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San Lorenzo Martir: A Jesuit Mission in the Service of Spanish Policy

This essay examines the development of a Jesuit mission established in the western part of the modern Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul in 1690 as set against the backdrop of Spanish geopolitical concerns in the larger region. During most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Rio de la Plata region remained a sparsely populated but strategic borderlands region contested by Spain and Portugal. The Guarani residents of the ***reducciones*** played a very important role in the economy and geopolitics of the region. For one the ***reducciones*** constituted a large part of the population of the larger region. In 1680, for example, the population of the Spanish provinces in the Rio de la Plata region totaled some 125,000 people. Of this total, the missions accounted for 67,000 or fifty-four percent of the total.¹

The mission residents also participated significantly in the geopolitics of the larger region. The early history of the mission expansion ended with raids by ***bandeirantes***, slave traders from Sao Paulo. The Jesuits organized several large-scale migrations in the 1630s from regions vulnerable to slave

raids by the *bandeirantes*, and created a militia in the *reducciones*. In January of 1641, the Guarani militia scored a notable victory against the *bandeirantes* at the battle of Mborore.² The Jesuits retained the militia following Mborore, and royal officials mobilized the *reduccion* militia some fifty times between 1637 and 1737 to maintain order, and to participate in campaigns against the Portuguese.³

An example of the involvement of the Guarani militia in international conflict comes from the repeated instances of Spanish attacks against Colonia do Sacramento, the Portuguese outpost established in 1680 in what today is Uruguay. Shortly after the establishment of the outpost, a Spanish force that included Guarani militia captured Colonia, but a 1681 treaty returned the outpost to Portugal. A quarter of a century later, in 1705, the Spanish captured Colonia a second time. Some 4,000 Guarani militia participated in the campaign. Spain returned the outpost of Portugal at the end of the War of Spanish Succession in 1713. Local officials mobilized a force of 1,000 Guarani militia to expel the Portuguese from a new outpost established at modern Montevideo in 1724, and to help construct the fortifications of the Spanish colony at the site named San Felipe y Santiago de Montevideo two years later in 1726.⁴

Royal officials also mobilized the militia in response to internal conflicts. In the 1720s and early 1730s there was growing discontent among the colonists in Paraguay, related in part to competition between the settlers and missions in the marketing of yerba mate. In 1732, the government mobilized 6,000 Guarani militiamen to restore order in Paraguay, and then sent to militia to Buenos Aires to fight the Portuguese in the Banda Oriente (Uruguay).⁵

The establishment of Colonia do Sacramento by the Portuguese in 1680 across the Rio de la Plata estuary from Buenos Aires in what today is Uruguay generated considerable concern among Spanish officials, but at the same time the Rio de la Plata region was also a sparsely populated borderland that generated little revenue and in the late seventeenth-century Spain did not have the same financial resources as in the previous century to pay for a potentially expensive colonization initiative that might have also provoked a war. The Portuguese expansion in the region threatened Spanish claims to the Banda Oriente and the territory east of the Uruguay River first occupied by Jesuit missions after 1610. The establishment of missions in Tape (modern Rio Grande do Sul) established Spain's claim, but the Jesuits evacuated the region in the 1630s as a result of destructive raids by the

bandeirantes, slave raiders from Sao Paulo. By 1680, the Paulistas no longer posed a threat to the missions, and in response to the establishment of Colonia do Sacramento the Jesuits re-established missions east of the Uruguay River in what today is the Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul.

Between 1680 and 1710, the Jesuits relocated four existing missions to sites east of the Uruguay River. They also established three new missions. In two instances the Black Robes divided the population of existing missions, and moved neophytes to establish the new missions. This occurred in 1697 when the Jesuits took a part of the population from San Miguel to found San Juan Bautista. Seven years earlier, in 1690, the Jesuits relocated 3,512 neophytes from Santa Maria la Mayor to establish San Lorenzo Martir.⁶ In establishing missions east of the Uruguay River, the Spanish Crown was able to assert a stronger claim to the disputed borderlands. By transferring thousands of neophytes from existing missions to the new establishments, the Jesuits were able to rapidly develop the new communities with a large labor force.

