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## Native Subordination Through The Franciscan Institutions During The Sixteenth Century

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NATIVE SUBORDINATION THROUGH THE FRANCISCAN  
INSTITUTIONS DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Social Sciences

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by  
David Matthew Perez  
June 2015

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## ABSTRACT

My thesis, building on over two centuries of scholarly research on colonialism and evangelism in Mexico, seeks to heighten the visibility of the Franciscan order in New Spain. I intend to clearly establish how the Virgin de Guadalupe's influence on native conversions was mediated through, and controlled by, the Franciscan institutional systems between 1523 and 1572.

Many scholars have argued that the most influential factor in converting the Nahua populations was the apparition of the Virgin de Guadalupe, in 1533. These scholars have argued that at the time of her appearance the conversion of the country had been incomplete, but following her appearance Guadalupinist Catholicism spread rapidly in Central Mexico and became the "focal value of Aztec culture" (Madsen 1967, 378), resulting in some nine million baptisms by 1537.

Although the Virgin de Guadalupe proved to be a substantial contributing factor for conversion in New Spain, I will argue that these scholars have given disproportionate emphasis to the Virgin, in the process neglecting the institutional systems implemented by the Franciscans between the years of 1523 and 1572.

This thesis will discuss the desire of the Franciscan administration to establish a moral order, defined by leading scholar of Globalization Christopher Chase-Dunn as, people's agreements about definitions of right and wrong, obligations, and legitimate conflicts (Chase-Dunn 2014, 176). Using Michel Foucault's theories about power and the subjected I will expand on this definition

and argue that the moral order helped define the relationship and the roles of the Franciscans and the Natives; the Franciscans becoming the administrators of a new society that they largely defined and managed, while using the institutions they developed as tools of social regulation and control to produce docile native subjects, deprived of a unique cultural heritage.

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Additionally, I would like to thank CSUSB for their support of my education; all the professors and students I have shared my undergraduate and MA experience with; and all of my friends and family, who have helped me stay sane throughout this process.

## DEDICATION

To my wife Michaela, my three children Joie, Hinson and Link, my sister Melissa, and my parents Amanda and Arthur Perez. Michaela: thank you for your support and encouragement throughout our marriage, and especially through our first year's marriage, for putting up with my outrageous schedule, and being willing to take life as it comes. I love you very much. Joie, Hinson and Link: I love you three and I am proud to call you my own. My parents: thank you for the lifelong support and guidance, for teaching me life isn't easy, and encouraging me to follow my heart. To my mom for exposing me to the world and for the encouragement to never give up on school, and to my dad for teaching me to laugh and take life as it comes. Steve for your words of encouragement, and Carol for you cooky prayers. Melissa: for your support and for letting me believe I can be a college graduate. I would not be the person I am today without all of your loving support. Thank you!



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## INTRODUCTION

### EUROPE, IMPERIALISM AND EVANGELISM

The European religious tumult of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, namely the Reconquista of Spain, the Spanish Inquisition and the Protestant Reformation, gave rise to ideas that were enormously consequential when exported to the New World, as they laid the foundation for imperialism, expansionism, and cultural hegemony. Inherent in the ebb and flow of the religious commitments and passions spreading across 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe was the increasingly strengthened power and control over what was considered the right and wrong way to believe in God and what was considered heresy, both in belief and in practice.

These religious events and the ideas they engendered are crucial in explaining the Franciscans evangelical zeal and the increased pressure they put on the natives to convert to Catholicism. As seen through the “God, Gold and Glory hypothesis”, motivating factors emerged from the Reconquista of Spain and the Spanish Inquisition that made it not only possible for the Europeans to export their religious beliefs to the New World but also to enrich their country with gold and silver and to expand their kingdom out of Europe. Many of those who traveled to the New World were encouraged by papal decree to expand the mission of the church and bring native converts into the fold. Gold was an added incentive, along with glory, for the conquistadors and Spain to cross the seas and

locate and export the enormous amounts of wealth believed to be in the Americas. After the conquest of Mexico was complete, the Franciscans and other mendicant orders were called to evangelize the country. The Protestant Reformation made it possible for the Friars to follow the evangelical zeal centuries before created by St Francis Assisi. When new ideas and outcries against the church emerged in Europe, the Franciscan order closely aligned their own methods of indoctrination with St Francis' guidance through "a living poverty."

In this thesis, I show how the Franciscan institutions of schools, hospitals, feasts and public displays of worship targeted the indigenous to incorporate the native's well-being and indoctrination. The evangelical intensity of the mendicant orders, buttressed by the desire of the crown to be the victorious head of the one true faith, was a powerful Christian presence in the New World. This can be seen when, after decades of Franciscan indoctrination, the native's came to apprehend and accept Christianity as their faith. I argue that the Franciscan institutions played a significant role in shaping indigenous subjectivities and without them the Virgin would have had little effect over the Nahuatl populations. To make this argument, I employ Michel Foucault's theories of power and discipline to suggest that Franciscan institutions introduced a moral order that ultimately transformed indigenous belief systems. After the apparition of Virgin de Guadalupe, the effectiveness of Christian evangelism was proved once again

when the natives of New Spain understood whom she was and continued the spread of Catholicism throughout the country.

### Reconquista of Spain

The Reconquista of Spain was a long and arduous battle between the Islamic Moors and Christian Europe, who endeavored to re-establish Christianity as the sole religion of the state. Initially, the war began as the recovering of independence in the north, but it would eventually become a fight for complete religious liberation of the Iberian Peninsula with re-population by European Christians. The nearly 800-year surge of triumphs and defeat finally left Christianity the sole power, when in 1492 the last Islamic state was brought down on the Iberian Peninsula.

The Reconquista was more than a conflict over territory or between kingdoms; it was fueled by an intense devotion to Christianity that hastened to become a crusade against infidels. The rulers of Spain's northern kingdoms realized that their shared value of Christianity could unite them, and collectively, set them apart from the Muslims to the south. Moreover, the soldiers who fought for the Reconquista were convinced of their superiority over their enemies who had rejected Christianity. This was shown by the development of their own rules of war including the right to enslave the people they conquered. In the end, once Spain was re-conquered, all Jews and Muslims were forced to convert or be expelled from Spain.

What was considered heresy had yet to be settled by the time of the Spanish conquest of the Americas. However, the prolonged engagement with the Islamic Moors certainly helped define what would be considered heretical. The Spaniards felt that once the Iberian territories were re-conquered it was their duty to God to convert and outright dismantle the Islamic religion. The residue of this belief would cross the waters. Upon the Spanish arrival in the New World, paganism, idolatry, and sacrifice, were the main staples of religious practice. This paganism struck the hearts of the Spaniards and compelled them to wage a long-term project to culturally cleanse the ethnic population.

Moreover, the Reconquista had been driven by the desire for land and profit. Because many of the kings in the middle ages were not as wealthy as they would later become, a vast majority of the military was privately financed. Leaders of the armies, who fought against the Moors and risked their own money, won rights to conquered land and a share of conquered peoples wealth (Walbert 1997, 2). The Spanish would also bring this motivation with them to the New World.

In sum of David Walbert “the re-conquerors were the perfect men to cross the dangerous Atlantic and conquer a “New World” of dense uncharted forests, tropical diseases, and hostile heathens. They were devoted to God, King, and Queen; they were tough; and they were eager for wealth and glory. Furthermore, after 1492, with the Reconquista complete, they were eager for a new crusade” (Walbert 1997, 2). Conveniently enough, around the same time as the end of the

Reconquista, Christopher Columbus discovered the Americas and the new crusade soon followed.

The end of the Reconquista intensified the desire for commodities such as silk, spices, and riches. Spain acquired these commodities from Eastern Asian countries but the long journey from the East to Spain made them highly expensive. Thus, Christopher Columbus pleaded with the new monarchs of Spain to finance his voyage to find a shorter route to Asia. Finally, his voyage had been conceded by the monarch's eagerness to find new sources of wealth and opportunities to spread Christianity. He would never make his way to Asia, instead stumbling upon the Bahamas. After three more ventures to the Caribbean, believing he had been searching the shores of Asia, Columbus died in 1506. His mistake turned out to be one of the most important discoveries in the history of human civilizations.

### Spanish Inquisition

Towards the end of the Reconquista of Spain, in 1478, the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile intensified the Spanish Inquisition, desiring the conformity of Catholic orthodoxy throughout their kingdoms. By and large, the Inquisition was intended to install Catholic orthodoxy and maintain Christian converts from Judaism and Islam. To this end, forceful royal decrees were issued ordering Jews and Muslims to convert or leave, and if converted to no longer practice old religious acts. Ultimately, the religious

decrees to secure Christianity were deemed insufficient. Christian authorities believed contact, communication, and intercourse with the Jews impaired Christian faith. In the end, the Alhambra Decree was issued in January 1492, expelling Jews from Spain.

Historians have long disagreed over how many people left willingly and how many were expelled, but the main premise is that accusations by neighbors, torture, and death were everyday affairs. Torture was a tool, successfully wielded to gather confessions, and accusations of lapsing in the faith could easily result in being burned at the stake. Assorted estimates of Jews baptized as Christians within a three-month period have ranged from the thousands to the tens of thousands, mostly to escape expulsion rather than any desire to relinquish their faith.

As with the Reconquista, the residue of the Inquisition would travel with the Spanish to the New World. Concern over contact with pagan beliefs and the resultant intolerance of their existence in Christian lands motivated the new religious elite in the Americas to exercise the “tools” of conversion or expulsion with great effectiveness.

### Protestant Reformation

The protestant reformation can be traced back to several individuals but Martin Luther is among the most notable. In the year 1517 Martin Luther produced his ninety-five theses', primarily concerning a host of clerical abuses,



nepotism, simony, usury, pluralism, and the sale of indulgences. Coincidentally, in 1517, while Martin Luther was producing his writings and introducing deep divisions within Christian Europe and within Catholicism itself, the first Franciscans were near to setting off to the New World. Departing in the midst of these tensions, and endowed with a more substantial feeling of freedom, created a strong impetus in the Catholic orders to direct and guide individuals in a way they considered appropriate, with conversion or punishment the only choices.

As the reformation raged in Europe, the Mendicant Orders (Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians) of Spain arrived in New Spain. Due to the division within and the preoccupation without during this period, the Mendicant Orders were free to express their teachings in ways that suited them, rather than in the manner of the papacy. The mendicant orders were thoroughly devoted to their religion but did not agree with every doctrinal practice. There was a bishop of New Spain, but the orders were largely dispersed throughout Mexico. In a sense, the Mendicant orders were free from European disturbance. Bishops would go days, weeks, and sometimes months without visiting particular groups of orders. Because of this, the orders practiced their own customs, and it was the mendicant orders that took on the task to convert the natives, not the bishops or the pope. Hence, to a certain extent, the mendicant orders paralleled the protestant reformation in New Spain and developed their own customs of evangelization.

The first generation of Franciscans, also known as the “famous twelve”, pursued new religious endeavors that were endowed with a strong millenarian vision, and possessed of a apocalyptic view of history that posited a leading role for their own order (Curcio-Nagay 2000, 152). Several of the Friars belonged to the provincial house of San Gabriel, founded by Father Juan de Guadalupe in 1496. Guadalupe emphasized a “living Gospel” of extreme poverty and humility in emulation of both Christ and Saint Francis, the founder of the order. The Franciscan project sought to establish a church different from that of the Old World. This Idealistic approach to the natives conversion, motivated undoubtedly by unfulfilled yearnings for apostolic poverty and simplicity that the Franciscans could not find in Europe, persuaded the friars that they were founding a new church quite distant, geographically and spiritually, from the church of Europe (Morales 2008, 148). Mendieta called it the “Iglesia Indiana,” the “Indian Church” as opposed to the “Church of the Indies” (Morales 2008, 148). At this time, the Franciscans in Mexico were trying to go back to the Apostolic Church, such as the protestant reformers intended. This and other proceedings would pave the way for the Franciscans to move away from public humiliation and lashings to subtler ways of evangelizing, the most notable being the establishment of institutions and the religious residing in the villages with the natives.

Both Saint Francis and Father Guadalupe had been influenced by the writings of Joachim de Fiore, who through dreams and a numerological approach to the Bible discovered three different states of mankind, leading to the second

coming of Christ. The first state was the epoch of God the father at the time of the secular church, dating from Adam to Christ; this was followed by the era of God the son and the church of priests, from the birth of Christ to A.D. 1260; and the third age, that of the Holy Spirit, was the period of the rule of the monastic orders and the destruction of the earthly church (Curcio-Nagay 2000, 152). The new Christ described by de Fiore would be the founder of a monastic order in which several of the Franciscans believed Saint Francis to be this messiah. Once the earthly church was destroyed, he would reign for a thousand years. This particular millennium would be characterized by a world of perfect egalitarian charity inhabited by the poorest and most humble, the native populations fitting this characterization well.

The prophecy produced a mass belief that the Native Americans, discovered in 1492, were the “last gentiles”, those unbelievers who in conversion would lead to the fullness of the Church, a clear sign of the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding the coming millennium. By evangelizing the natives, the first Franciscans believed that they were playing a decisive role in the creation of the millennial kingdom or Christian paradise on earth (Curcio-Nagay 2000, 152). This explains the rigorous pressing by the Friars to establish a moral order with the Natives. The Friars hard work and evangelizing techniques were considered vital to the second coming of Christ. This would all come to an end, in 1572, when the secular clergy of Spain arrive in the New World and expelled the orders from their monasteries.

Accordingly, the Protestant Reformation sought to establish new ways of devotion and to establish its own moral order concerning the way the church ought to be run. It was believed that the church, on the one hand, became corrupt, but on the other hand was needed for guidance and instruction. This is important because during the event of reformation, the Franciscans practiced their own way of evangelism and instruction in New Spain, despite European papal customs of religious fellowship.

#### Hernan Cortez and his Hurdles to the Franciscan Solution

The initial Spanish conquest of the America's was a turbulent period. Prior to the Hernan Cortez's landing in Mexico, he was stationed in Cuba. After the governor of Cuba, Velasquez de Cuellar rejected Cortez's proposal to land on the shores of Mexico, Cortez and his men nevertheless beheaded the journey. Cuellar sent forces against Cortez and his men but Cortez triumphed. Simultaneously, Cortez encountered "pagans" who practiced idolatry, sacrifice, bloodletting and so. Fearing he might be charged with mutiny, he wrote the king of Spain defending his mutiny and the native religious practices he and his men witnessed. Barely leaving behind the Reconquista of Spain and the Spanish Inquisition the Kings desire coupled with the spread Catholicism and wanting to be known as the victor of the one true faith conceded Hernan Cortez's mutiny and satisfied Cortez's request to evangelize the natives.

First and foremost, the initial task at hand would be to seize the country for Spanish control. The Aztec city, Tenochtitlan was the primary city-state of the Valley of Mexico. After a failed attempt to defeat the Aztec empire, Cortez and his men allied with enemy neighboring tribes and brought down Tenochtitlan. Following his victory, Cortez called upon the Franciscan and Dominican mendicant orders to begin the evangelization of the country.

Subsequently, the victory over the Indians allowed the Spanish soldiers to receive land for their duty during the conquest. At this time, the encomienda system was made able for the Spaniards to collect Indians to aid in farming, mining and other domestic chores. Natives received religious instruction as their payment, although the Indians were not labeled as slaves per se, many priests mocked the system otherwise.

