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## To Make Graver This Sin: Conceptions of Purity and Pollution Among the Timucua of Spanish Florida

Tamara Shircliff 1971- Spike



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

TO MAKE GRAVER THIS SIN:

CONCEPTIONS OF PURITY AND POLLUTION  
AMONG THE TIMUCUA OF SPANISH FLORIDA

By

Tamara Spike

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The members of the Committee approve the Dissertation of Tamara Spike defended on 3 April 2006.

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Robinson A. Herrera  
Professor Directing Dissertation

---

Michael Uzendoski  
Outside Committee Member

---

Rodney Anderson  
Committee Member

---

Matt Childs  
Committee Member

---

Edward Gray  
Committee Member

---

Rochelle Marrinan  
Committee Member

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Based on sources located in archives and special collections located in Mexico, and the US, and employing the social, cultural, and ethnohistorical methodologies, this dissertation represents the first profound examination the Florida Timucuan's cosmology. I argue that although the Timucuan worldview fits well within indigenous Southeastern belief systems structured around purity and pollution, the Timucuan view of the cosmos did not function within an oppositional binary system of "positive" purity and "negative" pollution. Instead, Timucuan conceived of purity and pollution as a complementary system. Pure and polluted were both linked to the sacred, and must be conceived as halves of a whole, sacred/pure and sacred/polluted. Moreover, these symbolic units corresponded to aspects of the cosmos: the sacred/pure with the Upper World, the sacred/polluted with the Under World. This study reconstructs the Timucuan worldview through examinations of rituals and belief systems, including rituals of food, healing and curing, death and blood sacrifice rituals, magical practices, and the reading of omens. It also discusses Timucua gender systems of male, female, and Two Spirits. The dissertation explores how Franciscan friars perceived Timucuan beliefs, and the evolving relationship between the two groups on the missions.



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Franciscan friars, so you have come  
From the distant parts of the East  
To settle this poor and barren nest  
Where the sun's fair face is hid.  
What humbly now I beg you all  
Is to teach these western tribes  
Who look upon Satan as a friend  
But their Maker, God, regard as foe.

-Poem of Governor Pedro Menéndez  
Márques welcoming the Franciscans  
to St. Augustine, 1587.<sup>1</sup>

In a 1613 confessional written for the Timucuan of Florida, Fray Francisco Pareja gives advice and counsel to his fellow Franciscans on how to “make graver this sin.”<sup>2</sup> The relationship between Spanish friars and Timucuan was, in many ways, characterized by this phrase. The Franciscans perceived many Timucuan practices and beliefs to be heretical, and tried their best to extirpate them from the society and culture in the missions. Sometimes they met with success, but just as often, the friars found themselves fighting a losing battle against a cultural system that did not change fast enough or thoroughly enough to suit the Church. This is, of course, a pattern that can be observed again and again throughout the Americas and in this way, the story of the Timucuan is a familiar one. Their extinction as a viable cultural group in the mid-eighteenth century, however, has effectively silenced the Timucuan voice in a more profound manner than other groups. As Michel-Rolph Trouillot notes, “Silences are

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<sup>1</sup> Michael V. Gannon, The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1993), 38.

<sup>2</sup> Francisco Pareja, Confessionario en Lengua Castellana, y Timuquana Con algunos consejos para animar al penitente. Y asi mismo van declarados algunos efectos y prerrogativas deste sancto sacramento de la Confession. Todo muy util y provechoso, asi para que los padres confesores sepan instruyr al penitente como para que ellos aprendan á saberse confessar. Ordenado por el Padre Fr. Francisco Pareja, Padre de la Custodia de santa Elena de la Florida. Religioso de la Orden de nuestro Seraphico Padre San Francisco. Impreso con licencia en Mexico, en la Empronta de la Vidua de Diego Lopez Daualos. Ano de 1613. Manuscript 2401B, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C. The original reads, “para agravar este pecado.”

inherent in history because any single event enters history with some of its constituting parts missing. Something is always left out while something else is recorded.”<sup>3</sup> Timucuan were not only left out of the process of creating history as discussed by Trouillot, but as an extinct culture, their voice is nearly completely silenced today. The cultural system that the Franciscans waged war against no longer exists, except in bits and pieces throughout the documents that they generated in waging their battles against supposed heresy.