San Lorenzo Martir: A Profile of Mission Development

The goal of the Jesuits in the Paraguay missions was to create Christian utopian communities among the Guarani protected and isolated

from the corruption of colonial Spanish society.⁷ The new mission communities retained the traditional Guarani clan based social and political structure, and the *caciques* retained their influence in the missions. They exercised considerable authority through the *cabildo* (town council), a newly introduced Iberian institution.⁸

The mission fundamentally was a community of Guarani neophytes, and demographic patterns influenced the development of the new community. The high population densities in the missions made the populations vulnerable to epidemics, and a pattern of intra and inter-regional trade further facilitated the spread of epidemics. Guarani neophytes lived in compact villages adjoining the mission church and associated structures, and this living in close proximity to each other in large numbers made it easier for pathogens to spread. Major recorded epidemics struck the missions in 1618, 1619, 1635, 1636, 1692, 1718, 1733, 1735, 1737, 1739, and 1764. A measles epidemic in 1695 killed 600 people at Candelaria and 2,000 at San Carlos. The decade of the 1730s proved to be particularly deadly. Reportedly, 18,733 died during a 1733 outbreak, measles killed more than 18,000 Guarani in 1735, and smallpox claimed the lives of some 30,000 in 1738 and 1739.⁹ The population of the missions dropped from 141,000 in 1732 to 73,910 in

1740, but then recovered over the next two decades. The population of San Lorenzo Martir totaled 3,512 when established in 1690, and grew to 6,099 in 1733 on the eve of a series of disastrous epidemics. The numbers dropped, but then began to rebound or recover in the 1740s (see Figure 1).¹⁰

The Jesuits used the medical knowledge of the time to try to reduce mortality during epidemics, but contemporary medicine based on ancient Greek principles and medieval texts could do little in the face of highly contagious crowd disease such as smallpox and measles, as evidenced by the heavy mortality during the outbreaks in the 1730s. One method used was quarantine, the isolation of the ill in temporary hospitals away from the main population.¹¹ Officials in contemporary Europe used quarantine measures during plague outbreaks. The first effective smallpox treatment, inoculation by variolation, (injecting a healthy person with pus from the pustule of a smallpox victim) was apparently first used during a 1796 outbreak. Officials inoculated 126 residents of San Francisco de Borja, and only fifteen died.¹² Doctors in Mexico first used inoculation by variolation during a 1779 epidemic in Mexico City, and royal officials distributed instructions on the use of the method throughout New Spain. Two years

later, in 1781, Dominican missionaries at several of the Baja California missions significantly reduced mortality rates by inoculating the neophytes.¹³

The Guarani populations living in the missions were high fertility and high mortality population, similar to contemporary European populations. Birth and death rates were high and population growth low to moderate. Epidemics slowed or stopped population growth, but the population did recover. Parish registers have not survived for the Guarani missions, but extant censuses record totals of baptisms and burials. Major epidemic outbreaks not only raised death rates, but also tended to lower birth rates or the rates of life births. Mean life expectancy at birth dropped as a result of major epidemics.¹⁴ Guarani living in the missions lived between twenty and thirty to thirty-five years from birth, or an average 26.8 years from birth for non-epidemic years and 5.9 years in periods of extreme mortality caused by epidemics. The Guarani populations drawn into the missions did not experience the declines associated elsewhere with the arrival of the Europeans, and the creation of new colonial regimes.

The Guarani uprising of the mid-1750s, discussed in more detail below, followed by the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish empire in 1767, ended the utopian dream. The populations of San Lorenzo and the other

trans-Uruguay missions dropped in the seventy years following the uprising from out-migration, disease, and the effects of war in the region, particularly during the tumultuous independence period (see Figure 2).