The encomienda system survived throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century but lessened with the arrival of the Mendicant orders. More specifically, the Franciscans who were the first of the orders to arrive in New Spain and took control of the most important social and political centers in the Valley of Mexico, including Mexico City. The sole purpose of the Franciscans was to evangelize the Indians. The Friars established and maintained their own religious communities apart from the encomienda system. They build schools, churches, hospitals, places of worship, celebrated feast days and emphasized public displays of worship. The Franciscan missionaries were not just a partial solution

to encomienda systems but were a solution to the spread of European Catholicism.

In 1524, with the arrival of the “famous Franciscan twelve,” the natives witnessed an unparalleled difference between the old and new religious evangelizers making a lasting impression on the natives. The Franciscans educated the natives, cared for the sick, consoled the dying, they built churches, hospitals, defended the accused Indians against the Spanish. All this was in comparison to what they had witnessed from their prior evangelizers and conquerors.

Within these European events historians are able to grasp the correlation between heresies, conversions, and religious control that spilled over into the Americas. The Europeans were engulfed in their own religious turmoil while simultaneously conquering the Americas. These events, the Reconquista, Inquisition, and Reformation, led to the imminent conquest and evangelization of the America's. Lastly, the lack of episcopal guidance and control over the Americas left the Friars with almost complete control of how to evangelize. This led to following Joachim de Fiore's prophecy, which gave great emphasis to the conversion and establishment of the moral order in the New World. To the Friars, serving the works of the Gospel and spreading Christian faith not only was their duty, but also its success in the New World conveniently justified belief in the monastic order. Their evangelical indoctrination and presence made for an everlasting affect on the determination to evangelize the New World.

By reading reports of the devotion, humility, and obedience of the natives many Friars believed they were fully prepared to accept the articles of faith and were the prophesized Christians of the third age. They believed that the natives were already prepared to live as Christians and merely needed to be introduced to Christianity or be indoctrinated in the passion of Christ. This wrongful belief would produce decades of institutional systems that, through trial and error, meant to eradicate a more than century old civilization. Moreover, the decades of indoctrination by the Friars produced Christianized Indians so that at the time of the apparition of Virgin de Guadalupe the Indians were proficient enough in their understanding of Catholic doctrine to recognize that she was the mother of God.

### Structure of Study

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The Introduction examined the importance of the Reconquista of Spain, Spanish Inquisition and the Protestant Reformation. The consequences of these European religious events spilled into Mexico, as evangelical doctrine was propagated and exported around the world. After the conquest of Mexico, the conquerors felt it was their duty to God to convert the “pagans” of Mexico to Catholicism and pursue riches.

The first chapter will examine the Franciscan Order and introduce their institutional methodology between the years 1523-1572. The significance of this period begins with the Franciscans arrival in New Spain to their eventual loss of

mendicant control over their communities and Indians. The Secular Clergy of Spain insisted the Friars only held temporary religious control of the natives until proper institutions could be established. In 1572, most of the mendicant orders were turned out of their positions and the Secular Clergy took control.

Hernan Cortez first called upon the Franciscan order, known as the “Famous twelve”, in 1524. The Franciscan order was the first of the three religious mendicant orders to arrive in New Spain and is largely emphasized since they held the largest territory in the Valley of Mexico, which encompassed the most important social and political centers.

It is believed the “Famous Twelve” made an astounding impression on the Aztec people upon their arrival in Mexico City. Walking many miles bare foot and dressed in ragged robes, the Indians initially mocked the Franciscans, calling them “Motolinia,” meaning “he is poor” in the Nahuatl language. However, this eventually led to admiration. When Cortez and his men knelt before the priests as they entered the city, the Indians also fell to their knees (Madsen 1967, 372). The Spartan self-discipline of the Franciscans and the respect they commanded from their conquerors created among the Aztec a favorable impression, which endured and became a powerful influence in the conversion (Madsen 1967, 372). The Indians were astonished by the Franciscan devotion to God, shown through flagellation and the wearing of grass shirts for their wrongs. In addition to this, they slept in the same conditions and ate the same foods as the natives. This, in comparison to what the Indians had previously witnessed by their conquerors,



illuminated the contrast between the Franciscans and the conquistadors, and it solidified a commonality.

The Franciscan's sole mission was to evangelize the Indian populations. To this end the Franciscan priests employed a variety of evangelical practices hospitals and schools were also very effective institutions for eventual native conversion. These institutions were religiously based, and they helped to colonize the minds of the natives in that they taught them how to treat and care for their fellows in a Eurocentric manner. Hospitals, for example, clearly demonstrate the native mind being institutionalized by European methods. Their introduction brought meticulous record keeping, quarantining the sick, sanitation, consolation, and Christian prayer and emphasized the living gospel of daily worship.

The second chapter introduces Michel Foucault's theories of power. This nuanced approach guides the individual towards how they ought to act within a particular setting. The primary institutions through which Foucault believes this approach is communicated through or within are hospitals, schools, prisons, factories and the military.

In each institution the natives conformed to rules and regulations of power, schools, for example, were situated to produce educational excellence. Schools provided a hierarchy based on knowledge and ability in which pupils could be separated based on merit. By assigning individual places it made possible the supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all. It organized a

new economy of apprenticeship. It made the educational space function like a learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, and rewarding (Foucault 1975, 147).

Foucault's economy of power is needed to explain the "correct" means of training. Its purpose was to transform the soul and to enforce the civil laws and the regulations of the institution. The docility of the individual made each institution run fluidly, and conformity among the masses followed the established economy of power. The exercise of habits allowed the Franciscan's to produce an economy of power that sought to break down the individual and rearrange Aztec culture in the paradigm of Western civilization.

In institutional duties the political anatomy sought to correctly train the individual not to neglect little things because all little things are necessarily a part of larger things, for example, the meticulous recording of patients and medicinal records to enable the efficient running of the institution and maintain an adequate level of appropriate supplies. All institutions hold precision to be vital; within hospitals the meticulousness of doctoral records of medicinal use and supply, the number of patients and staff, sanitation and patient observation, made the economy of power ever more important to saving lives and quarantining the diseased from the rest. Through discipline, a medically useful space was created.

Enclosure and functional sites ran in tandem with monastery schools and factory systems in that they maximized their objectives of control. Enclosure ensured that individuals were present and avoided distributions in groups. All

could be accounted for and it was easier for each individual to be assessed, judged and calculated based on merits. Functional sites broke down communications that might disrupt the political anatomy of the institution but also created a useful space.

The correct method of training through discipline is to train the moving, confused, useless multitudes of bodies and forces, into a multiplicity of individual elements (Foucault 1975, 170). It is discipline that makes individuals an instrument of exercise. As it follows, the success of disciplinary power lends aid from simple instruments such as hierarchical observation and normalizing judgments, and a combination of the two. In the prison system the 'panopticon' is used as both a combination of observation and normalized judgments in that the criminal could be seen without knowing when they were being watched. The central structure surrounded by cells allowed a useful space for correct training. It functioned with fewer guards, instead forcing prisoners to act accordingly based on the unease and conformity that results from never knowing when they are being watched. Later, this building was spread throughout society based on the notion that it deprived the individual of his freedom and therefore could reform him.

The mainstay of control was done through hierarchical observation, normalizing judgments and examination. Through these three features of discipline the notion of norm developed. By and large, Michel Foucault's theory of discipline runs in almost complete tandem with the Franciscan institutional

systems and their evangelical goals. His theory of discipline is helpful in understanding how the evangelization was carried out. Complete and austere observation was constantly in effect aligning itself with normalizing native judgments and Christian faith. Without proper discipline the natives may never have been fully converted and the religious order not as firmly established.

Chapter three will precisely describe each Franciscan institution while synthesizing Foucaultian theory to establish how the moral order established how the native was brought into the fold of the moral order. In addition, the emphasis given to discipline provides an outlined view of how the Franciscan institutional systems were successful in converting the natives. Thus, in synthesizing Foucaultian theory with the Franciscan institutional systems, this chapter will attempt to provide substantial secondary evidence detailing the success of the institutions through schools, hospitals, physical punishment and monasteries. Through the top down discipline approach, the Franciscans were able to control the native populations and their culture had been shaped by the way the Franciscans instructed the natives.

Beginning in 1523, after the arrival of the Friars in New Spain the Indians began to flee the major farm and populated areas for rural territories up in the hills. This was largely due both to the conquistadors claiming the land as their own and the Franciscans who began to evangelize and destroy their temples. The scarcity of natives troubled some evangelists such as Martin de Valencia. De Valencia, a Franciscan, understood that much of the Indians were influenced by

visual inspection and they prayed where all could see the practice. Thus, Valencia, along with other Franciscans pleaded with King Phillip II to give the order for congregating the Indians in villages.

Here Foucaultian analysis is helpful in explaining the Franciscan logic of corralling and producing a docile body. In the eyes of the Friars it was a means of correct training in that it normalized native judgments and placed them in a realm where they were constantly being seen and accounted for. Following this logic, it made the Indian an object while simultaneously making them an instrument to exercise. This was the apparatus of discipline; with constant surveillance it made the natives act in the way of the hierarchized towns and villages. The Franciscan priests being at the top and the Indian always at the bottom. The priests were in charge of gathering the individuals for mass, lecturing, and keeping a watchful eye on the construction of religious structures and activities. The precarious structure of towns made it easier for the Friars to administer functions of management, keep a watchful eye, maintain control, and examine the religious functions. Discipline made the “mechanisms of power” more efficient and less forceful. By thinking you are always being watched, your mind structures and transforms to obey norms and remain obedient.

Early in the Franciscan governance the Friars established schools and catechisms in order to train and evangelize the native youth. Through their establishments the Franciscans created a docile Indian. In this way, the youth were trained as a political entity of power for the higher institution. This is shown

through their transformation from the Aztec religion to Christianity and from Christianity to demolishing their ancient temples and idols. The extension of docility went further into propagandizing elders and reporting the continuation of idolatries behind closed doors. Furthermore, the youth were not only subjected, but they also served as a power entity aimed at a larger scheme within their society. The docility sought to transform and improve the instruction of Christianity to all non-Christians and maintain the devotee status.

Whether directly or indirectly, strict discipline was essential to making hospitals run efficiently and to socializing the natives in European methods of medicine. The meticulousness of regulations and the supervision of priests and doctors made this institution a constant reminder of discipline. The combination of regulation, meticulous observation of detail and the religious awareness led to a modern Indian. More precisely, it led to “the man of modern humanism” (Foucault 1984, 185), which was one essential goal to the evangelizing effort.

Likewise, Bishop Zumarraga concentrated his focus of discipline on the Indigenous leaders and elite. Given a Foucaultian analysis of the native leaders and through the eyes of the native spectators one can visualize and postulate the great meaning behind witnessing one crack of a whip on the back of an elite figure. What this meant was a fundamental display of colonial might. “By subjecting Nahua elites to humiliation and physical penance, Zumarraga also targeted their subjects collective remembrance of the power their bodies once

held” (Taverez 2011, 37). Thus, the natives became more apt to disavow their old cultural traits and replace them with the newer colonial qualities.

The fourth chapter will analyze the apparition of Virgin de Guadalupe by Juan Diego, in 1531. The Virgin appeared to Juan, dressed as a native and speaking the native language. She entrusted Juan to carry a message of her appearance to Zumarraga, the first Bishop of New Spain. She requested a church be built in her honor, on the Hill of Tepeyac. Once Bishop Zumarraga approved Juan’s apparition story, news spread all over the country spurring mass devotions and conversions to Catholicism.

Virgin de Guadalupe is noted by scholars to be the main driving force behind the conversion of the country, but given a proper analysis of the institutional systems, specifically a Foucaultian stance focusing on public humiliation directed at the elite and pagan priests, it is easy to see the profound reactions it had over the mass populace. The destruction of Aztec temples, idols and gods provided evidence that the Aztec universe had now become incomplete. Thus, respect for the elite and the native religion was destroyed. In the end, the loss of faith in Aztec Gods provides a convincing indication that the Franciscan institutional systems were a success in converting the Nahua populations to Catholicism. The over all effort of the Friars had been accomplished with the dissemination of their ancient faith. Without these paramount systems implemented by the Franciscans, Virgin de Guadalupe would have had little effect in the country.

## Literature Review

Due to the breadth of this topic, a considerable amount of literary sources have been researched covering Franciscans institutions and Virgin de Guadalupe. Indeed, by the time of this proposal, I have read and researched sources for the past three years.

To understand the conversion of Mexico, historical and religious works by Robert Ricard, David Taverez, Robert Jackson, Francisco Morales, Stafford Poole, Patricia Harrington, Jeanette Peterson, Francis Johnson but not limited to must be explored.

Robert Ricard, in *The Spiritual Conquest*, provides an in-depth look at hospitals, Christianized rituals, schools and public punishment. Ricard portrays the Franciscan priests as the middlemen of the evangelization process in that they worked between God and the crown of Spain. He explains their struggles to convert a country that subsequently had an established religion. Their religion was more than a devotion to a single god but to a multitude of gods that the Indian believed would keep peace throughout the universe.

Both Ricard and Taverez postulate clarifications aimed at why the Franciscans were sent to evangelize. Nerves were running high in Europe; the Protestant Reformation was spreading broadly, the Spanish Inquisition had just come to an end, and the Reconquista of Spain had been successful. Just seventeen years prior to the conquest of New Spain, Muslims were forcibly converted to Christianity. These efforts intensified the sentiments to eradicate



“paganism.” In addition, the King of Spain wanted to be known as the victor of spreading Catholicism. Their efforts purport to evaluate the systematic reasoning to evangelize by their lovingness of “one true God.” In many cases, after the military conquest was complete, barbaric and forceful tactics were used as a way to frighten and draw the conquered into becoming a devotee.

A notion held in common by Ricard and Taveres is that while the religious elite sometimes used force, the priests genuinely admired and had love for the Indian communities and likewise, the Indian came to trust and admire the priests. Nonetheless, while the Indian was loved, he was not treated as an equal as he could not hold holy positions in the church. Thus, the researchers conclude, in the eyes of the holy, the Indian was a child that needed them, their guidance, and above all, their message of salvation. This is a striking view; Robert Ricard sees that the relationship captured the heart of the Indian through trust and admiration. In fact, this is why Ricard and Taveres believe the Franciscan institutions were such a success. Consequently, the school of thought surrounding the Virgin de Guadalupe ignores this essential facet and believes the Virgin to be the main turning point in devotion.

The Virgin could not have been effective if the Franciscans had not pushed their evangelical zeal, socialized the Indians in a European fashion and established a top down religious indoctrination of catechisms. Hence, without the workings of the Franciscans, reaction to the Virgin de Guadalupe would have

been useless. She could have been interpreted in ways opposed to Catholicism or interpreted as part of their ancient religion.

Both Ricard and Taveres's work itself contains many elements of discipline, panopticon communities, an established infrastructure of control, trust and admiration and abused power. Robert Ricard gives more emphasis to the Franciscan institutions, rather than the Virgin de Guadalupe. Ricard's work was one of the first works on the "Spiritual Conquest" and it was ground breaking for its time. It is still highly sought out and cited through academic journals, articles and other academic works.