The reconstruction of the Timucuan cultural system is the ultimate goal of this work. In recreating how the Timucua understood themselves and their place in the world, I examine many facets of the culture including food rituals, healing practices, death and sacrificial rituals, magical activities, and gender norms. In seeking to understand how Timucuan culture functioned and understood itself and its place in the cosmos, the study will also examine the ways in which Franciscans attempted to interact with Timucuan culture. Based on their observations, the friars made choices about which cultural practices should be changed and which could be tolerated. Through this process of interaction, and other effects of missionization, including disease and overwork, the Timucuan group evolved from a strong regional power to a handful of survivors.

When the Spanish and French first arrived in Florida, the Timucua were a powerful cultural group that dominated the region of modern-day southeastern Georgia and north and central Florida. The precolonial Timucua were likely made up of fourteen different tribes, and spoke at least ten different dialects. Although the most basic unit of governmental organization among the Timucua was the individual village, alliances were formed, resulting in small-scale chiefdoms of related and allied villages. These alliances were formed for, among other reasons, the need for protection against mutual enemies, distribution of food, and through the sheer dominance of one village over another. Alliances were cemented through intermarriage and paying tribute to the chief of the higher status village.<sup>4</sup>

The Franciscan friars first arrived in Florida in 1587 to convert the Native population to Christianity and to European ways of living. The Timucua, as the group closest to St. Augustine, were among the first to experience missionization in Florida. In order to convert these peoples, the friars set up an extensive system of missions. Based in part on their experiences in other parts of the Americas, the Franciscans took advantage of the preexisting political hierarchy in the area, and established missions at the largest and most important villages of the precolonial alliance system. Here, friars instructed their penitents in the Christian doctrine and held Mass. Friars again took advantage of the knowledge that they had gained in the mission fields of Mexico and South America, and sought to focus their efforts on the children of the society, rationalizing that these children would grow up to raise their own children within the Church.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 48-49.

<sup>4</sup> Jerald T Milanich, The Timucua (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 45-46.

<sup>5</sup> Amy Turner Bushnell, Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 95-97.

When Francisco Pareja first arrived in Florida in 1595, relatively few missions had been established and the friars had little contact with the Timucuans. Mission efforts had, as yet, met with failure. The colony of Florida itself was also quickly proving to be a dead weight on the Crown, existing only with the help of the yearly *situado*, a monetary stipend from the Crown to aid in the support of both St. Augustine and the mission system.<sup>6</sup> Even with the *situado*, the colony had problems feeding itself, and letters to the Crown complaining of persistent hunger and short supplies were frequent.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the colony of Florida was necessary and even vital to the Crown as a military outpost, strategically located at the periphery of the Spanish empire. Florida provided a buffer zone between the rich colonies to the south and intruding European holdings to the north. The Spanish Crown felt it had no choice but to maintain the struggling colony. Moreover, the activity of missionaries was mandated by both Spain's obligation to the Church under the *Real Patronato*,<sup>8</sup> and by the needs of the colony; in part, the mission system functioned to supply St. Augustine with corn and labor.<sup>9</sup> Such was the peripheral nature of the colony that *caciques*<sup>10</sup> had to be appeased through regularly gifting them with items such as cloth, tools, and flour. In return, the *caciques* pledged their loyalty to the Crown and the governor.<sup>11</sup>

Upon his arrival in Florida, Pareja was assigned to San Juan del Puerto, located on Fort George Island, near modern Jacksonville, Florida. The mission was probably

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<sup>6</sup> Relación of Fray Juan de las Cabezas Altimirano. Florida Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, Box 86, folio 1, PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida; Franciscan Friars to the King, March 13, 1669, Archivo General de la Nación, (hereafter referred to as AGN), General de Parte 12, exp 405; Fray Francisco de Marón to Don Fray Antonio Díaz de Salsedo, January 23, 1597, Woodbury Lowery Collection (hereafter referred to as WLC), box 4, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>7</sup> Baltasar de Castillo y Ahedo, Visitador to Florida to the King, February 12, 1577, Jeanette Thurber Connor Collection (Hereafter referred to as JTCC), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Gamboa, "Investigation made in Madrid by Licenciado Gamboa on matters concerning Florida", February 4 1573, JTCC; Governor Pablo de Hita Salazar to the King, St. Augustine, June 15, 1675, John Bannerman Stetson Collection (hereafter referred to as SC), PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida; Pedro Menéndez Marqués to the King, Santa Elena, October 21, 1577, JTCC; Francisco Redondo Villegas to the King, April 18 1600, SC; Diego de Velasco to the King, St Augustine, August 1575, JTCC.