A second goal of the Jesuits was to establish economic self-sufficiency. The basis for the mission economies was a dual concept of production and the ownership of land, livestock, and crops. *Abambae* was family or clan property and production, and *tupambae* communal property and production administered by the Jesuits.¹⁵ Agriculture, ranching, and craft production formed the basis of the mission economy, but the Guarani and Jesuits also participated actively in regional trade with towns such as Asuncion, Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, and Corrientes. Goods traded included yerba mate, hides, cotton textiles, craft goods, and other products.¹⁶

Within the missions there was some specialization, based upon the quality of land, availability of pasture, and the location of wild stands of yerba mate. One group of missions specialized more in livestock, including Santo Tome, La Cruz, Yapeyu, San Miguel, San Francisco de Borja, San Juan Bautista, San Lorenzo, Santo Angel, San Luis, and San Nicolas. The Jesuits stationed at San Lorenzo Martir specialized in ranching because of access to extensive pasture lands in the *Banda Oriente*. The Black Robes stationed at

San Lorenzo Martr developed an extensive *estancia* southeast of the mission near the Laguna Grande de los Patos bounded on the north by the Jacui River and on the south by the Jamaqua River.¹⁷ A second group of missions specialized in agriculture: Santa Maria de Fe, San Cosme y San Damiano, Santiago, Trinidad de Parana, Jesus de Tavarangue, Santa Rosa, Itapua, San Ignacio Guazu, San Ignacio Mini, Santa Ana, and Candelaria. A third group, located in areas with both good agricultural land and pasture for livestock, specialized in both farming and ranching. They were San Carlos, Santa Maria la Mayor, Aposteles, San Jose, and Concepcion. The final group of missions were the most specialized, and supplied *yerba mate* for consumption within the missions and for export. These were Loreto, San Francisco Javier, and Corpus Christi.¹⁸

The Jesuits directed the construction of extensive building complexes (*casco*) that symbolized the creation of a new social order. The Black Robes used a standard blue print for the *casco* based on several elements. One influence was the configuration of medieval monasteries in Europe with a large dominant church and the cemetery and cloister on either side of the temple. Spanish colonial law also incorporated regulations for urban development, specifically the use of a grid plan centered on the *plaza*

or square.¹⁹ Convents and monasteries built in the new Spanish cities in the Americas also influenced the blue print used in all of the missions. The *casco* contained different types of buildings including the church which was the largest structure in the new community, the cloister or residence and offices of the Jesuits, work shops for craft production including textiles, hides, and metal goods, and two types of housing for the Guarani neophytes. Guarani families lived in large multi-apartment structures organized into blocks based upon the existing clan social structure. Each *cacique* retained control over the housing block occupied by the members of the clan. There was also the *cotiguacu*, the dormitory for widows and orphans.²⁰

The development of the *casco* passed through several stages, particularly at the older establishments that occupied several sites during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the initial stage the Jesuits directed the construction of temporary buildings built of wood and/or adobe or *tapia francesa* (constructed of mud and branches-wattle and daub). The second stage entailed the construction of the main structures of the complex of stone and/or adobe laid on a stone base, such as housing for the neophyte population, industrial shops, etc. A temporary church remained in service during this phase of reconstruction. The final phase at a number of

missions was the construction of a new magnificent church of stone. The construction of the large stone temples occurred in the 1730s, 1740s, and 1750s, and the churches at San Ignacio, Sao Miguel, Candelaria, and other communities date to this period. Construction of the large church at Jesus de Tavarangue began in the late 1750s, but had not reached completion at the time of the Jesuit expulsion in 1767.²¹

The construction of the *casco* at San Lorenzo Martir followed the blue print created by the Jesuits, with the large square at the center of the community (see Figure 3). However, given the geopolitical motive for the establishment of San Lorenzo and the large population transferred to the new community, the construction of permanent stone structures occurred more rapidly. Ruins of buildings of reddish stone survive at the site today, except for the Guarani neophyte housing that local settlers in the region cannibalized in the early and mid-nineteenth century for building materials for their own use.²² The church initially contained five naves but the Jesuits later had it remodeled with only three naves. Two rows of wood columns supported the roof. It measured 93 x 43 *varas*, or 77.9 x 36 meters.²³ Adjoining the church are the ruins of the cloister, and the cemetery still used by the local population (see Figures 3 and 4).