Unlike Robert Ricard, Robert Jackson a more contemporary scholar, who views the "Spiritual Conquest" as time of upheaval and resistance towards Christianity. Although David Taveres is a contemporary scholar as well, Jackson and Taveres consider many of the same aspects of conversion for example, the conversion of the natives was not necessarily an over night acceptance to Christianity. Both scholars allude to much more resistance including murdering missionaries and other acts of violence towards the priests. Views among scholars during the beginning to the middle of the twentieth century such as Robert Ricard paint a picture of little resistance. Robert Jackson views the Franciscan institutions were effective but were not met without reaction by the natives. Apart from Taveres and Ricard, Jackson views many historical accounts are from a European standpoint. Jackson strives to give the natives a voice by distancing himself from Eurocentric records and realizing many historical records

are absent from Indian testimonies. Jackson's views are a great leap towards new foundations of scholarly research in Mesoamerica but he further concurs with Tavarez and Ricard in his views towards the mission methods to civilize and Europeanize the Indians.

Like Francis Berdan, Ignacio Morales and Patricia Don explain the historical context of the Aztec religion. Both scholars emphasize the fact that when the Franciscan priests took hold of the land they destroyed Aztec temples and idols. This triggered grave consequences for the Aztecs. Once the Indian became conquered the combination of losing their land, seeing their worship centers destroyed, and being ruled, left them feeling doubtful of their Gods. Many scholars tread lightly over this analysis but it should not be forgotten. It explains yet another vital piece of the demise of the Aztec religion and the rise of Catholicism in Mexico.

Manning Nash, a leading scholar, concurs with many other scholars over syncretism in Mexico. It is no revelation to any scholar that syncretism took place after the Franciscan priests established their institutions or after Virgin de Guadalupe appeared. Yet, Nash's contribution to this scholarly topic alludes to more adoption of Catholic proceedings. Many scholars rationalize syncretic practices but, far away from the fact, syncretism lodged Catholicism into the Aztec idiom and way of life, and eventually replaced the ancient "pagan" rituals. Hence, syncretism was a paving stone that led to greater adoption and devotion.

It was a mechanized institution that struck the Indian's emotion and soul.

Henceforth, this syncretic institution made great strides at conversions.

It is important to follow Francisco Morales work also. Morales looked at Franciscan schools, in particular the Colegio de Santa Cruz. Many scholars give an overview of the Franciscan monasteries and schools but Morales examines the Colegio de Santa Cruz. His central contribution was to highlight aspects of the Colegio. The school taught the Nahuatl students Spanish and Latin. Thus, breeding a group of trilingual Indians. The schools not only taught multiple languages but also transcribed Catholic texts into the Nahuatl language, extending the reach of Catholic doctrine to Nahuatl speaking populations. This is significant for the reason that first the priests learned the Nahuatl language to evangelize. Now, the students under the guidance of the Franciscans were evangelizing their own people. Even if the Indians were only transcribing, many did indeed project their newfound faith to their communities.

In a more contemporary study by Stafford Poole, he introduces many new highlighted examples of the evangelization disregarded by both Ricard and Tavarez. First and foremost, the geography in which the natives were located in the country played a large role in the conversion. Poole believes the natives closet to the military actions of the conquest, such as the Mexica of Tenochtitlan, were the most affected by the violence and chance of new imperialism and a new rule. In contrast, those on the peripheral of the battlegrounds were less affected

and viewed the conquest not as imperialism but as the arrival of settlers, bureaucrats, and missionaries as they would often come after Spanish victories.

By contrast, the other school of thought sees Virgin de Guadalupe as the highest contributing factor in the Indian conversion. This group mainly ignores the Franciscan contribution, first, introducing the religion, and second, having an already established relationship with the Indian, which reinforced religious faith.

Stafford Poole delves deeper in both the Franciscan missionary methods and the Virgin de Guadalupe when he highlights scholars such as George Vaillant and Luis Weckman. By and large, these authors see the Franciscan missionary methods as a substitution of religions for the Aztecs. Later after the apparition of the Virgin appears, they view the same process is exemplified from first learning Christianity and replacing Tonatzin (Aztec mother goddess) who appeared on the Hill of Teyapec before the Virgin de Guadalupe who appeared on the same hill years later.

Francis Johnson's *The Wonder of Guadalupe* is but one of many historical essays written on the apparition of the Virgin. The main emphasis Johnson contributes is the in depth historical analysis. She incorporates historical studies, while speculating and making her own conclusions. The history of the Virgin's appearance was written a great period after her said appearance. Thus, Johnson seeks alternative sources to draw on specific events that were said to have transpired, for example, Nahuatl archives and interviews with contemporary

Nahuatl populations living near the hill at Teyapec. The story of her appearance has remained alive for centuries and is still heard today.

While Johnson deals with the actual apparition story, Patricia Harrington delves deeper and into the Virgin de Guadalupe. She traces the Virgin back to the Reconquista and how she made her way to the new world. This is important for she explains how the image was seen on the battle fields, statues of the Virgin were left in conquered towns and how the natives initial impression of the Virgin was probably of war and bloodshed.

Her work aids the explanation of the Franciscan institutions in that without the friar's initial indoctrination, the Virgin would have been thought of as a symbol of destruction. Furthermore, she pieces together that the symbol of the Virgin meant two different things to two different groups. For the natives, she represented a new beginning, but for the Spaniards she was just another image of the Virgin and a continuation of Christianity.

As I suggest in this thesis, the Franciscan institutions were directly related to the conversion of Mesoamerica and without them the Virgin would have had little effect over the Nahuatl populations. Without the fundamental religious base the Franciscans established among the Indians, Virgin de Guadalupe could have been construed in several different ways. The most catastrophic would have been by the Indians believing it was their own god, completely distant from Catholicism. Thus, without the Franciscan effort, the Virgin would have proven futile and many converts could have lapsed back to their ancient religion.

## Methodology

In this thesis, I test Foucault's theory of the "economy of power" in the context of colonial Mexico. Foucault's theory examines institutionalized forms of power that shape and discipline the body primarily through the penal system. I apply his theory to the context of Franciscan evangelizing efforts in colonial Mexico as seen through their institutions such as hospitals and education systems. Leading scholars during the mid-twentieth century to present that have studied colonial Mexico but not systematically synthesized Foucault's "economy of power." I suggest that Foucaultian notions of power can be applied to Franciscan institutions. By doing so, my thesis concludes that institutional forms of power shaped indigenous subjectivities and created the grounds for Guadalupine Catholicism.

## CHAPTER ONE

### FRANCISCAN INSTITUTIONS AND THE INDIGENOUS

Converting the natives of New Spain was not an easy task and could not have been accomplished without the religious Mendicant Orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians. For the purposes of this thesis, the Franciscans will be emphasized, dating from their arrival in 1523, to the beginning of their expulsion in 1572. The Franciscans held the largest number of missionaries and assumed the most important social and political centers within the valley of Mexico. Franciscan evangelization began in 1523, with the arrival of Pedro de Gante and two others who died shortly after arriving. Many scholars however date the era of Franciscan evangelization to 1524, with the arrival of the “Famous Twelve”. The arrival of the twelve represented the beginning of a new and systematic evangelization of the Indians of New Spain. Hernan Cortez had called specifically on the Franciscans and Dominicans to evangelize the country but the Franciscan twelve were the first to arrive. It was during this period that institutions and codes were established and enforced. However this does not diminish the fact that Pedro de Gante did evangelize upon his arrival, thus 1523 is the date used here.

Discussion of the evangelization of the New World must include mentioning Hernan Cortez. A devout Christian, Cortez nevertheless was a debauched politician who sought glory and triumph. Prior to the conquest of the



New World, Cortez was stationed in Cuba. The governor of Cuba, Diego Velasquez de Cuellar, denied Cortez permission to land in Mexico but the command was ignored. Cuellar sent forces against Cortez but Cortez's men and his new Indian allies fought them off.

Established in Mexico, Cortez and his men were convinced it was their duty to God to end the "pagan practices" of idolatry and sacrifice they witnessed. Cortez wrote several letters to the king of Spain, indicating their discovery of "pagans", and seeking permission to convert them. With both Cortez's desire to be a victor and the Crown's desire to be the champion of the true faith of the world, permission was soon granted. Cortez's initial attempts to lead a conquest against the Indians failed, but two years later he allied with the Tlaxcalans, an enemy neighboring tribe of the Aztec's, and together in 1521 they vanquished the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan.

After the conquest of the city-state, Tenochtitlan, Hernan Cortez specifically called upon the Mendicant Orders to start evangelizing its peoples. This would prove to be one of the paramount changes in New Spain. 1523 marks the year of the beginning of the Mexican church and the implementation of a disciplined alien culture. From this point forward, native religious practices would slowly dwindle, be dismantled, and nearly eradicated.

In a letter to King Charles V Cortez urged for more missionaries to aid in evangelizing. Only once did Cortez request bishops, but changed his mind, thinking bishops and cannons often set an unscrupulous example and were too

costly, and thus would be fatal to the conversion of the natives. Further he believed Friars alone would be sufficient (Ricard 1966, 21). Granting this request, Charles V asked the pope to send missionaries from St. Frances and St. Dominic, so they could confirm the natives in the church and administer sacraments of ordination. The first generation of Franciscans were greatly educated, endowed with a strong vision, and held a prominent role for their order. Their vision was clear, and they sought to instruct evangelically pure Christianity to the natives to establish a Christian Indian state. To this end, contemporary scholars David Sweet and Robert Jackson believed the Mendicant Orders were in New Spain for three purposes: to convert, civilize and exploit (Jackson 1995, 3). Much exploitation came from the encomienda system, which largely, the Franciscans were apart from. However, institutional systems laid forth by the Franciscans sought to convert the Indians from their ancient religion by civilizing them in a Eurocentric manner.

The Famous Twelve arrived, in Mexico City on June 17 or 18 1524, belonging to the Friars. It was during this time the “Golden Age of the Indian Church” thrived. Under the reign of Charles V, the Franciscans enjoyed unlimited confidence from the crown, while the secular clergy and episcopacy were of little importance in New Spain. Although Cortez believed more religious missionaries would be needed, the Dominicans and Augustinians would not arrive for another few years. Cortez and the Franciscan missionaries realized a more methodological approach to evangelizing the natives would be needed. This set

the stage for the development of institutions and the establishing of a moral order.

In 1536, the Spanish crown gave authority to the first Bishop of New Spain, Fray Juan de Zumarraga, to establish an Episcopal Inquisition in Mexico City. The Franciscans held the significant advantage of converting the natives. The Friars were the largest in number, and their influence and leadership was absolutely paramount between the 1520's and 1530's. Furthermore, there was no branch of the Holy Office in New Spain. The crown had only extended the authority of the Seville Holy Office to New Spain. It was during this time the inquisition entered. However, Bishop Zumarraga was less fond of the inquisitorial tools, thinking them unnecessary for the eradication of heresy in the indigenous community. Zumarraga regarded the inquisition as a tool to monitor the new settler communities, not the Indians.

At the time of the Franciscan arrival in New Spain the Holy Office of Spain was not established in the country, nor were there office officials to dictate the right and wrong way to evangelize. The Franciscans were able to evangelize in their own manner. A manner that had been a large part of Franciscan past, it emphasized a "living Gospel" of extreme poverty in emulation of both Christ and Saint Francis of Assisi, the founder of the order (Curcio-Nagy 2010,152) this is important because the friars established their own institutions of learning that were apart from the European style and entered a new realm of instruction style that some what mirrored the protestant reformation. It further allowed the

Franciscans to evangelize the natives in Nahuatl, even though it was in direct opposition to the crown. It should be noted, Mendicants such as the Franciscans were teaching orders, which formed part of a larger movement to educate the population and reassert church control over religious belief and activity (Curcio-Nagy 2010,153). The priest's dismay over politics in the church led to vociferous opponents against the encomienda system, by which the owner of the encomienda was supposed to teach the Indian Spanish and religious instruction. The extraction of Indian labor was payment for the owner's services but Indians were treated more as slaves. This mutual understanding between the friars and the Indians helped solidify respect and maintain a moral order of beliefs. However, respect and moral beliefs that stood apart from the encomienda owners and commanded compassion.

Within this context, the moral order will define the subjected as the Indian population, while the administrative powers are categorized as the Franciscan priests who aim to dismantle the Indian culture. For the Franciscans, it was the ability to establish a Christian based society wherein the subjected became a faithful servant to the Holy Gospel. For the native, the moral order was recognized when he lost all cultural heritages and enshrined himself within the belief of the Gospel. The moral order is best understood as a syncretic mode in which both the Franciscans and natives played an instrumental role. Neither group could fully accomplish the moral order without each other's consent. Once the moral order had been proven, the Franciscan institutions could fully train and

guide the mind of the native. For the natives, docility was created through commonality and together they cohesively produced a Christian native who was easily evangelized and led to fewer natives who lapsed in their new faith.

It was the Franciscans desire to distance themselves from the European religious political hierarchy, wealth and institutional power. Seeing this opposition, it is no mystery that they desired to return to the age of Christ (Balsera 2005, 22). The Franciscans undoubtedly identified themselves with the natives. The way they lived, the way they spoke, and their declared motive for coming to meet the Nahuas not being for Jade, gold, or quetzal plumes, but only out of desire that the Indians be saved; that is, only for love (Balsera 2005, 25). In fact, the Franciscans favorite pastoral activities were with the Native population. Hence, schools and colleges, hospitals, and publications, were addressed to them.

The Franciscans believed they were the saviors of the natives, presenting them with the right way to worship and live. As explained by Klor de Alva, the missionaries represent themselves in the Nahuatl version as having been sent to instruct the Nahuas “how to cool the heart/ of He by Whom All Live, so He will not completely destroy you.” The Franciscans were like the Nahua priests, the knowers of the right way to service the supernatural powers in order to appease them (Balsera 2005, 26).

First and foremost, it should be understood that initially, the Spaniards, Franciscans, and other religious denominations conceptualized the natives as

“that of lacking and/or lessening difference: half-child, half-wild, barbaric practices or of hardly any practice at all, or if having an undeniable degree of civilization, of perplexing customs and beliefs revealing an inherently deficient use of reason and great ignorance of truth” (Balsera 2005, 3). Although there were deep contradictions within the religious elite towards the natives, there remained a desire to save their souls. On the one hand, many of the Franciscans believed the Indians were capable of accepting Christ, but on the other, a small sum believed they were incompatible and would lapse in the faith.

There were two morality conjectures, one in which the colonizers set into motion to evangelize, and the other of the native and their willingness to adopt Christianity, understood as the moral order. As Robert Ricard has so eloquently put it, the natives were viewed by the Spanish as children who needed to be saved. In the eyes of the religious, what would the native have done had they not been shown the right way? “Questioning of the indigenous capacity to Christianize led Franciscans in New Spain to defensively and rigorously enforce Christian living among the indigenous in the Valley of Mexico in the 1530’s” (Don 2006, 28). The notions of morality gave way to establishing institutional systems set apart from the encomienda system that the priests disavowed to institute faith. More importantly, a moral order was established to create a docile native that could be mended and molded to the religious’ desire.

Even though some Franciscans doubted the native’s capacity to believe in the articles of faith, a majority of the Franciscan leaders believed and argued that

the work had been effective and the indigenous were fully capable of Christianization, while still fully realizing that evangelizing would be a difficult road. This belief system led to massive baptisms of tens of thousands of Indians. In many cases, once the spiritual leader or elite figure had been baptized the rest of the populace soon followed. It was not until the 1530's, when there were finally enough Friars to reside in towns and villages long enough to discover "paganism" that punishment or sanctions would result.