<sup>8</sup> The Real Patronato, or royal patronage, refers to Spain's control of Church matters in the Americas. In part, this agreement mandated Spain's responsibility to convert the Native peoples of the Americas to Christianity. Peter Bakewell, A History of Latin America: Empires and Sequels 1450-1930 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 129-130.

<sup>9</sup> Cedula to the Governor of Florida, December 24, 1680, AGN, Reales Cédulas Originales 18, expediente 84; Worth, Timucuan Chiefdoms, 128.

<sup>10</sup> Cacique was the term most often used by the Spanish to refer to Native headmen, chiefs, or leaders. In other parts of Spanish America, the authority of the *caciques* was diminished and they were subjugated to Spanish power and authority. James Lockhart and Stuart Schwartz, Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Latin America and Brazil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 69-71.

<sup>11</sup> Cedula to the Governor of Florida, December 24, 1680. AGN, Reales Cédulas Originales 18, expediente 84; Cedula relativo a la guarnición, situado, y agasajos a los indios, July 20, 1733, AGN, Reales Cédulas Originales 52, exp. 30; Juan Gimenez Montalvo to Jose de Veitia Linage, September 29, 1680, SC.

established during the 1587 efforts, making it one of the earliest missions in Florida.<sup>12</sup> During his years of service in Florida, Pareja held important posts in the Franciscan order. He was elected to different offices on several occasions. By 1608, he held the office of *custodio*, a sign that he headed a minor province (*custodia*) within Florida. In December of 1616, an election was held in which Pareja was made *provincial*, or head of the entire province of Florida. Pareja probably held this post until the next election in 1620.<sup>13</sup> On several occasions, he seems to have served as the spokesperson for the friars of the province. For example, his letter to the King of March 8, 1599 criticizes Governor Mendez de Canzo's treatment of the Franciscans, and complains about the governor's restrictions on the order, which he felt restricted missionary work.<sup>14</sup>

As one of the first mendicants in Florida, Pareja's confessional ranks among the earliest and most detailed sources for Timucuan culture. The 1613 confessional is an example of one of the most powerful weapons in the Franciscan arsenal: a document in which the friars could enumerate and describe the supposedly sinful Native practices so as to eradicate them among their indigenous charges. Ironically, now that the Timucuan culture is extinct, this confessional and documents like it are valuable tools for the historian in exploring the very rituals, practices, and beliefs that the Franciscans sought to eradicate.

However, the source presents several challenges to historians. This first lies in its obvious bias. Pareja viewed the Timucua through a Christian and Spanish lens. His observations are certainly influenced by his religious beliefs and his Iberian experiences. Pareja's Catholic beliefs and Spanish customs defined the way he thought and acted, and defined his concepts of right, wrong, and sin. Almost invariably, the European ways of thinking and doing were right and the indigenous ways wrong. Other, much more subtle preconceptions held by Pareja also come through in the document. As a Franciscan, Pareja would have been well versed in the experiences of his brothers in Mexico and other parts of the New World. Pareja arrived in Florida with preconceived notions about how indigenous peoples thought and behaved, and how they were best brought before the Cross. It is crucial for anyone using this document to recognize the inherent biases. Yet despite its biases, a critical analysis of the documents left by the religious orders permits a better understanding of the Timucuan people.

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<sup>12</sup> Maynard J. Geiger, The Franciscan Conquest of Florida, 1573-1618, Studies in Hispanic American History, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1937), 55. Although dated, Maynard Geiger's chronology of the establishment of the Florida missions is one of the most complete and thorough accounts available. Anthropologist Jerald Milanich, however, disagrees with the 1587 foundation of San Juan del Puerto, and states that Pareja probably founded the mission himself in 1595. See Jerald T. Milanich, The Timucua, The Peoples of America, vol. 3 (Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 1996), 172.