1756: The End of the Utopia

The Guarani as a collective group did not resist Spanish colonial rule until the 1750s, and then a major uprising among the residents of the seven trans-Uruguay communities (San Miguel, Santos Angeles, San Lorenzo, San Nicolas, San Juan Bautista, San Luis Gonzaga, and San Francisco de Borja) resulted from a plan to relocate the seven missions west of the Uruguay River. In 1750, Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Madrid to adjust colonial boundaries. Under the terms of the treaty the Spanish-Portuguese border was to be set at the Uruguay River. The residents of the seven missions located in what was to become Portuguese territory were to relocate to Spanish territory, or else remain under Portuguese rule. Moreover, the missions were to loose lands east of the river used for ranching and farming.²⁴ Having served the purpose of establishing Spanish territorial claims, the Crown sacrificed the Guarani missions to larger geopolitical objectives.

The Guarani leaders of the seven mission communities rejected the plan to relocate from their homes. The members of the *cabildos* sent a petition to the Spanish governor in Buenos Aires that read in part:

Our fathers, our grandfathers, our brothers have fought under the royal standard, many times against the Portuguese, many times against the savages; who can say how many of them have fallen on the battlefields, or before the walls of the New Colony [Colonia do Sacramento] attacked many times. We ourselves can show our loyalty and valor withy our wounds..How does the Catholic King want to

reward those services, expelling us from our lands, houses, fields and legitimate inheritances. We can not believe it. By the royal letters of Felipe V, read to us from the pulpit by his own orders, we were exhorted to never let the Portuguese, yours and our enemies, approach our borders...²⁵

When the appeal to the royal official failed, the Guarani rose in rebellion. Resistance occurred in two phases.

Under the terms of the treaty a joint Spanish-Portuguese commission was to delineate the new border and set-up boundary markers. On February 27, 1753, the commission arrived at Santa Tecla, a chapel located in one of the *estancias* of San Miguel. An armed Guarani force prevented the commission from advancing further, and it retreated back to Montevideo and Colonia do Sacramento respectively. In response to the incident at Santa Tecla, the governor of Buenos Aires led a force of some 1,500 soldiers into mission territory in May of 1754. The Spanish army faced poor weather and lost most of its horses. A Guarani force ambushed a group of soldiers sent to deliver a letter to the Jesuit missionary at Yapeyu, and only a few survived. In August the Spanish force withdrew, but suffered Guarani

attacks. The Portuguese force sent in support of the Spanish also faced bad weather and Guarani attacks, and also withdrew.²⁶

Spanish and Portuguese leaders decided to unite their forces to suppress Guarani resistance, and a joint Spanish-Portuguese army of 3,020 soldiers reached Santa Tecla in February of 1756. The Spanish-Portuguese army routed the Guarani militia at the battle of Caibate on February 10, 1756. The Spanish-Portuguese army suffered three deaths and ten wounded, compared to 1,511 Guarani killed and 154 captured. In the aftermath of the battle the Spanish-Portuguese army occupied the seven trans-Uruguay missions. The retreating Guarani abandoned San Miguel and San Luis Gonzaga, and left the principal buildings in flames. The Spanish occupied and used Santo Angel as the base of operations, and the Portuguese used San Juan Bautista. Soldiers from the joint military expedition surrounded San Lorenzo Martir, and captured most of the Guarani population and the *casco* intact.²⁷ Spain and Portugal later annulled the 1750 treaty, and Spain regained control over the seven missions. The building complex of San Lorenzo did not suffer physical damage during the uprising, but the invading Spanish-Portuguese army slaughtered cattle from the *estancias* to feed themselves.²⁸ Spain and Portugal went to war over the disputed Rio de la

Plata borderlands in the 1760s, and only resolved the boundary disputes with the signing of the 1777 Treaty of San Ildefonso. The trans-Uruguay missions remained under Spanish control until occupied by a Portuguese militia force in 1801, but the war disrupted the mission program and particularly the mission economies.

What was the cost of the Guaraní War? We have already mentioned the damage to the buildings of several of the mission complexes, and the pillaging of the mission herds. The uprising and the presence of Spanish and Portuguese troops on mission territory disrupted the functioning of the larger mission economy. Moreover, in the immediate aftermath of the Spanish-Portuguese occupation of the missions, the Guaraní population dispersed. A 1756 census of the missions enumerated only 14,284 in the seven missions, down from some 29,000 at the beginning of the war.²⁹ Because of the circumstances of the capture of the mission and its population intact, San Lorenzo Martir was one of the more populous missions in the immediate aftermath of the uprising. The implementation of the 1750 treaty and the Guaraní resistance had been costly to the Spanish Crown. The expeditions against the Guaraní and the boundary commission totaled expenditures of 1,490,689 pesos between 1754 and 1758.³⁰