It is true, the natives were initially looked down upon because Christianity was virtually unknown, but this soon changed and gave way to a lasting relationship, mainly between the younger generations and the elite. The older generations and priests were more unlikely to assimilate but this does not diminish the fact that the country was developing a new shape. The natives were forced to attend mass, communion, public processions, and learn the Bible of Christianity. The moral order enveloped all natives and created a new frontier of religious zeal and evangelization. The moral order involved all natives to participate in religious events but was mainly concentrated towards the younger generations for they would be the generation to outlast the old. The stubborn older generations would die off but the youth would maintain the moral order for future generations to come.

It is believed the "Famous Twelve" made an astounding impression on the Aztec people upon their arrival in Mexico City. Walking many miles bare foot and dressed in ragged robes, the Indians initially mocked the Franciscans, calling

them “Motolinia,” meaning “he is poor” in the Nahuatl language. However, this eventually led to admiration. When Cortez knelt before the priests as they entered the city, the Indians also fell to their knees. (Madsen 1967, 372). The Spartan self-discipline of the Franciscans and the respect they commanded from their conquerors created among the Aztec a favorable impression, which endured and became a powerful influence in the conversion (Madsen 1967, 372). The Indians were astonished by the Franciscan devotion to God, shown through flagellation and the wearing of grass shirts for their wrongs. In addition to this, they slept in the same conditions and ate the same foods as the natives. This, in comparison to what the Indians had previously witnessed by their conquerors, illuminated the contrast between the Franciscans and the conquistadors, and it solidified a commonality.

The Franciscan’s sole mission was to evangelize the Indian populations. To this end the Franciscan priests employed a variety of evangelical practices. However, understanding their fundamental problem to be effective communication, the Franciscan’s initial primary focus was to learn Nahuatl, enabling them to teach Christian doctrine in the native language of the Nahuatl region surrounding the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan. Additionally, the second key factor in a successful conversion was to learn their society. By understanding their society, elimination would be an easier task at hand. A key figure in these efforts, Toribio de Benavente, who added ‘Motolinia’ as his surname to aid in his identification to the Indians and to show his love for the natives, is known as the



father of ethnographic research and linguistics in Mesoamerica. Benavante 'Motolinia' began studying the native's gestures and the way they spoke, making notes and collaborating his gatherings in his study. Other Franciscans began following his lead, eventually leading to a plethora of notes. Once the priests understood basic idioms and the framework of the Nahuatl language, they began consulting specific natives to strengthen their understanding. It is important to note, not all of the religious were able to grasp Nahuatl, one important figure being the first bishop of New Spain, Zumarraga. Their religious instruction was less than complete, relying on simple visuals and gestures or the demonstration of the articles of faith through plays. Although in time many of the Franciscans eventually mastered the Nahuatl language, producing a substantial number of dictionaries and grammar manuals to further the missionary work in the field.

The Franciscans undoubtedly believed that the key to winning the Indians hearts was by learning their language, but hospitals and schools were also very effective institutions for eventual native conversion. These institutions were religiously based, and they helped to colonize the minds of the natives in that they taught them how to treat and care for their fellows in a Eurocentric manner. Hospitals, for example, clearly demonstrate the native mind being institutionalized by European methods. The Spaniards brought with them many highly infectious diseases that ran rampant throughout New Spain. These were European ailments requiring European treatment. Moreover, the hospital was highly desired by the natives because they quarantined the sick together, where

they could be cared for and consoled by the town priest. Beyond that, the hospitals were constantly stocked with foods and other general commodities. Robert Ricard argued that soon after their introduction, hospitals were looked upon as a retreat. Schools served a similar purpose in that once the natives acquired enough doctrine they began to instruct in a European fashion. The combination of the priests learning Nahuatl, and the natives learning Christian doctrine and European customs, allowed the Franciscans to “socialize” and mold the native to their desire.

Although language was an important step for a mutual understanding, education was the cornerstone towards the “Nahuatlization of Christianity” through the priests and children. Prior to the 1530’s, the Franciscans called upon the children of the elite to attend their Christian convents for education and training. There the *pipiltin*, children of the nobility, received religious, military, and civic education. By the 1530’s, the Franciscans were placing these “children enforcers” back into villages to take over religious instruction from their elders and, possibly, snitching on their families. Out of fear of being spied on and lack of familial loyalty, their own relatives killed many of these children. Children of the elite and the lower classes not only learned Christian doctrine but also writing and reading, the liturgical hours, and how to serve the Holy Mass.

By 1532, over 5,000 children were receiving education in various monasteries of central Mexico, but the largest group was the Nahua population, in Mexico City. This particular school was not famous for the number of students

but for its higher education. Here, students were taught Spanish and Latin under the direction of Pedro de Gante. During the first half of the sixteenth century, there were only cathedral and parish schools, or houses of studies in the Franciscan Order where the youth were trained in priesthood. As the century progressed, higher education was the norm, directing students at colleges such as Colegio de Santa Cruz. This was justified by the perception that higher education constituted an essential lay support for the Franciscan missionaries to institute a moral order. By the middle of the sixteenth century, the college had successfully trained trilingual natives, speaking Nahuatl, Spanish and Latin. This group provided impressive work for the formation of a native Christianity.

As the youth, older generations, and priests, were made to follow the Christianized moral order, so too were the elite in great numbers. The campaign to exterminate “paganism” touched the elite, who were forced to change their accustomed ways. It is inherent that the elite held privileges unlike the common native, such as enjoying concubines and having several wives, which had been a main staple for centuries. In the 1530’s, the empress announced a “cedula,” requiring Indian leaders to select one wife as his only legitimate wife and to abandon the rest.

To further propagate evangelical doctrine, “pagan rituals” were Christianized. In other words, Christian songs were translated into Nahuatl, whereby the native elite gave the Christian song a recognizable native motif. This served the purpose of spreading Christian doctrine through the common

language. Public rituals were essential to pre-Colombian civilizations and within Spanish Catholicism. Edifying plays were an instrument to evangelize. Religious plays, music and festivals, especially at Easter and Corpus Christi, both of which celebrated the Holy Eucharist, were used as a mechanism of power to encompass religious devotees (Ricard 1966, 183). Hence, making a Christian song a native song and dance became an effective institutional tool of evangelism. In this way, both friars and natives made possible the spiritual and intellectual transfer of the Nahua religion to a Christian moral order.

The Franciscans deliberately avoided any accommodation, in ritual or dogma, and they stubbornly destroyed even certain usages that had little bearing on religion. Additionally, priests multiplied the ceremonies and instituted edifying plays (Ricard 1966, 183). By doing so they replaced rather than continued or developed native ceremonies, hence, destroying Nahua culture and installing Catholicism.

For the purpose of bringing further moral order to Nahua communities, every Sunday morning the natives were expected to make themselves present for catechism. It was an ordinary custom for the native upon arrival to bear a cross and recite prayers. Roll was called at the church and the absentees were noted for further punishment. Punishment ranged from rod lashings to more severe sanctions (Ricard 1966, 96). In addition, because there were often too few friars to instruct the natives, newly entrusted native converts in the moral order took their positions. These particular natives not only were given

permission to generally instruct but also brought forth the natives of the community that had not yet been confirmed into the church. Through this, the newly formed hierarchy saw that everyone received baptism and confession, marriages were made lawful, and that couples lived in peace. They denounced adulterers, concubinage, drunkards, merchants who encouraged vice for profit, sorcerers, prisoners and all else who still practiced "paganism." In this regard, the moral order took on a new face and was propagated by the natives themselves.

Catechism was broken into a hierarchy, one for the children of the elite and the other for the commoner. Although there was plentiful instruction for adults, their main effort targeted the children. The instruction for the commoner was basic doctrine. The child would arrive at the school in the morning and leave in the afternoon. In contrast, the children of the elite generally lived at the school and were further trained in Catholicism and politics for the reason that they would be the next generation to lead the country. In other words, the Friars effectively guided the children with Catholicism. Their minds had not yet taken root in the ancient religion of their lineage and the Franciscans used this to their advantage in maintaining moral order.

All children were expected to further propagate doctrine in their homes and at times, report idolatries that took place within. By 1537, Charles V gave the order to demolish the old idols. The Emperor said, they should be demolished, but quietly, and that stones should be used for building churches. These children later proved their faith when they began to destroy the old idols and temples, and

once even stoning to death a native priest who believed there was a god of wine. Because of the meager number of Friars, in some cases, boys ran away from home to evangelize other towns which otherwise did not have the same structure of mendicant control. Thus, the education the children received proved to be valiant but also destructive. Young Native scholars, fluent in Spanish, Latin and their own Nahuatl, translated and wrote prayer and confessional manuals, sermons, histories, and other religious treatises that became indispensable to the Christianization program. The new education created a moral order among the youth and was widely spread throughout all Christian towns and villages.

Another topic that will be explored is public humiliation. This short-lived but effective method of coercion began early in the sixteenth century when the Franciscan priests arrived in Central Mexico. The “ecclesiastic and civil authorities developed institutional measures and discourses that sought to identify and publicly punish a broad range of indigenous activities, that were labeled as idolatry, sorcery, or superstition” (Tavarez 2011, 3). The method was straightforward in that it targeted Indian individuals and groups who sought to continue “paganism” or disrupt Catholic proceedings. Outspoken individuals against the church were considered traitors and were made to be an example to the rest of the natives. In some extreme cases, the natives who continued their faith were sentenced to death. An example of these torturous methods can be found in the story of the Franciscan Don Carlos. Don Carlos’s extreme tactics in eradicating “paganism” led to the abandonment of physical violence to subtler

bio-political mechanisms in coercing the indigenous peoples to drop idolatry. These psychological techniques can be seen throughout hospitals, schools and catechism. Finally, public humiliation of native religion was expressed more discreetly through the vandalizing of holy temples and hiding and burying idols from the religious. All told, the purpose of these public humiliations kept the Indians in line and continued to allow the religious to mend and mold the Indians of New Spain in the constituted moral order.

Building on public humiliation, another topic that will be explored is the destruction of Aztec temples, gods and idols. When the Spaniards destroyed Aztec temples and worship sites they dislodged the Aztec religion. Priests were ousted from their prominent positions, “pagan idols” were smashed, temples were dismantled and churches were resurrected on the same site using the same stones of the destroyed temple. Aztec gods, temples and idols were believed to be fundamental to the Aztec religion and attributed to a successful functioning of the universe. The Aztec’s believed that for the universe to function their war god, Huitzilopochtli, needed to be nourished by human blood, but the conquest disrupted a more than century old procession. Thus, “the conquest destroyed not only public worship of Aztec gods but also belief in the protection of Huitzilopochtli” (Madsen 1967, 371) and initiated a great leap towards Catholicism and the dismantling of Aztec gods. This catechistic affect reveals itself in reports of Indians hanging themselves or taking poison in acts of mass suicide, caused by the profound shock at the overthrow of their culture

(Harrington 1988, 30). In addition, many Indians refrained from relations with their wives to avoid introducing new children into the world. The established moral order solidified the end of Aztec religion and the implementation of Catholicism.

By the end of the Franciscan governance, the Franciscan order was said to be a failure due to their inability to eradicate “paganism.” In 1572, many Franciscan parishes were overturned and the secular clergy of Spain took their positions. The secular clergy contested that the Franciscans only held temporary control, in order to continue to evangelize the native populations, until proper religious authority could be established in the country. It became painfully obvious to the Catholic clergy that internalization of Christian moral values and metaphysical concepts had not taken place among the Aztec. The archbishop of Mexico charged that the Indians did not believe the articles of faith and the mysteries, which the church celebrates (Madsen 1967, 380).

I believe the secular clergy were mistaken in their assessment of New Spain. This is demonstrated by their reluctance to learn the Nahuatl language and the intentional distancing of themselves from the Indian populations as the Franciscans did. In other words, the secular clergy had not formed or attempted to partake in relations with the Indians like the Franciscans did. Notably, the Franciscans and natives appeared as an inseparable body, an association not always welcomed by the Spanish Crown. In fact, since the middle of the sixteenth century bishops and royal officials tried to separate them, assigning



secular priests in the native towns and limiting the ecclesiastical authority of the friars (Morales 2008, 137). They failed to notice that, in the end, the Indians had already grown accustomed to the religious in colonial Mexico, their ancient religion had almost been eradicated and their minds had already been fashioned within a Catholic moral order.

However the Franciscan's established the moral order and the Indians followed and accepted the moral order. This was shown through their willingness to adopt, publicly worship, evangelize native communities, attend mass and constantly find themselves engulfed within the Christian moral order. One thing is certain, it was reputedly a top down process of religious superiority inflicted to introduce and maintain a religious moral order.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER AND DISCIPLINE

Michel Foucault's theory of power is vital to the analysis of the Franciscan institutional systems. He viewed discipline as a series of techniques, coercing and arranging the individual's movements and experience of space and time to control the body's operations. This was achieved by procedures such as normalizing judgments and observation. As it follows Foucault's views of discipline were thought to develop a complacent object while at the same time making them an object of power. The docile individual was made to conform to the standards of the institution and to act in accordance with the subject institution.

Thus, Michel Foucault's theory of power runs in direct harmony with the ways in which the Franciscan priests established and maintained a religious moral order. As stated before in this thesis the religious moral order is defined as the subjected and the subjector. For the Franciscans, it was the ability to establish a Christian based society wherein the subjected became a faithful servant to the Holy Gospel. For the native, the moral order was recognized when he lost all cultural heritages and enshrined himself within the belief of the Gospel. The moral order is best understood as an ideology implemented by the Franciscans to bring about change within the Indian communities. When the Indians became Christianized and began practicing the foreign religious customs

they entered the religious moral order. Once the moral order had been established and accepted, the Franciscan institutions could efficiently indoctrinate the natives. For the natives, docility was created through the commonality of religious beliefs and together they cohesively produced a Christian native who was easily evangelized and led to fewer natives who lapsed in their new faith.

The primary objective of this chapter is to discuss and explain Michel Foucault's theory of power. It is not enough to merely quote Foucault's theory, but rather what is needed is a proper analysis of his views on the economy of power. Later in the thesis, a synthesized analysis of the Franciscans institutions and Foucault will be examined. Specifically, how the object of power and discipline allowed the Franciscans to create and maintain their religious moral order over the Indians. The overarching effect, as Michel Foucault explains, is the usefulness of institutions in persuading the objected to conform through meticulousness, discipline, power and regulation.

In the simplest terms Foucault's works are best understood as a subtle learning process that creates an object or establishes groups to conform to the larger bio-political scheme of constraints. The newly formed object conforms to the particular institution and allows the institution to run more efficiently. Whether in schools, the military or a factory, Foucault's theory guides the reader through an overlooked step within an overarching process taking place, for example, the larger institution of a school in which the instructor's primary job is to produce

educated and obedient students such as in the Colegio de Santa Fe. The instructor will apply rules and regulations of arranged seating, no speaking or reciting the daily lesson. The daily rituals make the student conform to the instructors desire while simultaneously allowing the whole class to run efficiently and lessening abnormality. Thus, Foucault's theories explain how cultural power molds the individual's systems of thought and behavior. In other words, for Foucault, power means a set of relationships in which actors strategically seek to govern, shape, or manage the behavior of others by reacting to what others have done or might do in the future (Piomelli 2004, 424). This logic of power is a process that gets enacted, a process in which all peoples maneuver, improvise and modify their roles based on actions and reactions of others. This is the process of on going actions and reactions of power that Foucault is concerned with. Thus, historians showcase Foucaultian theory with their own to enable processes of control in cultural, social and political settings.