<sup>13</sup> Jerald T. Milanich and William C. Sturtevant, Francisco Pareja's 1613 Confessional: A Documentary Source for Timucuan Ethnography (Tallahassee: Florida Division of Archives, History, and Records Management, 1972), 13-14.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

## Sources and Methodology

In addition to ecclesiastical sources, this work relies on sources that include French and Spanish language unpublished archival documents such as petitions to the Crown, communication between friars and the royal officials at St. Augustine, and internal letters of the Franciscans, among other documents. I also use accounts from the period, ethnologies, archaeological reports, and linguistic studies. I draw from historical, archaeological and anthropological sources, culling from the disparate materials previously unknown and poorly understood elements of Timucuan cultural norms and social structures. The writings of Francisco Pareja provide a wealth of information about Timucuan cultural practices, rituals, and beliefs, and include the 1613 confessional, two catechisms, and an *arte de grammaria*, a description and primer in the Timucuan language.

Some of the earliest accounts of Timucuan life and culture include the French contact sources such as explorer René Laudonnière's *L'Historie notable de la Floridæ*. A complimentary series of drawings and notations by cartographer Jacques LeMoyne (reproduced by Dutch engraver Theodore deBry) illustrates the expedition.<sup>15</sup> I also use other French contact sources such as the account of Francois Coreal.

To compare the Florida Franciscans' activities in extirpating cultural practices with that of other friars, I use confessionals from other areas of the Spanish world. In other words, comparing the confessionals will highlight the concerns that friars had in common in areas all over the New World. Themes and concerns that are not repeated in the other confessionals are much more likely to have arisen from behaviors and beliefs that the Florida friars directly observed, thus pointing to the unique situation friars encountered when dealing with the Timucua.

Archaeological reports will be utilized to relate the material culture of the Timucuan to the historical evidence of Timucuan culture and worldview explored in this study. Archaeological evidence will also inform the Southeastern model. Similarities and dissimilarities between the material culture of the groups will do much to help prove or disprove patterns that the historical evidence will reveal. Similarly, ethnological and linguistic studies will also be consulted. Use of anthropological notes and papers from various Southeastern groups will allow exploration of topics and information that may be contained in the original research and field work that received little or no mention in the resulting published works.

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<sup>15</sup> Much controversy surrounds the authenticity of these illustrations. LeMoyne was present in Florida during the 1562 expedition, and wrote a narrative describing French activities in Florida. After his return to Europe, he made a series of paintings depicting the French expedition, including many of the practices of the local Timucuan Indians. These paintings were sold to Dutch engraver Theodore de Bry, who made a series of engravings from them. While the original paintings, with the exception of one, were lost, de Bry's engravings were published and widely distributed. Although LeMoyne's other works are known for their scrupulous attention to detail, the Florida engravings are littered with errors and inconsistencies, such as shells from the Pacific decorating the graves of chiefs and warriors carrying war clubs from Brazil. While some scholars attribute these oversights to de Bry taking artistic liberties with the originals, others hold serious doubts about whether an original series of paintings even existed. In the course of this study, I use the engravings for illustrative purposes only. I do, however, draw evidence from the accompanying narrative. For more information, see Jerald T. Milanch, "The Devil in the Details," *Archaeology* (May/June 2005), 26-31.

Methodologically, this work reconstructs aspects of Timucuan culture by tying together the two worlds that influenced them, the indigenous world of the Southeast and the European world, by examining the beliefs and rituals of the Timucua. First, the conventional understanding of the Timucua will be revealed through Spanish and French documents, primarily ecclesiastical records and accounts of first contact with the Timucua. My reading of the documents is grounded in the methodology of the New Philology as pioneered for the study of indigenous language texts. In reading the documents, one must consider its language grammatically as well as lexically in a detailed study of the wording and its use. Moreover, I seek to “read between the lines” of the documents, reading not just for what is said, but for underlying connections and patterns that can illuminate cultural behavior.<sup>16</sup> Finally, what is not said is often as significant as what is openly stated; such “coded silences” often mask ideological conflicts.<sup>17</sup>

Examination of the European sources will establish a baseline of observed behavior from which the study will expand. Although it is certain that some of these behaviors were exaggerated or even fabricated by the Europeans, knowing the source bias facilitates teasing out the historical information. The European documents will also serve to demonstrate how Europeans and the Spaniards in particular understood Timucuan culture and worldview.