One important lesson from the Guarani uprising was the strong attachment of the indigenous peoples to the seven mission communities that were to be transferred to the jurisdiction of Portugal. The early history of the missions in the seventeenth century was characterized by instability, as the Jesuits relocated the mission communities to different locations because of the threat of attack by Portuguese slave traders and hostile indigenous groups. Moreover, the Jesuits established several new missions with populations from existing communities, and these new communities including San Lorenzo Martir existed at one site for more than fifty years. By the 1750s the Guarani had a strong sense of identity tied to each of the seven trans-Uruguay missions, and rose in rebellion to protect their communities.

The Demise of the Missions

In 1767, King Charles III ordered the expulsion of the Jesuits from all Spanish territories. The King did not give reasons for the expulsion order, but his action was only the most recent action taken by European monarchs against the order. In 1759, Portugal expelled the Black Robes, and France followed suit five years later in 1764. One of the immediate consequences was the almost systematic looting of the accumulated property of the

missions at the hands of the civil administrators placed in charge of the temporalities. This can be seen most graphically in the total decline in the number of cattle. The missions owned more than 700,000 head of cattle on the eve of the expulsion, but the administrators culled the herds for their own profit. In 1769, 412,169 head of cattle remained, and in 1788 243,906.³¹ The missions continued to be administered as autonomous entities until 1848, when the Paraguayan government ordered the seizure of all remaining assets.³² Moreover, the missions, now called *pueblos de indios*, experienced population losses. The populations of the missions had fluctuated as a result of high mortality caused by epidemics. However, in the last decades of the eighteenth-century the populations declined as large numbers of Guarani neophytes left.

The exodus from the missions actually began prior to the Jesuit expulsion, but escalated following the removal of the Black Robes. The exodus was both voluntary and involuntary. The Guarani uprising of the 1750s caused a wave of out-migration from the seven Trans-Uruguay River missions. Following the suppression of the uprising, the Spanish relocated some 12,000 Guarani neophytes to the missions located west of the Uruguay River. In the early 1760s, only about 15,000 Guarani lived in the seven

missions following the return of the mission territory to Spain following the abrogation of the Treaty of Madrid.³³ Twice that number lived in the seven establishments in 1750. The Portuguese also relocated Guarani neophytes to Rio Grande do Sul, and settled the Guarani in several communities called *aldeias*, where they worked on nearby *estancias*. One such community called *Aldeia de Anjos*, counted 3,500 residents in 1762, but the numbers declined to 2,563 in 1779, 1,362 in 1784, and 300 in 1814. The population of San Lorenzo totaled 960 in 1801, the year of the Portuguese conquest of the seven trans-Uruguay missions, and dropped to 434 in 1814, 250 in 1822, and 258 in 1827.³⁴

Guarani neophytes also voluntarily migrated to the disputed borderland of the *Banda Oriente*, and established new communities that were independent of the Jesuits. One such community was called Las Viboras, and was first settled in 1758 following the suppression of the Guarani uprising, and about 1,500 people lived there in 1800. An analysis of 1,045 entries in the baptismal registers from Las Viboras for the years 1770-1811 provides evidence of the diverse origins of the Guarani residents of the community. The majority, 784 or seventy-five percent of the total, were children of neophytes who had once resided in the Jesuit missions.

Others were from the Franciscan missions in southern Paraguay, and from other areas in the larger Rio de la Plata region. The residents of Las Viboras abandoned the community in 1846 as a result of an attack during a civil war in Uruguay.³⁵

How extensive was the out-migration from the missions following the Jesuit expulsion? In the years immediately following the exodus of the Black Robes, out-migration occurred, but on a limited scale. In 1767, 88,796 Guarani lived in the thirty missions, and the number dropped to 80,891 five years later in 1772. The greatest drop occurred during the decades of the 1770s, and in 1783 56,092 Guarani still lived in the missions. The numbers stabilized somewhat in the 1780s and 1790s, but also fluctuated. In 1791, the population of the missions totaled 44,677, rose to 51,991 in 1793 although this figure also incorporated people who were still on the mission roster but were absent. In 1801, there reportedly were 45,637 in the missions (see Table 1).³⁶