### Discipline and Punish

In Michel Foucault's *Discipline & Punish* he provides the historical perspective by first looking at the French revolutionary period, where the scaffold is primarily used as discipline. In this period it is the physical body that is being disciplined, but as history passed, discipline became less directed towards the body and more towards the individuals mind. This nuanced approach guides the individual towards how they ought to act within a particular setting. The primary

institutions through which Foucault believes this approach is communicated through or within are hospitals, schools, prisons, and the military. These have evolved over the years to become the institutions we now know today.

Discipline was the collective term that he gave to a set of techniques and procedures designed to track, transform, and optimally utilize humans. These techniques arose in monasteries, schools, barracks, and hospitals and then spread throughout the rest of the social body, from the late seventeenth century (Piomelli 2004, 431) onward. The purpose of these procedures was to make individuals simultaneously more productive and more manageable or “docile”. They were devices that allowed a single person or small group to manage a relative multitude. The techniques primarily focus on isolating and training human bodies, Foucault characterized discipline as an “anatomy-politics of the human body” that treats the body as a machine or object to optimize (Foucault 1990, 139). Specific innovations developed out of discipline. The most notable were record-keeping systems, constant surveillance, normalizing judgment, and the examination. Moreover, each of these techniques contributed to the ability to track, watch, and shape individuals and created what Foucault called, “the age of social control” (Piomelli 2004, 433). At the heart of disciplinary techniques is what Foucault called normalizing judgment. The process of interrelated practices of defining appropriate and inappropriate behavior or conduct and imposing micro-penalties to depress nonconformity as well as a system of reward to encourage internalization of the norms. Each mechanism entails making individuals better

known, more visible, identifiable and trackable, and their conduct and progress more measurable and manageable (Piomelli 433, 2004).

### Reform

Foucault challenges the notion that the subjection of the individual's body to torture in the past is qualitatively different than subjection to the penal system we know today. He also rejects the notion that the penal system was created through humanitarian works. He argues that it was the reformist elite who created it because they felt the power to punish and judge was unevenly distributed and therefore ineffective. A more evenly distributed and therefore effective form of punishment would result from state power becoming a form of public power. In sum, reformers were not concerned for the welfare of the prisoners; they wanted to make power operate more efficiently. Foucault's theory of "gentle" punishment, chain gangs for example, is considered the first step away from the excessive force of the sovereign and towards a generalized controlled means of punishment.

Similar to other reformers, the reformers in New Spain sought to bring about change. The reformers that Foucault talks about did not necessarily care about the welfare of the individual, but many of the Franciscan's cared and loved their native brothers. That being said, the commonality the two groups of reformers had was their desire to bring about change and development. Through

gentle punishment the Franciscan's could identify with the natives, and through subtle guidance they could transform their judgments.

### Methods of Coercion

In each institution the individual conformed to rules and regulations of power, schools, for example, were situated to produce educational excellence. Schools provided a hierarchy based on knowledge and ability in which pupils could be separated based on merit. By assigning individual places it made possible the supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all. It organized a new economy of apprenticeship. It made the educational space function like a learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, and rewarding (Foucault 1975, 147).

Foucault's economy of power is needed to explain the "correct" means of training. Its purpose was to transform the soul and to enforce the civil laws and the regulations of the institution. The docility of the individual made each institution run fluidly, and conformity among the masses followed the established economy of power. The prison system's main function is not to punish the actual crime that is committed, but to transform the criminal. The establishment is maintained by the individual being subjected to habits, rules, orders, and an authority that is exercised continually around him and upon him, which he must allow to function automatically in him (Foucault 1975, 129). The exercise of habits allowed the Franciscan's to produce an economy of power that sought to

break down the individual and rearrange Aztec culture in the paradigm of Western civilization.

In the case of detail, Foucault explains the political anatomy sought to correctly train the individual not to neglect little things of meticulousness because all little things are necessarily a part of larger things. Within hospitals the meticulousness of doctoral records of medicinal use and supply, the number of patients and staff, sanitation and patient observation, made the economy of power ever more important to saving lives and quarantining the diseased from the rest. Through discipline, a medically useful space was created.

Enclosure and functional sites ran in tandem with monastery schools and factory systems in that they maximized their objectives of control. Enclosure ensured that individuals were present and avoided distributions in groups. All could be accounted for and it was easier for each individual to be assessed, judged and calculated based on merits. Functional sites broke down communications that might disrupt the political anatomy of the institution but also created a useful space.

The correct method of training through discipline is to train the moving, confused, useless multitudes of bodies and forces, into a multiplicity of individual elements (Foucault 1975, 170). It is discipline that makes individuals an instrument of exercise. As it follows, the success of disciplinary power lends aid from simple instruments such as hierarchical observation and normalizing judgments, and a combination of the two. In the prison system the 'panopticon' is



used as both a combination of observation and normalized judgments in that the criminal could be seen without knowing when they were being watched. The central structure surrounded by cells allowed a useful space for correct training. It functioned with fewer guards, instead forcing prisoners to act accordingly based on the unease and conformity that results from never knowing when they are being watched. Later, this building was spread throughout society based on the notion that it deprived the individual of his freedom and therefore could reform him.

Foucault insisted that power is fundamentally productive. The relationships in which people and groups shape the behavior and conduct of others do not just thwart or prevent behavior, but often affirmatively create or incite it. As Foucault approaches it, power teaches; it molds conduct; it trains; it creates and instills aptitudes, habits, and identifies; it stimulates; it incites desires. In other words, superiors, peers, and situations do not just prevent us from doing things, they encourage us to think, act, and understand ourselves in a particular way.

In the end, Michel Foucault viewed discipline as a series of techniques through which the individual could be controlled. The mainstay of control was done through hierarchical observation, normalizing judgments and examination. Through these three features of discipline the notion of norm developed.

By and large, Michel Foucault's theory of discipline runs in almost complete tandem with the Franciscan institutional systems. The Franciscans

main purpose was to evangelize a society that by the time of their arrival had an established culture and religion. Foucault's theory of discipline is helpful in understanding how the evangelization was carried out. Complete and austere observation constantly aligned itself with normalizing native judgments and Christian faith. Without proper discipline in monastery schools, hospitals and the specific ways towns were structured, the Valley of Mexico may have never been fully converted and the religious moral order may not have been rooted into society.

The need for the institutions was brought about by a moral order ideology, while trial and error led to the most productive institutions, including schools, hospitals and catechism. Punishment and harsh sanctions limited the moral order in that they reduced the effectiveness of the conversion. The scare tactic potentially produced illegitimate conversions that later led to the lapsing of faith, thus, the need for the institutions to assist the Franciscans by subtly coercing the natives through correct training. Schools, monasteries, hospitals and religious festivals were meant for all natives to attend. The institutions made power less forceful and through subtle discipline the Franciscan institutions efficiently indoctrinated the natives.

The Franciscans desired Christian subjects to emerge from the institutions, to replace native culture by institutionalizing the natives in European customs and religious beliefs. The need to create Christian subjects was to ultimately distance the natives from their culture and religion and promote

Christianity to the privileged place of the sole religion of New Spain. Christian subjects could serve this purpose by believing and following the works of Christianity, making them less likely to lapse in their faith and more likely to proclaim their religious beliefs to their families, communities and abroad in neighboring communities.

Institutionalizing the Indians reinforced the indoctrination of religion by not only following Christianity morals and practice, but also following European standards of education, reliance on European treatments for diseases and by learning the feast days, sacraments, and public processions to participate in. Backed by both Christianity and European cultural traits, these new Christian subjects were easier for the friars to guide.

Christian subjects were helpful to the friars in several ways. First, the Franciscans sought to distance themselves from the conquistadors, to show the natives that they did not come for riches but were there to save their souls. Unlike the encomienda system, the friars did not treat the natives as slaves but slept and ate in the same conditions. The natives were treated justly and religious doctrine was the main purpose of the institutions. Second, the friars structured their institutions to benefit the converted. Schools, hospitals, village life and public displays of worship encouraged all natives to participate and continue their religious faith. Third, once the natives accepted the foundations of Christianity, the faith could be passed down from generation to generation.

In the end, Christian subjects proved the success of the Franciscan institutional systems. The natives passed on their faith to their lineage and down generations. Without establishing Christian subjects among the native communities the conversion would have proven futile and would not have lasted to present day Mexico.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FRANCISCAN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS AND FOUCAULT

As suggested in the previous chapters of this thesis, the Franciscan order was the paramount force behind the spread of the church in the New World. The development of the Church in the New World could not have been accomplished without their dedication, their evangelical zeal, and also the trust of the Nahua populations. This chapter will delve deeper into the workings of the Franciscan institutional structure and how they led to the native adoption of the religious moral order. The essence of the mission was discipline- religious, moral, social and industrial, which it afforded (Langer & Jackson 1995, 5). As previously stated, the religious moral order was a syncretic practice wherein the natives needed to understand and accept the articles of faith and to participate in their practice in order for it to be established. Once the native understanding had been established, it set the foreground for evangelization. Furthermore, this chapter will provide a Foucaultian outlook on the Franciscan institutional systems. The main focus of this section will address the mechanisms of culture that affect the human being. It will precisely describe each Franciscan institution while synthesizing Foucaultian theory to establish how the moral order subjected the mind of the native. In addition, the emphasis given to discipline provides an outlined view of how the Franciscan institutional systems were successful in converting the natives. Thus, in synthesizing Foucaultian theory with the

Franciscan institutional systems, this chapter will attempt to provide substantial secondary evidence detailing the success of the institutions through schools, hospitals, discipline and monasteries. Through the top down discipline approach, the Franciscans were able to influence the native populations and shape their culture along institutional lines.

Each individual institutional system served its own methodological purpose, but in the end, all institutional systems were used to evangelize and socialize the mind of the Nahua peoples. More specifically, the Franciscans created institutional systems that gave rise to a docile native created through a religious moral order.

The focal Franciscan institutional systems this thesis is concerned with are: schools, hospitals, public humiliation, and processions of display and cultural subjectivity of the Nahua peoples. The reason the Franciscan institutions were of such grave importance is that while Hernan Cortez and the mendicant orders waited for the arrival of priests to aid their mission, in fact more priests would not arrive in New Spain for several years. The evangelization of the country would be held in the hands of a small number of priests. Therefore, a more methodological approach gave rise to the Franciscan institutional systems. The methodological approach proved to be so profound that the newly docile natives would stand in for the Friars in their absence and evangelize their own peoples through the created moral order.

## Village Structure, Schools and Catechism

The roots and foundations of schools and villages can be traced to directly following the conquest. The Spaniards received land for their duty during the conquest and as they ravaged this land the Indians were obliged to take refuge in the mountains. The scarcity of natives troubled some evangelists such as Martin de Valencia. De Valencia, a Franciscan, understood that many of the Indians were influenced by other's actions and they prayed where all could see them. Following this, "by imitating him, they might come to God, because the Indian's are very prone to do what they see others doing" (Ricard 1966, 129).

Motolinia wrote to Charles V, arguing that it would be necessary to gather both common and elite Indians into villages apart from the encomiendas in order to evangelize and socialize them more easily. Missionaries and Spaniards enforced the decree by Charles V and gathered all natives in communities where towns were erected, the sites of which he (Franciscan Fray Juan de San Miguel) selected with meticulous care, laying out the squares and streets, and marking the locations of the principal buildings (Ricard 1966, 137). The effects of constantly being watched by the Friars gave way into a function of power. Since the Indians lived in villages and worshipped in the public spaces their judgments began to be normalized. Rather than practicing their ancient religion, through the function of power under the watchful eye of priests and merinos, everyday religious practices became Christianized. The Indians attended mass, feast days,

participated in song and dance rituals and the children were forced to attend catechism every morning whilst attendance was maintained.

The main idea behind having congregated villages and communities was to develop a strict monastic life. They became villages to evangelize, which were grouped and organized around a vast space, which would be the center of community life. Within these “corrals,” the Indians were closely looked after, far from Spaniards who were not welcome and where the evangelizers could keep close watch on their activities. In fact, local Spaniards could not visit the religious communities, and merchants could only stay for a few days before they began to overstay their welcome. The Franciscans believed the outside world was tainted with greed and would set a bad example for the new religious converts, ultimately leading to the lapsing of the Indians in their new faith. In essence, the Indians were cut off from the outside world, while the Franciscans maintained the religious moral order through continuous surveillance. Continuous surveillance provided the Friars with a mechanism of power, in which they could see which native’s were toeing the line and which natives were in danger of lapsing. A strict Catholic life would be their mainstay until the Franciscans were forced to leave their monasteries towards the end of the sixteenth century.

Franciscan Fray de san Miguel viewed the Indians as “a flock without a shepherd.” Here Foucaultian analysis is helpful in explaining the Franciscan logic of corralling and producing a docile body within the village. In the eyes of the Friars it was a means of correct training in that it normalized native judgments



and placed them in a realm where they were constantly being seen and accounted for. By congregating the Indians it further moved the “confused, useless multitudes of bodies and force[d] [them] into a multiplicity of individual elements- small separate cells; organic autonomies; genetic identities and continuities; combinatory segments” (Foucault 1984, 188). Following this logic, it made the Indian an object while simultaneously making him an instrument to exercise. This was the apparatus of discipline; the Franciscan priest being at the top and the Indian always at the bottom. The priests were in charge of gathering the individuals for mass, creating and lecturing on the subject, and keeping a watchful eye on the construction of religious structures and activities. The centralized structure of towns made it easier for the Friars to keep a watchful eye, maintain control, and examine the religious functions. Discipline made the “mechanisms of power” more efficient and less forceful. By thinking you are always being watched, your mind structures and transforms to obey norms and remain obedient.

It is within these newfound schools that acculturation led to the Christianization and colonialization that further penetrated the Valley of Mexico. Early in the morning the monitors (*merinos*) of each quarter of the large towns, and the *alcaldes* of the villages, summoned their people. Each quarter or each village assembled at the church, bearing crosses and reciting prayers; roll was called at the church, and the names of those whose absence could not be explained by the *merinos* or *alcaldes* were noted (Ricard 1966, 96). In the

beginning control was severe for the absentees, for those who were absent received rough sanctions. Prior to the 1539, it was customary for the bishops to allow beating Indians with rods, imprisoning them or putting them in irons, to teach them the Christian doctrine (Ricard 1966, 96-97). By 1539, bishops had forbidden the practice of abuse. The dwindled lashings seemed to have disappeared through historical records but were observed in the 1570's when delinquent natives customarily were served with a half dozen strokes on the outside of their clothing. By being summoned every morning, the natives were subject to examination. Foucault makes it clear that the examination transformed the economy of visibility in the exercise of power. In discipline, it is the subject (Indians) who has to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of constantly being seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in subjection (Foucault 1975, 187). In short, either in a European classroom setting or when congregating for mass in the morning, discipline forced the subjected to follow strict religious procedure.

