.

[128] The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 which was on its way to invade England was one of those pivotal moments in World History. The best of the Spanish fleet was sent to the bottom of the English Channel by Queen Elizabeth's Sea Dogs led by Sir Francis Drake. Incidentally, Drake had raided St. Augustine the previous year. 1588 marked the beginning of the end for the Spanish New World empire and gave the English the opportunity they needed to begin their own. See Merriman. *A History of Modern Europe, Volume 1: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon*, 210-211.

[129] Charles W. Arnade, "Raids, Sieges, and International Wars," Gannon, ed. *The New History of Florida*, 100-108.

[130] Ibid., 100.

Carolina colony, to invade the Spanish colony in Florida. As Moore's army swept down the Atlantic Coast from Carolina, his Creek allies attacked the Apalachee and Timucuan settlements and missions to the west. The invasion by the English and their allies forced these peoples, already decimated from years of contact with the Spanish, to flee to the supposed safety of the Castillo de San Marcos at St. Augustine. Though the Spanish managed to drive off the English, the missionaries never returned to their originally established mission sites and the natives were forced to abandon forever their ancestral homeland.[131]

Despite the devastation of the Florida missions wrought by the English, after 1704 some missions did survive. Of course, none of these posts existed very far from the guns and garrison of the Castillo de San Marcos. In a letter to the King Phillip V of Spain in 1728, Friar Joseph Bulloñes listed 11 remaining missions, this 25 years after the English invasion. His letter also demonstrated the inability of the Spanish to protect even the few missions which remained. One mission in particular demonstrated the dire situation for the missionaries and the natives:

> Thama, contained Indians who came from San Jorge (South Carolina), and were baptized in Florida. A modest church of palm was built for them. On Nov. 1 1725 they were attacked by the Vchizes Indians while Mass was being celebrated. The priest had to escape in his vestments, carrying the chalice, in a canoe, and though shot at, saved his life. Many Indians were killed. The remaining Indians moved to Tolomato el Viejo and then to Pueblo de Moze.

Tolomato el Viejo fared little better, having as its initial location some three leagues from

[131] After 1763, the cultures that felt the biggest impact of the Franciscan mission effort ceased to exist in Florida. Therefore, not only were they unable to return to their homes after 1703, but when the Spanish surrendered the colony to the English in 1763, they left with the Spanish for Cuba. See Milanich. *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and the Southeastern Indians,* 173-195.

St. Augustine. From there they moved twice more, the first time to within a half league of St. Augustine, and then to, as Friar Bulloñes described it, to ". . . within the very shadow of the fort (Castillo de San Marcos)."[132]

Another striking feature of Friar Bulloñes' 1728 letter is the paltry number of natives he listed as living on the missions. The largest, Nombre de Dios Chiquito, contained some thirty men and nineteen women. Moze, where the inhabitants of the Thama mission finally ended up, counted twenty men, fifteen women, and seven children. An epidemic in 1726 further reduced this population to five men and women, and "three or four children." Again, because of attacks by other hostile native peoples, the Franciscans abandoned many of the missions listed by Friar Bulloñes and did not reside on those that remained. Instead, the Friars sought the protection of the coquina walls of the Castillo de San Marcos, and ventured out to minister the sacraments from there. By 1763, when Spain turned Florida over to the English, the missionaries still in Florida constituted a mere shell of the dozens who had handled a colony-wide mission system. They included the following Friars: Joseph Maldonado, Juan de la Via, Juan de Goyoneche, Manuel Marquez, Alonso Ruiz, Felipe Sabedra, Juan de los Ríos, Manuel de la Torre, Juan López, and Juan Francisco Pérez. With the downfall of native civilization in Florida, so too did the numbers and scope of the Franciscan mission system suffer.[133]

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[132] Geiger, O. F. M., *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba (1528-1841)*, 136-137.
[133] Ibid., 137-140.

The documents and letters under examination here are nearly all that survives of the Franciscan mission system in Florida. Finding the sites where missions once stood is easy enough, but few places have structures that give any clue as to the activities that took place there during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One place that does remain, the Nombre de Dios mission site, stands very near to where the walls of the Castillo de San Marcos. However, under the direction of historians and archaeologists, with the help of funding from the state of Florida, researchers have managed to recreate the San Luis de Apalachee mission. Located near Tallahassee, the site offers scale reconstructions of the Apalachee council house and the Franciscan mission church. Today, reenactors portray life on the mission for school groups visiting on field trips. Ongoing excavations continue to reveal the scope of this settlement which also served as a second capital for Spanish Florida.[134]