Another important cause for the decline was the physical destruction of many of the missions located in what today are Rio Grande do Sul and Misiones (Argentina) in the wars between Portugal, Argentina, and Paraguay over control of the borderlands of the *Banda Oriente* and neighboring areas

in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. In 1801, during a war between Spain and Portugal, a Portuguese militia force occupied the seven missions located east of the Uruguay River, which had been returned to Spain following the Treaty of Madrid fiasco and the Guarani War.³⁷ The Portuguese distributed Guarani mission lands to settlers in grants called *sesmarias*.³⁸ The eastern missions served as a base of operations for Portuguese invasions of the region between the Uruguay and Parana Rivers during the turbulent decades of the 1810s and 1820s. Invasions occurred in 1811 and 1812, and again in 1817 and 1818. During this last invasion 3,190 people in Misiones died and 360 were taken prisoner, and the Portuguese sacked many of the missions. Moreover, a major battle occurred in early April of 1818 at San Carlos that resulted in massive damage to the church and associated buildings. The Paraguayans also attempted to assert sovereignty over the territory between the Parana and Uruguay Rivers, and occupied and sacked the mission communities along the eastern bank of the Parana River in 1817 such as San Ignacio, Santa Ana, Loreto, and Corpus Christi, among others.³⁹

The Guarani abandoned many of the missions located in the war zone, and sought refuge elsewhere or were forcibly relocated. The odyssey of a

group of Guarani residents of the seven mission communities east of the Uruguay River illustrates how refugees were caught up in the unsettled political conditions in the region. In 1828, during the last stages of the war between Argentina and Brazil, one Fructuoso Rivera sacked the seven trans-Uruguay missions, and took some 6,000 Guarani back to Uruguay where they established a new settlement on the Parana River called Santa Rosa de la Bella Union. The refugees remained at the site for five years, but were forced to flee following an attack on the settlement by the militia of the *Colorado* faction involved in civil war in the region with the *Blancos*. A group of 860 originally from eleven *reducciones* established a new community called San Borja del Yi, and eventually the population of the town reached some 3,500. Of the 860 who settled San Borja de Yi, 139 came from San Francisco de Borja mission. Another 350 came from the other six Trans-Uruguay missions, and 371 from Yapeyu, La Cruz, Santo Tome, and Corpus Christi.⁴⁰

Conclusions

The establishment of San Lorenzo Martir mission in 1690 in the disputed borderlands of the *Banda Oriente*, including modern Rio Grande do Sul. The Black Robes relocated existing mission communities into the

territory east of the Uruguay River, and established new missions including San Lorenzo Martir with populations from existing establishments. The Portuguese establishment of Colonia do Sacramento prompted the expansion of the mission frontier east of the Uruguay River.

In many respects the development of San Lorenzo Martir paralleled that of the older missions located west of the Uruguay River. However, geopolitics determined and altered the growth of the new community. The 1750 Treaty of Madrid between Spain and Portugal attempted to establish boundaries between the colonies of the two countries in South America, and in order to obtain the treaty the King of Spain sacrificed the seven trans-Uruguay missions and the *estancias* in the *Banda Oriente* to Portugal. The Guarani residents of the seven missions resisted the forced relocation, and rose in rebellion. A joint Spanish-Portuguese military force suppressed the Guarani uprising, but at considerable cost to the mission communities. San Lorenzo Martir did not suffer the same level of physical damage as other missions, but an invasion of and pillaging of mission lands and particularly the *estancias* undermined the mission economy. Moreover, Spain only regained control of the seven missions in the early 1760s following the nullification of

the Treaty of Madrid, but when returned the missions were only a shell of what they had been a decade earlier.

The expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, decades of corrupt civil administration, and wars between Spain and Portugal and later Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil effectively destroyed the Jesuit missions. Civil administrators sold off mission livestock and other goods, often for their own benefit. Many Guarani elected to leave. In 1801, a Portuguese militia force definitively incorporated the seven trans-Uruguay missions into Brazil. During the wars of the early nineteenth-century the Portuguese used the missions as bases of operations from which to invade the disputed territory west of the Uruguay River. A final sacking of the seven missions in 1828 and the forced relocation of hundreds of Guarani to Uruguay signified the death of the utopian communities. San Lorenzo and the other missions fell into ruin. Established to satisfy the geopolitical goals of the Spanish government, the decades long dispute over the borderlands in the Rio de la Plata region shaped and ultimately disrupted the development of the mission.