It is at this point that the Merinos, alcaldes, and fiscales, fall into a category Foucault describes as discipline through rewards. Discipline rewards simply by the play of rewards, thus making it possible to attain higher ranks and places; it punishes by reversing this process. Rank in itself serves as a reward or punishment (Foucault 1975, 81). The reward of becoming higher in status produced a change in the Natives mind, coercing them into believing in the

superiority of the religion. The special treatment and authority bestowed, compels them to produce an attitude of evangelical zeal. This, in turn, gives the other natives a prominent position to strive for. In simplest terms, the reward system outweighs discipline. Discipline begins to fade and complacency takes its place, producing a docile body, an essential element in maintaining a religious moral order.

Villages of proper education and evangelization began to spring up. In many cases, the Indians themselves had already erected religious centers, such as in Texacoco, Tlaxcala, Cholula, Tula, etc., as a way to disorganize "paganism." The religious chose these sites for the new monastery schools. As an act of substitution, monasteries were erected on the top of the temples and pyramids where religious ceremonies and political endeavors were once held. The most damaging effects were inflicted not only on the native's psyche, in which the natives lost their own public worship sites, but also the belief in the protection of their gods began to erode. The top down colonial superiority began to create a docile Indian through the acceptance of the moral order. This was shown through the eventual abandonment of Aztec gods. For example it is significant that the worship of rain gods survived longer than the war gods during the conquest. During the conquest the cult of war disappeared. Rain continued but Aztec victories stopped after the conquest (Madsen 1967, 372). It is within the acceptance of the moral order that the New World's religion began to take hold. With the loss of belief in war victories, little by little the belief in protection

from Aztec gods lessened. It was in this period that the Nahuas started to adapt to Christianity and accept the religious moral order. A Franciscan, Fray Geronimo de Mendieta, and other active clergy in sixteenth-century Mexico, sought to “strengthen the softness” of the spiritually “weak Indians” that were found in the Mexican countryside (Fitzgerald 2012, 6). Priests, such as Mendieta, believed the strengthening had to be focalized on education with “solid doctrine” in the confines of schools (Fitzgerald 2012, 6). Through monastic education, the Franciscans were able to produce Christian subjects endowed with religious and scholastic education by establishing solid religious indoctrination, strict attendance requirements, and harsh sanctions for the disobedient. The Friars normalized the functions of society and produced docile subjects. Schools and catechism were structured primarily around the children. Elite and common children both attended the schools, but in some cases the elite parents were able to substitute their children with their slaves. In a European classroom setting, the children of the elite lived at the schools where they received religious instruction in the mornings and primary education in Latin and Spanish, thus producing trilingual natives. In many cases, classes were established in temples where the natives once practiced their old religion. While Franciscan schools threatened justice and punishment among the youth for noncompliance, the friars also offered social rewards for complying with their teachings. The children of the nobility not only were trained to become the ruling class but they learned reading,

writing, music, masonry, metal working, carpentry, ceramics, weaving, and silk culture (Madsen 1967, 374).

Historians note this was a sign of superior colonialism where the Indians would further believe in the loss in protection from their ancient gods. In cities where there were no temples, churches were resurrected for educating purposes. Children of the elite received social rewards from the friars for their participation in schools and catechism because they would lead the country in future generations. Children who attended these schools were able to hold high-ranking office positions and the friars hoped they would continue religious work within the church.

Schools and catechism for the common children was similar to that of the elite children. These children attended mass in the mornings and primary education in the afternoon but were sent home at the end of the day. These children were to follow the religious moral order and speak and indoctrinate their families at home.

Whether in the confines of the famous Colegio de Santa Cruz or in the less famous monasteries in the courtyards of village churches, Spanish evangelizers maintained and established environments for learning. Initially, the task at hand was communication. Through trial and error expressions of communication were established through pictographic ideograms, painted pictures encoded with meaning, to oral narratives and mnemonic tools embedded in song and dance. Once common language was mastered and

religious instruction was underway the development of more euro-centered classroom settings became the norm.

In the early stages of catechism, discipline seemed necessary for the guidance of the newly introduced and converted natives. Discipline was the instrument to remember the Christian doctrine and lose their “pagan practices.” There were too few friars to take on general instruction so they called on trustworthy aids to assist in several duties. In Spanish the aids were called *fiscales* or *mandones*, *tevizques* or *tequitlatos* in Nahuatl. The entrusted aids served several purposes, one of which was to assemble the natives for Mass and catechism. In other cases, when the bishop made his regular visits, the *tevizques* would bring forth the children and adults who had not yet been confirmed. It was their duty to see that all had been baptized and confessed, marriages were lawful, and that couples lived in peace. Customarily, the aids denounced the vices of the drunkards, adulterers, wine merchants, and those participating in concubinage, for their own profit. Not only did the *fiscales* speak out against prisoners but also policed the churches from vandalism, kept baptismal records, comforted the sick and dying, buried the dead, announced feasts, and, when necessary, baptized (Ricard 1966, 97).

In all cases the Franciscans trained their own *fiscales*. When the schools opened to the natives, Indians from each village were gathered and were taught to read, write, count and say the Hours of the Holy Virgin. At this point in time the trained individuals were to resume catechism with their families at home.

The schools were structured for Indians of all ages, but the emphasis was on children as they are foundational in a society. The two principal categories of children the Franciscans directed their efforts towards were the *gente baja*, who were the children of the lower class and the other, who were the sons of the *principals* who lived in the convent. Indian nobles were commanded to place their children in boarding schools. They obeyed this command because they feared punishment for disobedience (Madsen 1967, 372). The *gente baja* assembled every morning after Mass in the church and broke into two groups based on their knowledge of catechism. At the end of their education for the day they were sent home to work with their parents.

As for the sons of the principals, or native sons of the aristocracy, they were treated with meticulous care. The logic behind the different treatment for these youths was that the sons of the aristocracy would be the ones to lead the country. To summarize Robert Ricard, these boys lived in the convents as boarders, where the Franciscans could conform their native usage into a Spanish style. Like the lower classes they were taught catechism, but they were also instructed in reading, writing and singing, and also how to serve the monastery. The Franciscans assured themselves that these youth would be the truest and most active helpers in the work of evangelization and time and again events proved them right. In many cases the youth obtained enough religious doctrine to educate girls, who were more often than not excluded from the same education

as the boys. Furthermore, the girls would often become teachers, further evangelizing the populations.

Monastic and basic curricular education established a base for introductory understandings of Christ and a proficiency in basic education. The learning of Christianity began through enforced imitation as the friars taught their Indian pupils how to kneel, make the sign of the cross, and recite Latin prayers (Mendieta 1945, 70-71). It also provided the Franciscans with the ability to test the aptitude of each individual. Awareness of aptitude gave the instructors an indication of who needed more education and which individuals were suited for various monastic tasks. It also provided a strong indication of which individuals had not grasped the articles of faith and had not yet accepted the religious moral order. Pedro de Gante, who is called the father of Mexican education, recorded many detailed descriptions in the way schools were structured, for example at the doctrine school at the church of San Francisco in Mexico City the youth were not permitted to converse with other pupils. "This rule was made so they would forget their bloody idolatries and excessive sacrifices," furthermore, Gante wrote, "when there is a fiesta or dedication for demons (pagan Gods) the most able students are sent to forbid it... Then I summon them (the idolaters) to Mexico City and they are reprimanded" (Madsen 1967, 373). Yet at other times, the youth were frightened by threats of justice or punishment if they attend "pagan celebrations" again. In this way, little by little catechism and boarding schools became a tool to eradicate and abandon idolatries.



The Franciscans looked to the youth to evangelize their parents and to reveal any lingering religious superstitions in their relations. In other words, the boys were made to spy on their families, a situation that sometimes had grave consequences, for example, a thirteen-year-old boy, Cristobal, was killed by his father for trying to make him give up idolatry and drunkenness (Ricard 1966, 100). The children became so gripped by their religion that boys often ran away from home to evangelize where priests could not make regular visits. In another case, pupils of the school at Tlaxcala stoned to death a native priest for believing in a god of wine (Ricard 1966, 100). These examples prove the Franciscan monastery schools were quite successful. Franciscan historians have noted the profound effect the youth had on converting the native populations. In fact, Motolinia went as far as to entitle one of the chapters of his books, "How the conversion of the Indians was done through children" (Ricard 1966, 101). During the course of close contact in the schools, the Indian children came to respect and admire their Franciscan teachers. This warm interpersonal relationship later extended to entire communities in Central Mexico, where the Franciscans doctored the sick, comforted the dying, and defended the accused before the Spanish magistrates (Madsen 1967, 374).

For the priests who spoke the Nahuatl language, communication in the classroom environment proved to be successful, filled with reading and writing. For the priests who tried to learn the language and failed, instruction took on different forms, for example, Fray Luis Caldera, who used both depictions of

pictures and music in his instruction. In one case he brought in a type of oven and threw cats and dogs in it to represent hell. The screaming animal calls greatly frightened the natives (Ricard 1966, 104). It should be noted that many of these displays were ultimately abandoned by the priests, who feared they would cause the newly converted to lapse into old habits.

Explanations of the depth of this new doctrine were necessary. Fray Alonso de Molina taught the natives during catechism that the Christian doctrine was the only thing that would make it possible for them to go to heaven. It taught the existence of an omnipotent God of infinite perfection, very different from the “pagan idols,” who had no power or dignity (Ricard 105, 1966). Dominican Fray Pedro de Cordoba, who worked along with Fray Zumarraga, insisted the Indians believe that:

This God is supreme goodness: He does not accept blood offerings, and would be offended if men were sacrificed to Him. He is also supreme wisdom: He knows everything, sees everything; nothing escapes Him, even one’s most secret thoughts. On the Day of Judgment He will reveal all hidden acts, good and bad. It is not to be believed, moreover, that sin is not committed just because it is not seen, for one can sin in thought (Ricard 1966, 105).

Early in the Franciscan governance the Friars established schools and catechisms in order to train and evangelize the native youth. Through their establishments the Franciscans created a docile Indian. In this way, the youth were trained as a political entity of power for the higher institution. This is shown in their conversion from the Aztec religion to Christianity, and empowered by Christianity leading to the eventual demolition of their ancient temples and idols.

The creation of new subjects went further, from propagandizing elders to reporting the continuation of idolatries behind closed doors. Furthermore, the youth not only subjected the older natives, but they also served as a power entity aimed at spreading the religious moral order and the acceptance of Christianity. Their subjectivity sought to transform and improve the instruction of Christianity to all non-Christians and maintain the devotee status.

The acceptance of certain Christian values by school children was a reflection of their identification with the Franciscan agents of change. This is seen through Kelman's process of identification, the individual accepts influence in order to establish or maintain a satisfying, self-defining relationship to the agent of change, who is an attractive figure (Kelman 1958, 51-60). Thus, the school children's admiration for the friars multiplied and posed a great leap for Catholicism in the Valley of Mexico.

### Hospitals

In the colonial age of evangelization, epidemics and diseases had devastating effects on the natives. The Europeans brought foreign diseases to the New World that continuously ravaged the natives during the conquest. Few Franciscans and Spaniards were physicians but the priests felt it was their duty to relieve the miseries of the Indians. Sahagun believed the Indians were facing extinction, while Archbishop Montufar wrote that the most important thing Mexico needed was hospitals. In 1555, the synod of Mexico ordered hospitals to be

erected in villages, alongside churches, to receive the poor and sick while priests could administer sacraments. It should be noted, while hospitals were abundantly built in 1555, Pedro de Gante built the first hospital in Mexico City around 1530, and the Franciscans built several other hospitals throughout the 1530's.

Before and after the conquest, there were few hospitals in the New World. Hospitals of the New World were not run as state institutions; rather the state and churches together ran them. Unfortunately there were too few state officials to run the hospitals, so the main burden of responsibility was on the shoulders of the church and the natives themselves. In fact, many of the natives donated their time, gave monetary gifts, and supplied food from private and hospital owned gardens. In the case of medicines, doctors, hospitals and convents initially obtained their medicines from merchants or *boticarios*, but because of difficulties maintaining inventory and therefore not having medicine in a timely manner, convents established their own herb gardens and pharmacies, even though this involved the additional expense of employing a *botricario* (Newsom 2006, 379).

Every mendicant order built hospitals, but the Franciscans did so with an unrivaled frequency. Hospitals not only took in the sick and dying, but also took in the poor and acted as refuges for travelers, which was an important institution for such an enormously populated country. Moreover, hospitals were an institution that pursued on the one hand medical care as a charitable activity, and on the other hand sought to suppress practices that were incompatible with Catholic beliefs (Newsom 2006, 367). The incompatibility of native and European medical

practices is a further demonstration of the Foucaultian theory of power. The hegemonic and imperialist concepts of social, cultural and political scientific medicine, found its way into the settlements and new territories across the Atlantic Ocean. This brought about a moral order of understanding foreign supremacy.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth century Spain dominated all of Europe in medical practice. Hence, during the sixteenth century, when the conquest of New Spain had been complete, it was easy to assume the feelings of medical supremacy over the native superstitious healing practices. From the churches standpoint,

The main source of care for the sick came from the church. Charity was seen as a fundamental Christian responsibility that was reflected in the establishment of hospices and hospitals by the religious orders. Catholic orthodox beliefs and the moral philosophy of the time saw sickness as either a punishment from God or the work of the Devil, so the emphasis in hospitals was on charitable care rather than curing, with primacy given to prayers and the healing power of God and the saints, rather than medical treatment (Newsom 2006, 372).

So, native Indians were perfect specimens for the hospital institutions. The aim of the hospital was not only to relieve the natives' sufferings but also to aid in the attachment of the religious moral order through power and the conscious practice of religious activity within a panopticon type environment. The act of being seen worked with the religious activity to develop a new native subject, ready and willing to accept the religious moral order.

The most famous of the Franciscan hospitals was the Encarnacion, which could house up to four hundred people. It was known for its service to the poor

and the celebration of feast days. Its main support relied on the Indians, who never ceased making offerings and giving alms of every kind: linen and clothing, fowl, sheep, pigs, peppers, maize, and beans (Ricard 1966,157). This provided the main support for the hospitals, although they did received a meager budget. Half of the collected goods were reserved for the patients and staff, while the other half went towards buying linen and medicines. In spite of their extreme poverty, the Indians often gave what little they had. Because of this, the hospitals ran without much strain. In fact, within seven months of Encarnacion's opening, the hospital's goods were evaluated at about a thousand gold pesos.

One of the more famous friars responsible for opening hospitals in Michoacan, was Fray Juan de San Miguel. His hospitals were known to house travelers, who were entertained, and as places where sacraments of penitence and supreme unction were administered. At these particular Franciscan hospitals, the Indians took turns taking care of the sick. Women from various families took turns caring for the hospitals and dividing duties, while simultaneously making offerings as they could. The nurses were inclined to accept communion and confess regularly. Moreover, they assembled for Mass in the morning and evening and recited prayers and the giving of thanks to the Immaculate Conception patron of hospitals.

Another hospital worth mentioning was an Augustinian's of Santa Fe. Ricard describes this as a special kind of hospital, not simply because it had administrative offices, but because it included schools, workshops, storehouses

and dwellings for the families that belonged to the church. The *familias*, the dwellings for the families, were all surrounded by small kitchen gardens. The patients unit was made up of four parts, grouped around a square patio, which included a room for contagious diseases and a room facing it for the noncontagious. All rooms grouped around a patio with a chapel at the center so patients could view Mass from their rooms.