Places like Nombre de Dios and Mission San Luis are exceptional examples of physical remnants of the work of the Franciscan missionaries in Florida. Instead, clues of the activities of the Franciscans are either dug out of the ground in different sites around the state, or traced through the documents under scrutinization here. Archaeology offers a picture of the day-to-day lives on the missions. It can also testify to the relative success of the Friars through numbers of Christian style burials and the size and scope of the individual *doctrinas*. However, it is the documents that give the best idea of what mattered to the missionaries when it came to converting the native population of Florida. These letters and reports tell the modern researcher how the Franciscan Order operated in

[134] Information on the San Luis site can be found at http://www.missionsanluis.org/index.cfm. Interestingly, some of the expertise for building the Apalachee council house came from places other than Florida mission documents or archaeology. A caption under a picture of the council house's construction reads: "Zulus from South Africa used more than 100,000 palm fronds to thatch the council house."

a Spanish colony that many considered backwater even by New World standards. And while the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Spanish government played a role in Florida, the Franciscans did not always agree with the policies of the colonial governor in St. Augustine regarding the natives in the missions.

Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* comprised another physical example giving evidence of the kind of work Franciscans performed in Florida. Of course, Pareja wrote other manuscripts in both Spanish and Timucuan, specifically catechisms, but they say less about what the Franciscans did in Florida than what the Catholic Church as a whole taught on certain religious matters. Yet, as mentioned earlier, scholars have used the *Confesionario* more to illuminate Timucuan life than for its value as a Franciscan work. It is easy enough to look at Pareja's work for what it says about his converts, but there are specific theological questions that he saw as present in Timucuan culture. One method that Pareja employed for examining the different aspects of native society involved looking at the Ten Commandments as a way to condemn the various parts of the society that he examined. Many of the questions that Pareja posed proceeded from a specific commandment. Thus the *Confesionario* dismantled, line by line, Timucuan culture, leaving little for the natives to reconcile their traditional identity in the new Christian society.

The Franciscan deconstruction of the native culture in Florida did not concentrate solely on the Timucuan. The Guale and the Apalachee also had Friars as *doctrineros* working amongst their principle villages. Missionaries like Friar Pareja found themselves part of a colonial system and structured their activities in Florida accordingly, in order to take advantage of the support Spain could offer their evangelical efforts. Thus

the Franciscans created offices like the Provincial who served as spokesman for those of his Order on the missions in Florida. Still, despite co-existent administrations, the missionaries and the colonial government did not always agree on matters regarding the natives. Often this had much to do with the unsteady leadership Florida received in the forms of the governors sent to the colony. Letters written by the Friars testified to their dissatisfaction with the directives issued by the different governors over the whole history of the mission system. Because of their disapproval of the colonial leadership, when the native population revolted against the Spanish, the Franciscans sided with their charges on the missions. Yet with all the disagreements between the missionaries and the Spanish, the mission system with the help of the colonial government managed to maintain hegemony over the native population of Florida for 150 years.

A large portion of the documents chronicling the colonial experience found in the *Archivo General de los Indias* in Seville, Spain, trace the missionaries involvement with the Spanish Florida colony. What the archive contains, however, deals with direct interactions between the colonial government and the Franciscans. Most records that are specific to the activities of the Catholic Church are stored in Havana, Cuba. While the two administrative entities in Florida - the Church and the colonial government - worked together, their records keeping did not always overlap. It is perhaps lucky that Friar Pareja's *Confesionario* survived because of its purpose as a Church document. In this regard, it draws comparisons to reports like the "Ball Game" manuscript which gave an account of a native custom that the Franciscans felt they needed help eradicating. The letters and reports that the Friars wrote to different Spanish officials do give some clues as to what mattered to them as missionaries. Often they wrote scathing indictments of the

leadership of a particular governor. Other writing occurred when the Bishop from Cuba came to visit and inspect the missions for themselves. The words found in the *Confesionario*, "Ball Game" manuscript, and letters stand as a testament to the work of the Franciscans in Florida.

Works like the *Confesionario* also comprise much of what physically remains of the original Franciscan mission system. As discussed, certain sites around the state have recreated the mission that existed there during the Spanish period, but they stand as modern interpretations of a far-reaching system employed for the conversion of the original native population of Florida. That population exists now only in these same records. Yet the same is true for the Franciscans in how they live on only in the pages of the archives and translations worked by scholars over the years since the end of the mission system. Yet thus far these same scholars have looked at the historical record mainly for two reasons: as a window onto native culture, or in order to paint a picture of the Spanish colony. With the exception of Friar Maynard Geiger, few have reviewed the mission literature in order to say anything about the mission system from a Franciscan point of view. The Friars who came to Florida brought with them the ideals of their order, and the example of St. Francis of Assisi set a precedent for service to others that they repeated during the colonial experience. Thankfully, the Friars who served in Florida had an administrative zeal that Francis lacked, and because of this we can write about their legacy as missionaries.