Secondly, the dissertation examines Timucuan rituals and beliefs through the lens of the greater Southeast to identify what is general and what is unique about Timucuan culture. In this way I seek to identify what can be considered precolonial continuities and what resulted from European influences on Timucuan ritual and belief. Examination of the core Timucuan symbols, beliefs, and rituals through these indigenous lenses will not only inform and enhance the study’s basic purpose of reconstruction of worldview, but will also furnish a comparative framework for future Timucuan studies.

## Historiography

This dissertation contributes to the social and cultural historiography of colonial Florida from a largely ethnohistorical perspective. For the last twenty years, most of the works on Florida have focused on two main themes: exploration of the *entradas* (Spanish expeditions) into Florida and the Florida Mission period. Both have much in common, however, as understanding interaction between Spaniards and Florida’s indigenous peoples lies at the basis of the themes. In part, this influence has been dictated by the fruitful collaboration of archaeologists and historians in Florida. Jerald Milanich and Bonnie McEwan are two of the leading anthropologists who have led the way in encouraging, organizing, and editing collaborative works. McEwan’s Spanish Missions

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<sup>16</sup> Rolena Adorno, Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru, Institute of Latin American Studies, number 68 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

<sup>17</sup> Gustavo Verdesio, Forgotten Conquests: Rereading New World History from the Margins (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 8.

of La Florida exemplifies the trend. The work combines archaeological and historical studies into a cohesive whole that provides the reader with a picture of quotidian life on the Florida missions.

Studies of the Timucua have followed the basic pattern of Florida works, concentrating on the mission period, Timucuan reactions to missionization, and Timucuan-Spanish interaction and acculturation. Timucuan culture has received attention in several studies, including John Hann's A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions, John Worth's two volume The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida, and Jerald Milanich's The Timucua. This dissertation represents the first scholarly attempt at an intensive study of core symbols, rituals and beliefs of Timucuan culture and a construction of a coherent understanding of the Timucuan worldview. Past studies present Florida and the Timucua in isolation from the larger colonial and Atlantic world, with little or no connection to the larger Spanish Empire and the larger indigenous world, whereas I contextualize Spanish Florida and the Timucua within a broader historical narrative.<sup>18</sup>

The reconstruction of the Timucuan cultural system is the ultimate goal of this dissertation. In my examination of culture, I take a neo-Boasian approach to "culture" as a symbolic complex.<sup>19</sup> Culture is a coherent, learned system of beliefs, rituals, and ideas about the world that shapes how people live. Every culture is built around differing key ideas and beliefs that inform how the culture constructs itself. Although various aspects of a culture, such as construction of gender or taboos, appear to be different, all are subject to an underlying system of thought- a logic- that influences the culture and binds it into one cohesive whole. But far from being a closed system, culture is permeable, mutable, and constantly in flux. I argue that for the Timucua, culture was structured by their conceptions of purity, impurity and pollution, a threefold system that regulated Timucuan interaction with the sacred, structured their societal relations, and shaped their worldview.<sup>20</sup> I contend that rituals associated with these three states of being "create unity in experience...By their means, symbolic patterns are worked out and publicly displayed. Within these patterns disparate elements are related and disparate experience is given meaning."<sup>21</sup> These three states of being defined Timucuan cosmology, and form the basis of this dissertation.

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<sup>18</sup> A notable exception to this is the work of Amy Turner Bushnell, who examines Florida's economic ties to the Crown in Situado and Sabana.

<sup>19</sup> For more information about the movement in neo-Boasian anthropology, see American Anthropologist, volume 106, issue 3, which is partially devoted to the subject. In the same edition see especially Matti Bunzl, "Boas, Foucault, and the 'Native Anthropologist': Notes toward a Neo-Boasian Anthropology," 435-442; Ira Bashkow, "A Neo-Boasian Conception of Cultural Boundaries," 443-458; and Daniel Rosenblatt, "An Anthropology Made Safe for Culture: Patterns of Practice and the Politics of Difference in Ruth Benedict," 459-472.

<sup>20</sup> Worldview, in this case, refers to the Timucuan perceptions and understanding of self, group, outsiders, and the world around them, and the relationships between these elements.