The Spanish government used missions as a cost effective way of colonizing territories with few apparent lucrative sources of revenues that however had geopolitical importance in the face of challenges from rival

European colonial powers. Florida, Texas, and California all fit into this pattern. The threat or the potential threat of French, English, or Russian settlement on the fringes of Spanish territory prompted Spanish colonization based on the establishment of missions to control the local indigenous populations. However, only the Florida missions experienced attacks at the hands of other Europeans, in this case English colonists from South Carolina.⁴¹ Most mission frontiers, however, did not experience the same level of conflict between Spain and other European colonizers as did the Jesuit utopian communities of Paraguay.

Table 1: Population of the Paraguay Missions following the Expulsion of the Jesuits

1767	88,796
1768	88,864
1772	80,891
1783	56,092
1784	57,949
1791	44,677
1793	51,991
1801	45,637

Source: "Reductions of Paraguay," *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Internet File; Thomas Whigham, "Paraguay's Pueblos de Indios: Echoes of a Missionary Past," in Erick Langer and Robert H. Jackson, eds., *The New Latin American Mission History* (Lincoln, 1995), 168; *Herencia Misionera*, Internet site, url: www.herenciamisionero.com.ar/; Ernesto Maeder, "La poblacion de las misiones de Guaranies (1641-1682). Reubicacion de los pueblos y consecuencias demograficas," *Estudios Ibero-Americanos* 15:1 (June 1989), 49-80.

Notes

¹ Ernesto Maeder, "La poblacion de las misiones de Guaranies (1641-1682). Reubicacion de los pueblos y consecuencias demograficas," *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* 15:1 (June 1989), 49-80.

² *Herencia Misionera*, Internet site, url: www.herenciamisionero.com.ar. chapter 6.

³ "Jesuit Reductions," *Catholic Encyclopedia On Line*, Internet site, url: www.newadvent.org/cathen/.

⁴ *Herencia Misionera*, chap. 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, chapter 10.

⁶ Arno Alvarez Kern, ed, *Arqueologia historica missioneira* (Porto Alegre, 1998), 72. In 1682, Francisco Garcia de Prade, S.J., established San Francisco de Borja on the east bank of the Uruguay River. In 1687, Anselmo de la Mata, S.J., Miguel Fernandez, S.J., and an unrecorded Jesuit established San Nicolas, San Luis Gonzaga, and San Miguel respectively east of the Uruguay River. In 1690, Bernardo de la Vega, S.J. established San Lorenzo Martir. In 1697, Antonio Sepp von Reinegg established San Juan Bautista. Finally, in 1706 Diogo Haze, S.J., established Santo Angelo Custodio.

⁷ This is the central theme in Arno Alvarez Kern, *Utopias e missoes jesuiticas* (Porto Alegre, 1994). Kern points out that utopian writings influenced the Jesuit missionaries in many ways. Missionaries in Mexico were equally influenced by the idea of creating utopian communities.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁹ *Herencia Misionera.*, chapter 10.

¹⁰ Kern, *Arqueologia*, 72.

¹¹ Artur Barcelos, *Espaco e arqueologia nas missoes jesuiticas: O caso de Sao Joao Batista* (Porto Alegre, 2000), 106.

¹² Ibid., 105.

¹³ Robert H. Jackson,, "Epidemic Disease and Indian Depopulation in the Baja California Missions, 1697-1834," *Southern California Quarterly* 63 (1981), Pp. 308-346.

¹⁴ Calculated by Robert McCaa using Populate and included as a dataset with Populate, a microcomputer program that uses inverse projection to calculate sophisticated demographic statistics including mean life expectancy at birth. Populate analyzes five year samples of data, and reports statistics at the mid-point in the quinquennium. McCaa used data from the research of Ernesto Maeder, and used Populate to fill in the gaps in missing data.