* * * * *

Of course, Franciscans did not serve solely in Florida, but had missions elsewhere in the Spanish New World Empire. As seen, the Order of Friars Minor had a presence in nearly every part of the Americas, especially in Mexico, then called New Spain. They acted as the main group of missionaries for Spain throughout their colonies in the New World. Perhaps no other religious order of the Catholic Church at the time of the Spanish explorations of the Americas had the kind of missionary zeal that the Franciscans possessed. Three hundred years separated the time of St. Francis death and the beginning of the mission era in the New World. Yet during that time, the Franciscans grew from the small group of devotees surrounding one man to a global order working at converting non-European peoples to the True Faith. Other religious orders, namely the Jesuits, also worked in some of the same places that the Friars did, but never did they operate at the same time together. Still, how do these other mission sites and orders compare to the work performed in Florida?

All Franciscans who served as missionaries in the New World traveled there because it offered a chance to do something that St. Francis had attempted himself during the Fifth Crusade: "rescue the spirits or souls of benighted aborigines and send them to the Christians' eternal paradise." Another motivating factor for the Friars to come to the Americas derived from the Royal Orders of 1573 which gave the missionaries the central role for the exploration and pacification of new lands through religion. This did not, however, apply to Florida, which had already been explored and, with the exception of the Apalachee lands, settled and missionized. Therefore the efforts of the Franciscans in places like the American southwest became something more than merely converting the natives. Missionaries acted as much more than agents of colonialism in the west, they

also served as colonizers. Therefore the responsibility fell to them for organizing settlement patterns of the natives in order to better insure their effectiveness in converting native populations like the Pueblos. This meant the enforcement of the *encomienda* under the direction of the Friars themselves, a type of spiritual economic system that survived for hundreds of years in that part of the continent.[135] While the Franciscans employed two different systems in the west and Florida due to timing and circumstances, the two have comparable records of longevity in their mission activities.

In furthering this comparison it is useful to point out some documents written in western America with those produced in Florida. Places like modern-day New Mexico, through which ran a road going north and south from Mexico, and along which existed several missions, had their own Friar Parejas and Paivas. Florida had a similar road that ran east/west from St. Augustine to the San Luis de Patale mission. Friar Alonso de Benavides wrote to King Philip IV of Spain in 1630 in order to report the state of the missions in this northern part of New Spain. His report at once calls the native nations "barbarous," and also remarks effusively on their ready acceptance of Christianity. One tantalizing quote sums up the Friar's response to the natives on the missions: "It is an admirable thing to see that less than twenty years after the first baptisms began, and, in particular, eight years since they began right here, where the harvest of souls has been the most abundant, the people seem to have been Christians for a hundred years."[136] As with similar reports like the "Ball Game" manuscript, the Franciscans seemed ready to accept as heart-felt, conversions amongst natives who had previously worshipped other gods for

[135] Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 94-100.
[136] Morrow, trans., and ed., *A Harvest of Reluctant Souls: The Memorial of Fray Alonso de Benavides, 1630*, xxiii.

centuries preceding the arrival of the missionaries. Therefore, despite differences in the kinds of mission systems used by the Franciscans throughout Spain's New World Empire, the Friars in Florida shared the missionary zeal of their brothers elsewhere. Rare are the instances where a native population rejected the Friars outright, unless their Spanish co-colonizers caused tensions between the Europeans and the natives. And as seen, when this occurred, the missionaries often sided with the natives in their grievances against the Spanish authority.

Other religious orders did serve as missionaries in the Americas, for both the Spanish and the French. The Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, comprised the most notable of these other orders. Jesuits came to Florida along with the settlement of Pedro Menéndez de Áviles but did not manage to establish any permanent missions among the natives, especially amongst those living in the southern portion of the peninsula. Although the Jesuits did work with the Spanish, they had the most success initially with the French settlements in Canada — then called New France — and around the Great Lakes region. Like their Franciscan cousins to the south, the Jesuits often ventured out to the natives in that region alone, and had to learn local dialects in order to further their missionary efforts.[137]

There is a touch of irony in the fact that the Franciscans became so synonymous with the Spanish in the Americas and the Jesuits with the French as missionaries. St. Francis' father often traded textiles in France and while on business trips with his father,

[137] Reuben Gold Thwaites, intro., Edna Kenton, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries of North America, (1610-1791),* xix-liv.