Several families lived on the premises and were obligated to work in the monastery and hospital for six hours a day. After the harvest the families' received what they needed for the year and the rest was distributed amongst the hospital and the poor in the community, who suffered from drought and famine. Clothing codes were enforced for simplicity and all offices were run democratically. The moral order established a kind of utopian society in which apparel was standardized, no one could take more than what was needed to survive, work was broken down into equal increments among individuals and individual disputes were settled democratically. There was a general hierarchy in which no one person was either above or below you. The Indians were welcome in the hospital as long as they participated in religious activity and kept up with their share of work. This came to be the religious moral order of hospitals.

A systematically righteous institution resulted from the Franciscans willingness to aid the misery of the natives through social control and religion. Hospitals were used as a double-edged sword in regards to the religious. They established a religious moral order by influencing medical asylums and

incorporating religion as a daily work ethic. According to Robert Ricard Santa Fe and Mexican hospitals were among the most ingenious devices for making Christian ideas a part of daily life. Religion was the backbone of this institution and without belonging you could not reap the benefits of the retreat in which you lived and the commodities to gain there. Slowly, the inhabitants and practitioners learned to lean on Christian faith and become dependent of the religious moral order.

Whether directly or indirectly, strict discipline was essential for hospitals to run efficiently. This sort of discipline created a political anatomy within the Indian hospitals, which created an essential need for detail, and ultimately led to socializing the natives in European methods of medicine through doctoral records of medicines and their use, numbers of patients, and quarantining the diseased from the rest and imposing sanitation. The meticulousness of regulations and the supervision of priests and doctors made this institution a constant reminder of discipline. The combination of regulation, meticulous observation of detail, and religious awareness led to a modern Indian. More precisely, it led to “the man of modern humanism” (Foucault 1984, 185), which was one essential goal to the evangelizing effort.

### Punishment and Public Humiliation

As with schools, discipline and punishment go hand and hand with committers of idolatry and outcries against the Christian faith. In this section I



view punishment as an institution used by the Franciscans to establish their religious moral order. This institution can be viewed separately from schools and hospitals because it runs against the moral order. As with schools and hospitals, we see attendees who come to endure Christianity, whereas this section will deal with the Indians who act against the Christian faith. These individuals were supposed to be made an example of for the rest of the Nahua populations and, ultimately, punishment maintained the religious moral order. In addition, this section runs in tandem with Kelman's concept of compliance as a process of attitude change in which the agent of change possesses the means of control (Kelman 1958, 51-60). In other words, this institution made the individual change his behavior because he expects to gain rewards or approval and avoid punishment or disapproval.

Corporal punishment was rarely used, in fact, in Central Mexico, juridical torture applied to native defendants accused of idolatry, sorcery, or superstition in New Spain between the 1520's and the early nineteenth century, indicates that physical coercion were highly unusual inquisitorial tools that were only used in exceptional cases by a handful of ruthless or desperate inquisitors (Tavarez 2011, 17). Still, it was not uncommon for a native to receive six or seven blows with a stick for being late or missing mass. While torture was extremely infrequent, psychological coercion, public humiliation and fear from civil authorities were frequent. Incarceration was also used, indeed jail and stocks for the natives lasted until the eighteenth century.

David Taverez, leading scholar in New Spain narrates a story of one idolater. On November 30, 1539, a Nahua nobleman was led to the scaffold in Mexico City's Main Square. His Spanish name, given to him at baptism, was Don Carlos. He was accused of crimes against Christianity. Bishop Zumarraga, the first bishop of Mexico, intended his fate to be seen by all native neophytes in the city. Don Carlos was paraded through the city from the prison to the scaffold bearing Christian symbols and holding a candle with a cross in front of him. A native interpreter reportedly heard the nobleman repent before the crowd. David Taverez makes the assessment that it was within this public display that Bishop Zumarraga made a transition from execution to psychological coercion.

Between the 1520's and 1571 the first cycle of anti-idolatry efforts began, falling within the period this thesis is concerned with. David Taverez highlights three main staples found within Bishop Zumarraga's disciplining of humanity: an emphasis on the public humiliation of native nobles and officeholders, a near fetishistic form of iconoclasy, and a concern for procedural formality (Taverez 2011, 35). Throughout various trials, especially targeted at nobleman, the men's punishment varied considerably. Historical records show one lord was sentenced to four lashes, while among children at a doctrinal school, punishments ranged from one hundred lashes and ten years exile.

Bishop Zumarraga's tactics at targeting the noblemen and officeholders was critical in establishing the religious moral order. The idea within Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is to imagine what the awe struck spectators

must have felt when they witnessed the crack of a whip of colonial might on the back of their official. Its superior display of what officials had done to past criminals now exhibited for all of the masses to see. It strikes the hearts of the commoners and causes them to lose their allegiance to their cultural vestiges. The realization of the old rule is over and the religious moral order begins to dominate.

Bishop Zumarraga's method of punishing the elite and officeholders is ingenious in that it not only punishes the individual, but is also directed towards the spectators. It targets the Indian's memory of the position the elite once held, while simultaneously leading to their loss of fellowship for their elite. Public humiliation broke down the cultural vestiges that were once rooted in Nahua society and replaced them with religious authority.

During Bishop Zumarraga's anti-idolatry campaign, the elite were targeted, but so too were the ancient public worship sites, idols, and practices. While punishing the elite proved to be a viable asset to the religious, at the same time, public worship sites were dismantled by the religious and their new converts. Idols were smashed and burned and the Indians who still worshipped their idols were hunted down and punished.

The children in the monastic schools often aided the religious in the dismantling of the native religious centers, but they also reported idolatry. The natives who still worshipped their "pagan idols" were sought out and punished for their reluctance to follow the Christian God. Often, the process of discovering the

idols and punishing the offenders took a strict order. The idols were either discovered or reported by the newly converts; the idols were then smashed and burned; and then the individual was made to repent and do penance for his wrongs. The punishment for not repenting took many forms and varied upon every circumstance.

The substantial importance does not lay with the idol itself or even as the practices continued. The great importance is that the practice of idolatry was slowly dwindling. The Indians were beginning to learn the Christian customs and aided in anti-idolatry by reporting idolatry, destroying idols and by becoming a Christian. The shaping of the society, by the 1530's, was beginning to take a religious centered acculturation established by a religious moral order. As the decades proceeded, more and more of the natives converted and became devout Christians, while the older elite, priests, and officeholders were dying off. The religious moral order takes shape by years of religious indoctrination of the youth and by the converts accepting the religious moral order.

### Displays of Worship

The displays of worship were done on almost every Sunday and religious holidays, such as Easter and Palm Sunday, and they were all displayed for the public to see. On religious holidays, feasts and processions throughout the city were the main staple of worship, along with Mass.

Mass and liturgy were not necessarily the centers of religious life. Pilgrimages, processions, and celebrations of the local patron were frequently more important, or at least more personally meaningful (Poole 1994, 345). Mass was seen as a casual event but still vital towards the evangelization efforts in Mexico. Patron city saints were assigned to towns and villages to watch over the people. Surviving to this day, patron saint and the Virgin are a highly important aspect of Catholicism.

Within the first few years of the conversion of New Spain, many of the natives were reluctant to accept Christianity but, as documented by Motolinia, an incessant storm turned into a useful tool. Motolinia writes:

In the fourth year after the arrival of the friars in this land it rained very much, ruining the cornfields and causing many dwellings to collapse. Up to then no processions had ever been held among the natives. On that occasion the natives of Tezcoco held one with a simple cross. And, having rained incessantly for many days, it pleased our Lord in his mercy, through the intercession of His Holy Mother and St Anthony, who is the chief patron saint of this town, to put a stop to the rains on the day of procession, in this way conforming the newly converted Indians in their Languid and weak faith (Morales 2008, 141).

From then on, Motolinia continues,

The Indians made many crosses, banners of saints, and other ornaments to be used in processions. And forthwith the natives of Mexico came (to Tezcoco) to get patterns of them. Soon after, in Huejotzingo, the Indians began to fashion rich and elegant drapery for crosses and also processional platforms of gold and feathers. Before long the Indians everywhere began to adorn their churches, to make altarpieces and ornaments, and hold processions while the children learned dances in order to make processions more attractive (Morales 2008, 141).

The Nahua peoples were known for their songs and dances and music is a chiefly important to Catholicism so the religious used this to their advantage, bringing together the village for public worship. It was not enough to have extravagant feasts and ceremonies. The music brought natives from different villages to learn new instruments and to partake in the festivities. At this point, the religious moral order began to develop in yet another institution by the Franciscans.

Public worship through Mass, processions, and music began to create new Christian traditions. The substitution of Catholicism for “paganism” made it easier for the Friars to direct the Nahua’s in religious sacraments and to convert the willing natives more easily. Historical records show music and dance were highly favorable among rituals during the pre-conquest. Although Bishop Zumarraga disapproved of native dance with Christian ceremonies it still continued and became an integral part of Indian religious life (Poole 1994, 347). The priests used this to their advantage in summoning participants to play instruments, and populations from far and wide attended Mass frequently. The Indians learned Christian songs and even native songs were given a Christian motif.

Processions were displayed almost every Sunday, accompanied with singing and dancing. People and archways were decorated with flowers and boughs; floats were elaborately decorated and carried through the city. It was common for children to be in trees throwing flowers into the procession as it

passed by. The Nahua's enthusiasm ran high for the processions, as Robert Ricard noted, it made a vivid impression on them.

It goes without saying that the public display of worship was a key element in maintaining and furthering the religious moral order. Public display of worship was an instrument used by the Franciscans to congregate the Indians together; to see them celebrate Catholicism; to have the natives accept the religious doctrine; and, ultimately, to further the religious moral order of acceptance.

Each institution had its own influence on the Nahua peoples and struck each individual differently. By and large the Franciscans initiated one of the greatest religious transformations ever known from learning the Nahuatl language and indoctrinating the peoples of a foreign country. Moreover, indoctrination spurred more institutions to establish the religious moral order of acceptance. Over the years Nahua society began to change through these institutional systems, creating a rebirth of religion. As native religion began to wane, Catholicism through catechism, monasteries, hospitals, punishment and public displays of worship gripped the masses of Indians and transformed the "pagan country" into a thriving New World of Christian converts. The Nahuas excitement for song and dance backed by the Franciscans translated songs made possible the spiritual and intellectual transfer of the Nahua religion to Christianity (Morales 2008, 143).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE VIRGIN'S SUCCESS THROUGH THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS

This chapter will analyze the apparition of the Virgin de Guadalupe by Juan Diego, in 1531. The Virgin de Guadalupe story was not recorded for some thirty-five years after her appearance (Peterson 1992, 2) but its importance has grown in scholarly debate over the years. The focus of this chapter is to guide the reader not only through the historical record of the Virgin's appearance but to heighten the visibility of the important role played by the Franciscan institutional systems that initially established a religious moral order with the native peoples of Mexico.

It is intriguing, as noted by Patricia Harrington, that the image of the Virgin Mary was seen throughout the battles with the Moors during the Reconquista as a symbol of good faith and fortune, but also that it made its way to the New World during the conquest of the Indians. Cortez carried banners of the Virgin wherever he marched and into battles, leaving statues of the Virgin behind in the conquered cities and villages. Harrington observes that while the Aztec's battled the Spaniards they must have initially associated the Virgin with blood and war. The indoctrination by the Franciscans sheds light on how such an image, associated first with battles and bloodshed, could ultimately become the beloved Virgin de Guadalupe. Through the native indoctrination, the natives learned who



she was and what she stood for. The Indians understood their culture had come to a demise and as Harrington notes, “something needed to fill the void and make sense of New Spain, the new world of which they were now a part and in which they had suffered defeat at the hand of outsiders. The image of Guadalupe served that purpose” (Harrington 1988, 33). Within these beliefs, “Guadalupe watched over the death, defeat, and illness, and assured the Indians that these aspects of life need not lead to despair. They were protected in the shade of the great Mother Goddess” (Harrington 1988, 34).

The Virgin is said to have appeared, in 1531, to Juan alone, dressed as a native and speaking the native language. She entrusted Juan to carry a message of her appearance to Zumarraga, the first Bishop of New Spain. She requested a church be built in her honor, on the Hill of Tepeyac. Once Bishop Zumarraga approved Juan’s apparition story, news spread all over the country spurring mass devotions and conversions to Catholicism.

The Virgin de Guadalupe’s appearance is one piece to understanding the continued spread of Catholicism throughout Mexico. Many leading scholars such as Patricia Harrington explain the apparition story as the Virgin meant two different things to two different groups in New Spain. For the natives, she represented a coherent world. “Through Guadalupe, they could back their world, even though the Spaniards were now in charge. To the Spaniards, on the other hand, Guadalupe was another image of the Immaculate Conception, one among

many such images they held holy. She represented Roman Catholic orthodoxy and a continuation of Spanish traditions” (Harrington 1988, 26).

The initial spread of Christianity came from the European priests who educated and indoctrinated the Indians through their institutional systems. The Franciscan priests established a religious moral order completed by their institutions whereby the Indians accepted the articles of faith by practicing Catholicism, attending mass, praying in public spaces, promoting Christianity to other natives whose faith had not yet been converted and so on. The Virgin gave the natives hope after the friars were expelled from their monasteries and the natives continued their faith in Catholicism.

The foundation of evangelism started with the arrival of the Franciscan priests, in 1521. A mere ten years later, the appearance of the Virgin appeared and supported the worship of the European God. It is noteworthy that while the Franciscan missionary work shaped New Spain throughout the sixteenth century, the Virgins appearance carries such undue weight. Without the evangelistic zeal of the Franciscan priests, the Virgin could have been interpreted in several ways, the most devastating being an Aztec apparition causing a lapse of faith. Many scholars, such as Moreno Jimenez note, the real turning point in the conversion came with the miraculous appearance of the Indian Virgin of Guadalupe in 1531. This event brought about the emotional acceptance of a new faith, which has been aptly called Guadalupinist Catholicism (Moreno 1958, 92). My interpretation is that the initial Franciscan institutional systems had already Christianized the

country prior to the apparition story of the Virgin de Guadalupe. The populace only continued the worship of Christianity after the apparition. Later in the century the secular clergy turned the Franciscans out of their monasteries and their institutions would slowly die off, but Guadalupanist Catholicism would remain up into the present day Mexico. This was accomplished through the Franciscans establishment of religious moral order with the Indians.

To properly understand the importance of Virgin de Guadalupe, Juan's historical story will be explored. The dark- skinned Virgin appeared where the Aztec goddess Tonantzin was known to appear in former times. Tonantzin was one of the three earth goddesses who apparently were three aspects of the same deity. Aztec religion identifies Tonantzin as the mother of gods, including Huitzilopochtli (Aztec war God) who was created by divine conception. It is important to note, scholars such as William Madsen say, "In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Virgin of Guadalupe came to be a symbol of the new Indian Catholicism as distinguished from the foreign Catholicism of the conquerors" (Madsen 1967, 378). That said, William Madsen fails to give appropriate credit to the Franciscan priests or their Institutions. Juan Diego is a newly Christian convert but without correct instruction in the Christian doctrine he may have understood the apparition to be Tonantzin, not the Virgin de Guadalupe. It is my interpretation that this is the fault of William Madsen and scholars alike. Many modern scholars note the appearance of Virgin de Guadalupe took place on the Hill of Tepeyac where the Aztec goddess Tonantzin had been rumored to appear in the past. This

provides an indicative argument for many scholars because they argue the Virgin represents a triumph over the old Aztec gods. After Virgin de Guadalupe's appearance, Tonatzin is not rumored to be seen again. However, I return to my original argument here. Without Christian indoctrination, the new apparition may have been interpreted as another Aztec god. After all, she first spoke to Juan in Nahuatl and dressed as a native.