Quinquennium Mean Life Expectancy at Birth* in the Guarani Missions, 1692-1767

Year	MLE	Year	MLE	Year	MLE
1692	29.7	1722	26.7	1752	30.0
1697	28.6	1727	34.8	1757	23.2
1702	26.6	1732	8.8	1762	6.1
1707	26.7	1737	0.2	1767	8.3
1712	32.3	1742	20.1		
1717	19.3	1747	23.0		

* Calculated using "Populate."

McCaa's figures give an average of the mean life expectancy of 26.8 years at birth in quinquenniums without major epidemics, and 5.9 years at birth in quinquenniums with major epidemics. We calculated the same statistics using a sample of only complete data for the years 1736-1755, and 1762 to 1766. The figures we calculated for Mean Life Expectancy may be a little different from McCaa's, but are in the general range: 1736-1740=4.5 years; 1741-1745=24.8 years; 1746-1750=24.4; 1751-1755=29.9; 1762-1766=9.4 years. The average in non-epidemic periods was 26.4 years at birth, and 7 years at birth in periods with a mortality crisis.

¹⁵ Kern, *Utopias*, 17.

¹⁶ Ibid., 49-50.

¹⁷ Kern, *Arqueologia*, 72. As many as 40,000 head of cattle grazed on the *estancia* of San Lorenzo Martir.

¹⁸ *Herencia Misionera*, chapter 8.

¹⁹ Kern, *Utopía*, 33-34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

²¹ *Herencia Misionera*, chap. 15.

²² Kern, *Arqueología*, 89.

²³ Barcelos, *Espaco*, 178.

²⁴ *Herencia Misionera*, chapter 12.

²⁵ *Herencia Misionera*, chapter 11. The quote reads: “Nuestros padres, nuestros abuelos, nuestros hermanos han peleado bajo el estandarte real, muchas veces contra los portugueses, muchas veces contra los salvajes; quién puede decir cuántos de ellos cayeron en los campos de batalla, o delante los muros de la tantas veces sitiada Nueva Colonia. Nosotros mismos nuestras cicatrices podemos mostrar en prueba de nuestra fidelidad y de nuestro valor. (...) Querrá pues el Rey Católico galardonar estos servicios, expulsándonos de nuestras tierras, de nuestras iglesias, casas, campos y legítimas heredades. No podemos creerlo. Por las cartas reales de Felipe V, que por sus propias órdenes nos leyeron desde el púlpito, fuimos exortados a no dejar nunca aproximarse a nuestras fronteras a los portugueses, suyos y nuestros enemigos...”

²⁶ *Ibid.*, chapter 12.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, chapter 12.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter 12.

²⁹ Ernesto Maeder, “Fuentes Jesuíticas de información demográfica misional para los siglos XVII y XVIII,” in Dorá Celton, coordinator, *Fuentes útiles para los estudios de la población Americana: simposio del 49o Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, Quito, 1997* (Quito, 1997).

³⁰ Buenos Aires Treasury, Latin American Colonial Economic History Web Page, <http://mansell.stucen.gatech.edu/rig7/latamcaja>.

³¹ Richard White, *Paraguay's Autonomous Revolution 1810-1840* (Albuquerque, 1978), 27.

³² Thomas Whigham, "Paraguay's Pueblos de Indios Echoes of a Missionary Past," in Erick Langer and Robert H. Jackson, eds., *The New Latin American Mission History* (Lincoln, 1995), 179.

³³ Moacyr Flores, *Reducoes Jesuiticas dos Guaranis* (Porto Alegre, 1997), 118-120.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 121-126.

³⁵ Luis Rodolfo Gonzalez Rissotto, "La Importancia de las Misiones Jesuiticas en la Formacion de la Sociedad Uruguaya," *Estudios Ibero-Americanos* 15:1 (June 1989), 191-214.

³⁶ *Herencia Misionera*, Chap. 21.

³⁷ *Herencia Misionera*, chap. 21.

³⁸ Flores, *Reducoes*, 127.

³⁹ *Herencias Misionera*, chaps. 26-28.

⁴⁰ Gonzalez Rissotto, "La Importancia de las Misiones Jesuiticas," 201-203.

⁴¹ Gerald Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians* (Washington and London, 1999), 168-188.