Francis learned about chivalry while traveling through France.[138] On the other hand, the Jesuits had their foundation in Spain in 1508. The Order's founder, St. Ignatius Loyola, actually fought against the French and received a wound while defending against an invasion in 1521. Yet nearly a century after the Order's founding, the Jesuit Priests found themselves as part of France's colonization efforts in North America. In discussing the foundation and the spirit of the Jesuits, Father Joseph Tetlow, S.J. wrote: "It's always said that the Jesuits were founded by Ignatius of Loyola, but I like the thought that the Jesuits were founded by a committee, not by one man. And it's crucial because if the real mainspring of Jesuit spirituality is companionship, then our being together in a company is really right out of that reality, that we are together in a companionship."[139]

This spirit of companionship is evident from documents regarding the Jesuits in New France. What Father Jouvency wrote in 1710 about the history the Jesuits in the Americas largely mirrored that written about the Franciscans in other parts of the New World. As Father Jouvency testified:

> The first concern of the Fathers was to build a chapel, to learn the language of the country, and to instruct Frenchmen who had emigrated from old to new France. Then, going forth, as it were, from the city walls, the heralds of the church traversed a great part of the country. A godly act was performed whenever the opportunity was allowed; hands were laid upon the sick; services rendered to the French who were establishing new homes, nor were seamen and ships' passengers neglected. Meanwhile, so great a scarcity of provisions existed, that for each week a ration was allotted, so scanty that it was hardly sufficient

[138] Spoto, *Reluctant Saint: The Life of Francis of Assisi*, 12-27.
[139] More information about the Jesuits and St. Ignatius Loyola can be found at http://www.jesuit.org/sections/default.asp?SECTION_ID=187&SUBSECTION_ID=215. Incidentally, 2006 is the 450th anniversary of the death of St. Ignatius Loyola, who passed in 1556.

> for one day. . . . In addition to this, each man was his own mechanic, mender, miller, cook, hewer of wood and drawer of water.

For Jesuit missionaries as well as Franciscans, they endured the hardships present in colonies throughout the New World. But they found their spiritual sustenance in their work when "hands were laid upon the sick," and "a godly act was performed." These services, among others, comprised the reasons why missionaries ventured into the Americas in the first place.[140]

Yet comparisons between the different mission sites across the Americas and the different religious Orders that worked on those missions stops at their writings. Of course, one might compare and contrast the length of time missionaries spent in each region and how their respective Orders influenced their longevity, or their lack of it. Still, the main factor that decided the acceptance or rejection of the Franciscans and Jesuits came down to the different native populations themselves. Certainly, if a Friar or Jesuit Priest worked their way into native society, the resultant letters and reports clergymen produced reflected warmly upon the missions and the missionaries. But different native peoples called for different measures in establishing the missions, making those in Florida unique from those of the Jesuits in New France, and even those of the Franciscans in New Spain. The Franciscans in particular had a missionary zeal as part of the ideals of their Order, and this factor more than any other contributed to their success in the New World. The Friars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after more than three centuries of service to the Roman Catholic Church, had the readiness to work hard

[140] Kenton, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in North America, (1610-1791),* 4.

as part of a massive colonial effort on the part of Spain. Francis himself had tried to convert an entire population to Christianity when he traveled to Egypt during the Fifth Crusade. Where Francis failed in the Middle East, his Order flourished amongst the native peoples of places like Florida.

* * * * *

Missionaries still exist today. They operate on almost every continent, save for Antarctica, and are no longer limited to Catholics. Protestant missionaries serve in many of the same places that Catholics do, sometimes simultaneously. After the Protestant Reformation, countries like England who started their own churches sent their ministers to their settlements in the Americas to also convert any natives they encountered there. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries spread out across the globe over the centuries, preaching their ideas on the Gospels, and attempting to convert whole nations to Christianity. Sometimes, as happened in Europe, the two branches of Christianity found themselves in competition with one another, as the different colonial powers across the world often had different brands of religion to offer the indigenous populations. Today, mission trips are encouraged by both Protestant and Catholic Pastors, especially to youth, who the clergy feel are best suited to perform some of the more arduous tasks of conversion, i.e., building churches, helping care for the sick, and teaching foreign languages. However, the teaching of Christian doctrine, especially amongst Catholic missionaries, still falls to the Priest and Friars, as it has for hundreds of years.[141]

[141] For a listing of several different missionary organizations, both Catholic and Protestant, as well as some