The apparition of the Virgin appeared to a newly converted native by the name of Juan Diego, on December 9, 1531. Juan was a devoted Christian who traveled fifteen miles every Sunday morning for mass, in Tlaltelolco, to receive the sacrament and participate in confession. On his way, he passed the Hill of Tepeyac, located near his village. Juan's wife had passed away several years earlier and Juan had come to live and look after his uncle, Juan Bernardo. One morning, as Juan passed the Hill of Tepeyac, he heard a voice call out to him. He climbed the hill and to his amazement, there was a gleaming figure. She spoke to him dressed as a native and through the native tongue of Nahuatl pronounced She was the mother of God and that she had specifically come to him. She entrusted Juan to deliver a message to bishop Zumarraga, the first bishop of New Spain, to have a church built in her honor, at the top of the Hill of Tepeyac.

Rather than continue his regular walk to mass. Juan walked to bishop Zumarraga's parish to convey the extraordinary message. Upon his arrival, the parish guards greeted Juan. After harassing him, the guards finally led Juan into the church, where he waited several hours for bishop Zumarraga to give his

consent to the unexpected visit. Unfortunately for Juan the bishop disavowed his message and sent him away. Juan returned to the Hill of Tepeyac where the Virgin reappeared and requested that Juan return to Zumarraga a few more times, which he did but to no avail.

Juan returned home to find his uncle seriously ill with *cocolixtle*, a fever that claimed many lives during the century. Fearing he might die, his uncle requested that Juan retrieve a priest to hear his confession and administer sacraments. Since there was no village priest, Juan set out to walk several miles to fetch a priest, in Mexico City. Once again, the path leading to the priest passed by the Hill of Tepeyac. Fearing that the Virgin would be angry with Juan for not returning to the hill because of his sick uncle, he veered off the path to try and avoid her. As Juan veered off the beaten path the Virgin called out to him, "What is the matter, my little son?" she said. "Where are you going?" (Johnston 1981, 33). Juan replied,

My uncle, your poor servant, is very sick. He is suffering from the plague and is dying. I am hurrying to the church in Mexico City to call on a priest to hear his confession and give him his rites. When I have done this, I will return here immediately to convey your message. Please forgive me and be patient with me. I am not deceiving you. I promise faithfully to come here tomorrow without haste" (Johnston 1981, 33).

She then replied,

Do not be troubled or weighed down by grief. Do not fear any illness or vexation, anxiety or pain. Am I not here? Who am I? Am I not your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I am not your foundation of life? Are you not in the folds of my mantle? In the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else you need? Do not let the illness of your uncle worry you because he is not going to die of his sickness. At this very moment, he is cured" (Johnston 1981, 33).

At this point she told Juan to go back to bishop Zumarraga's parish and deliver the message one more time. Juan was hesitant, as he had already made several attempts to no avail.

Finally, the Virgin instructed Juan to climb to the top of the Hill of Tepeyac to pick a bushel of Castilian roses. It should be noted that these particular flowers are not native to this part of the country and could not have grown in the harsh climate. She assured Juan that she would give him a message that would convince the bishop once and for all. He then handed the flowers to the Virgin and she arranged them in Juan's *tilma*. Juan then walked back to bishop Zumarraga's parish where he was greeted by the guards. He held tightly onto his *tilma* where the Virgin had arranged the flowers. The guards yelled out to him to drop whatever he was holding but Juan exclaimed, "No, I am holding a message for the bishop." The guards and Juan then wrestled and Juan's *tilma* opened and the flowers fell out and melted to the ground. Within the *tilma*, an image of the Virgin de Guadalupe appeared in his cloak as if it had been embroidered. Following this miracle, Zumarraga came out to see the commotion. At last, Zumarraga confirmed Juan's message and commissioned a small chapel be built in her honor until plans could be drawn up for a more elaborate church.

Upon Juan's arrival at his uncle's house he found him alive and well. His uncle proclaimed that the Virgin had visited him and made him well. Following this, Bishop Zumarraga summoned Juan to show him exactly where the Virgin had first appeared. As Juan searched for the exact location he could not

remember. Miraculously, a spring rose out of the ground and Juan then remembered that she appeared in this spot.

The story of Virgin de Guadalupe rapidly spread throughout the country and soon flocks of natives from all over came to see the famous location where the Virgin first appeared to Juan Diego. Years later, a suitable church was built in honor of Virgin de Guadalupe which Juan Diego ran and looked after until his death.

Historians from the mid-twentieth century on, such as Jeanette Peterson, view the Virgin de Guadalupe as symbol of liberation from the conquistadors and the reclaiming of something indigenous, and Francisco Moreno, who believes the apparition caused an emotional acceptance of the indigenous' new faith, have noted that the apparition of Virgin de Guadalupe caused a massive surge in devotions and baptisms. While Virgin de Guadalupe did spur additional devotees, it should be noted that its initial cause came from the religious mendicant orders, specifically, the Franciscan's and their institutional systems that first introduced and followed through with the native conversion. Moreover, it was the Franciscan indoctrination and grasp on native society that mended and molded the native's psyche to give way to the acceptance of the religious moral order, while also familiarizing the non-devotees with the articles of faith.

Juan Diego himself is indicative of this thesis, that Franciscans paved the way for Catholicism in the country. Juan was a devote Christian who had accepted the articles of faith through the mendicant orders direction. There was

no village priest, but still, his dedication to the religious moral order led him to willingly and frequently walk fifteen miles to hear religious instruction and to have sacraments administered to him. Even Juan's uncle, Juan Bernardo, did not lose his faith on his deathbed and requested a priest to hear his dying words. Moreover, as Juan's uncle lay dying, Juan chose to disobey his uncle's dying wish based on the premise and belief of religion and he continued his entrusted mission. All of these reasons are strong indications of how deep the religious moral order had penetrated the Indian populations who lived in a village with or without a priest.

Virgin de Guadalupe is noted by scholars to be the main driving force behind the conversion of the country, but given a proper analysis of the institutional systems, specifically a Foucaultian stance focusing on public humiliation directed at the elite and "pagan priests," it is easy to see the profound reactions it had over the mass populace. The destruction of Aztec temples, idols and gods, provided evidence that the Aztec universe had now become incomplete. Thus, respect for the elite and the native religion was destroyed. In the end, the loss of faith in Aztec Gods provides a convincing indication that the Franciscan institutional systems were a success in converting the Nahua populations to Catholicism. For the natives, the Virgin not only meant a continuation of the Catholicism learned from their missionary priests, but they also believed she understood their turmoil. She stood for the despair and the destruction of the conquered (Harrington 1988, 32). The overall effort of the



Friars to disseminate their ancient faith had been accomplished. Without these systems implemented by the Franciscans, Virgin de Guadalupe would have had little effect in the country.

## CONCLUSION

The conversion of New Spain was the result of a chain reaction of religious events that began in Europe and eventually spilled into New Spain. The Reconquista of Spain, a religious rivalry pitting the Jews and Moors against Christianity, was a struggle to not only convert the Jews and Moors to Christianity but also to acquire new territory. Likewise, the Spanish Inquisition was another European religious struggle to make the “infidels” convert to Christianity or leave the country. Many Muslims and Jews during this time were either tortured for confessions of heresy, put to death, or expelled from the country.

After the Reconquista of Spain, kings were not as rich and powerful as they would later become. When the war ended, eagerness to evangelize and seek desired commodities outside of Spain became a pressing matter to capitalize on. The Spanish desired silk and spices from the Far East but the arduous travel it took to import commodities made them highly expensive. Therefore, Christopher Columbus sought to find a shorter route from Spain to the East.

Columbus did not find his way to the East. Far from there, his voyage led him to the Caribbean where he died believing he had discovered the passageway. His illegitimate discovery became one of the most profound events to occur in the New World. The discovery of new lands and “pagans” lured many

Europeans to pick up where the Reconquista of Spain had left off, in search of riches, adventure and new opportunities to save souls.

After the demise of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec city-state, the conquest of New Spain was complete. Hernan Cortez wrote the king of Spain, Charles V, that it would be necessary for priests to evangelize the “pagan population.” He specifically requested Franciscan and Dominican mendicant orders because he thought canons and bishops were too costly and often provided a bad example. The first to arrive were the “Famous Twelve” Franciscan’s. These priests formulated a methodological approach to evangelizing the Indians by first learning the native language and establishing institutions, such as schools, places of worship and hospitals

The Protestant Reformation sought to bring about change in the European church. Men, such as Martin Luther, believed the church abused its power by way of nepotism, simony, usury, pluralism, and the sale of indulgences. At the time of their arrival, in 1523 there was minimal control over how the indoctrination of natives ought to take place. The Franciscan Order followed St Francis’ evangelical doctrine through a simple way of living and poverty. The Franciscan project sought to establish a church different from that of the Old Continent. This Idealistic approach to the natives conversion, motivated undoubtedly by unfulfilled yearnings for apostolic poverty and simplicity that the Franciscans could not find in Europe, persuaded the friars that they were founding a new church quite distant, geographically and spiritually, from the church of Europe

(Morales 2008, 148). In this way, the friars built schools to educate the Indians in Spanish and Latin. Catechism enabled the friars to indoctrinate the natives in Christianity. Hospitals allowed for the priests to console the sick, quarantine the infectious natives, indoctrinate the natives in churches on the grounds of hospitals and teach the natives European methods for treating European diseases.

Although punishment and public humiliation were short lived during the first decades of the evangelization, they were effective tools targeting the native leaders. The punishment targeted the leaders but was mostly aimed at the spectators. The native nobles were made an example for the rest, to see what their world had become, and to witness that even their leaders were not exempt from religious authority.

The interest paid to the Franciscan institutional systems in this thesis is given to aid in the explanation of how the Virgin de Guadalupe was mediated through them. Michel Foucault's theories of power and discipline fit well with the record of the effectiveness of the institutions; how the schools, catechisms, hospitals, punishments and public humiliations were able to establish a moral order among the natives. This moral order was firmly established when the natives lost the cultural heritages of their ancient religion and accepted Christianity as their faith. Furthermore, once the moral order was established among the natives, they would spy on their families, instruct their families at

home, run away to evangelize other villages where priests could not always be present, participate in religious feast days and destroy ancient temples and idols.

Michel Foucault's theories of power illuminate the Franciscan institutional systems. Understanding Michel Foucault was imperative to this thesis because he supported the analysis of the principal institutional systems. Foucault viewed discipline as a series of techniques. Coercing and arranging the individual's movements and experience of space and time can control the body's operations. This was achieved by procedures such as normalizing judgments and observation. Moreover, Foucault's views of discipline were thought to develop a complacent object while at the same time making them an object of power. The docile individual was made to conform to the standards of the institution and to act in accordance with the subject institution.

It follows that Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* helps explain the Franciscan institutions by explaining normalized judgments, constant observation and hierarchized environments for instruction. The combination of Foucaultian theory and Franciscan institutions exemplifies the initial introduction of Christianity to the natives and how it established a lasting impression on the natives.

Years later, the Virgin de Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego, a new Christian convert. The miraculous story spread across the country, spurring more devotions of faith, but it was the Franciscan's who first evangelized the country, introducing the bible, scriptures, and how one should act as a Christian. Without

the Friars initial work the Virgin de Guadalupe would have little affect on the country or worse, been interpreted as a pagan symbol, possibly causing a lapse of faith among Christians and the newly converted.

First and foremost, through normalized judgments, constant surveillance and hierarchized environments the institutions became full-fledged machines of instruction that functioned efficiently for the Friars. Therefore, the individual's action was internalized as right and wrong through power, discipline, daily rituals of catechism, and domestic hospital work, and born from this was a sculpted Christian subject free from idol hands and engulfed in the religious moral order. From here on the individual was ready to accept Christ and the Franciscan priests could mold the subject further to their desire.

The Franciscan institutional systems were a vital element in the Indian conversion to Christianity in New Spain. The Friars established and maintained a religious moral order in which the Indian populations lost the cultural heritages and vestiges of their past religion. Subsequently, their ancient religion was replaced by practice and devotion to one God. Through rigorous instruction and indoctrination in schools, hospitals, punishment, public humiliation and ceremonies, new Christian subjects developed throughout the country ready and willing to accept a foreign God and religion. In this case, the religious moral order was attained through religious instruction, by which the Indian populations adorned Christian faith and practiced Christianity introduced by the Franciscan mendicant order, and explained by Foucaultian theory. The Franciscan

institutional systems upheld religious indoctrination for decades to come. Their success was already apparent before the apparition of the Virgin de Guadalupe.

Produced through secondary evidence, both historically and anthropologically, this thesis attempts to understand and explain the largest religious endeavor of the New World and how it was completed by meager numbers of priests from 1519-1572. This thesis delves deeper than beheading Aztec religion by destroying its focal values. Moreover, the highlighted premise was to engage both the Franciscan institutional systems and the Virgin de Guadalupe and pervasively establish that the Franciscans mediated the understanding of her conversions through the institutional workings of establishing a moral framework of Christianity and acceptance. The most substantive way to support this evidence was by presenting Foucaultian theory. Franciscan institutions were run top down with the priests instructing the natives through subtle discipline. Through power and discipline, the Friars established a moral order in which Christianity was understood, practiced and instructed by the Franciscans. In this way, the Friar's laid the religious ground for Catholicism to absorb the Nahua peoples and to understand whom the Virgin de Guadalupe was and what she stood for. This is a crucial notion to recognize for without the religious instruction, she may have been interpreted as a "pagan god" rather than the Mother of God triggering many to lapse in their faith.

The successes the Franciscans made in evangelizing the natives proved to be substantial even after the Franciscans were beginning to be expelled from

their positions. Catholicism continued, and indeed flourished after the appearance of the Virgin de Guadalupe. The Friars initial instructions paved the way for the Nahuas to adapt and accept the Christian moral order that continued to outlast the Franciscans themselves. The appearance of Virgin de Guadalupe did influence communities throughout the Valley of Mexico, but it was the institutional workings of schools, hospitals and guided instruction that embedded the moral order in the Indians beliefs and actions.

Finally, this work lends itself to scholars who have produced research and ideas intercepting the culture of politics, neo-religious studies and the demography of Mesoamerica. Certainly, controversy and debate often overwhelm religious studies, but my intentions were to avoid this and provide an educated theory of religious colonial Mexico backed by true historical facts and supported by leading theories of power.

Today, after centuries of religious imperialism, cultures around the world continue to be burdened by a religious hegemony that can result in the loss of cultural heritages. The will of the religious to introduce and evangelize populations seem to disregard this phenomenon that simultaneously takes place. This thesis was written to shed light on religious events both past and present, to demonstrate the destruction of missionary efforts, the priesthood and other evangelists play in society and politics around the world.



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