In modern times, the Franciscan example has served to guide missionaries. One particular religious Order of the Catholic Church that has become synonymous with mission activities today is the Missionary Society of St. Columban. Two Irish Priests during the 1910s named Edward Galvin and John Bolwick began the society and named it for a sixth-century Irish missionary to Europe. Together, these two Priests began their mission work in China amongst people they saw as "still untouched by the Gospel." They are priests and nuns who, as it says on their website, are ". . . called by the Church to proclaim and witness to the Good News in Jesus Christ of full Christian liberation and reconciliation of all peoples through the sharing of life and service with peoples of other cultures and faith traditions." The Missionary Society of St. Columban does much of its work in Asia, especially in countries with a long Buddhist tradition, such as China, Vietnam, and Myanmar.[142]

Another aspect of these missionaries that harkens back to the writings of the Franciscans in Florida is the way the Columbans report their activities. While perhaps more formal than reports like the "Ball Game" manuscript, or more colorful than the *Confesionario*, the Columbans put out a magazine that talks about their mission activities called *Columban Mission*. This magazine is read on four continents: North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. They have published it for the past fifty years and during that time, the Order has spread its missions to fourteen countries. In addition to their Priests and Nuns, they also have a lay ministry, like the Franciscans before them, who assist in the day-to-day running of the missions so that the regular clergy can focus on

history and background for each of these groups, see http://www.crosssearch.com/People/Missionaries/.

[142] Information on the Missionary Society of St. Columban can be found at http://www.columban.com/history.htm.

their evangelical efforts. And as with all missionaries past and present, their intent is to preach the word of God as a means for peace and conversion. As they state: "Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Church in our time is challenging the injustice of structural poverty and spiraling violence with more emphatic insistence on the basic implications of the Gospel. Servants of the Church, we see this concern for justice and peace as central to our apostolate."[143]

The story of one particular place where the Columbans serve as missionaries bears resemblance to the experiences of the Franciscans in Florida. In 1936, Columban missionaries first arrived in the country of Myanmar, and began their work among the Kachin people of Burma, as Myanmar was known as then. In Burma, the Columbans established parishes, learned the Kachin dialect, and even ordained some ethnic Kachins as Priests, something never accomplished in Florida with its natives. As with the Franciscans in Florida, the Columbans underwent a time when they had to leave their missions due to local resistance. However, unlike the missionaries in colonial Florida, the resistance to the missions came from the ethnic government and not the people living on them. Also, the Columbans in Myanmar did not collaborate with a European country in exploiting those they converted. However, no matter what reaction people like the Apalachee gave to the Franciscans, or the Burmese to the Columbans, they both truly cared about returning to these people in order to spread the word of God. Like Friar Oré's *Martyrs of Florida*, no matter what hardship the Columbans endured, they had the determination to return after their ultimate expulsion in 1979 in order to care for a people they felt really needed their help and guidance. And they did return in 2001 to help guide

[143] Ibid.

a new generation of Kachin clergy who had grown up in a Catholic society without any connection to its roots in Rome. Though those converts in Myanmar stayed when their missionaries went away while the Florida natives left with their's, these two peoples draw comparisons in their faithfulness to an alien religion.[144]

The Franciscans who served in the mission system in Spanish Florida helped usher in a period of expansion for the Catholic Church globally, something that is still going on today. In 1573 when the first Friars came to the Florida colony, 350 years had passed since the death of St. Francis of Assisi, but they maintained his missionary spirit. As an Order, they had the zeal for service at a time when colonial powers like Spain needed it most. Of course, certain things that the Franciscans did in Florida did not exactly fit the mold that Francis set for his Order. The scholarly work of men like Friar Pareja exemplifies the Friars doing what they had to — in this case, learn a native tongue — in order to best carry out their ministry. In addition, the amount of involvement the Franciscans had not simply with the Catholic Church but also with the Spanish colonial government, veered away from the simple life that Francis sought for his followers. Yet Spain provided the support the Friars needed in order to do their job, even if sometimes they quarreled over the treatment of the natives. And the Franciscans involvement with the Spanish should not take away from the care they gave to the missions.

To conclude, there is a legend about St. Francis, one that has survived through the centuries. One day after becoming frustrated with the lack of acceptance of the message he preached to a group of people in the countryside, Francis decided to give a sermon to a

[144] *Columban Mission*, December 2005.

flock of birds. Apparently the birds thought better of his words than did the people he just left, and more and more birds kept landing to listen to Francis speak. Medallions and statues immortalize this story to this day, and the Friars in Florida wore such medals commemorating the event. It is the most identifiable feature of Francis, him speaking to a bird in his hands with others gathered around. Whether or not the birds understood is not important, they listened and they stayed. The Franciscans who came to Florida sought such an audience and, for the most part, they received it. As long as they trusted themselves to God, the outcome would take care of itself.

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