<sup>21</sup> Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 2-3.

The basis for pollution and taboo theory was laid in Mary Douglas' Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. Douglas argues that culture seeks to eliminate disorder, which she refers to as "symbolic dirt." Purity, on the other hand, represents order in the environment. Culture gives meaning to the environment and religion through manipulation of both purity and pollution.<sup>22</sup> Douglas' theories on the nature of purity and pollution form the basis for many studies in a variety of fields encompassing anthropology, history, literary analysis, and philosophy.<sup>23</sup>

Anthropologist Charles Hudson applied this schema to the Indians of the Southeastern United States, including the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Seminole, and Timucua in his work The Southeastern Indians. He argues that an oppositional paradigm of purity versus pollution defines the cultural complex of the Southeastern Indians.<sup>24</sup> Most of the ceremonies of the Southeast, he contends, can be understood as a means of keeping the pure and impure or polluted separate or as a means of overcoming pollution where separation failed. This separation maintained order within the world and the cosmos, which is vital to the Southeastern cosmology.<sup>25</sup>

Hudson's system is useful, but requires some nuance in order to explain Timucuan culture. While the model is valuable in terms of understanding religious ideas about purity and the sacred, it does not fully explain ideas about pollution and the impure. Because the model is based on a binary oppositional paradigm, it infers that the two categories defined are, in fact, opposites. If purity represents the sacred and is good or positive, then what is polluted must therefore be secular and negative. Moreover, Hudson argues that this system's function is to maintain order within society. The ultimate goal of keeping the pure and polluted separate, he maintains, is to create an ordered and harmonious world, structured through the creation of categories.<sup>26</sup> Yet as Mary Churchill notes, Hudson's system does not account for things and ideas that do not fit into the pure/polluted categories that define the world. She correctly concludes that Hudson is forced by the rules of his schema to look upon these exceptions (which he refers alternately to as "aberrations" or "abominations") negatively, as they represent a threat to the ordered universe.<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, Hudson's system as he first conceived and applied it

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 1-4.

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, John James Collins, Native American Religions: A Geographical Survey (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991); Åke Hulkrantz, The Study of American Indian Religions (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1993); Amy Mullin, "Purity and Pollution: Resisting the Rehabilitation of a Virtue," Journal of the History of Ideas 57, no.3 (1996): 509-524; Janina M. Safran, "Rules of Purity and Confessional Boundaries: Maliki Debates about the Pollution of the Christian," History of Religions 42, no. 3 (February 2003): 197-213; and Keith Sidwell, "Purification and Pollution in Aeschylus' Eumenides," The Classical Quarterly, n.s., 46, no. 1 (1996): 44-57.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Hudson, The Southeastern Indians (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 41-42.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 41-42.

<sup>27</sup> Mary Churchill, "The Oppositional Paradigm of Purity Versus Pollution in Charles Hudson's The Southeastern Indians," The American Indian Quarterly 20, no.3-4 (1996), 567-568.



proves too constraining and does not adequately account for the role of “aberrations” such as two spirit people (the Third Gender) within society.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Sacred/Pure and Sacred/Polluted Dyads**

This study argues that a looser application of the model of purity and impurity fits Southeastern society, and the Timucua in particular, well. Instead of conceiving of order as the ultimate goal of categorization, categories are built to understand the world and the way it works, to inform rather to impose order. Most things within This World (as conceptualized by the Cherokee and other Southeastern nations) do fit within the classificatory categories that define the world.<sup>29</sup> Those things that do not fit the mold require special attention. Often, they are special, powerful, or possibly sacred. Aberrations are not necessarily assigned a negative role, as Hudson assumed, or a positive role either. Instead it appears that in some cases things that fall outside of the category of the norm gain power from defying the norms of society.

Moreover, Timucuan culture went beyond Hudson’s basic variation of purity and pollution alone. Instead, I argue that Timucua conceived of their world as divided into three categories: purity, pollution, and impurity. For the Timucua, purity was linked with the sacred. Symbols/objects of purity in Timucuan culture included fire, First Fruits, blood, corn, tobacco, and black drink. Timucua used these things to achieve a personal state of purity, to purify the environment, and to attract the attention of and interact with the sacred, including the ancestors and the gods. This was especially true of the sun god, the chief god in the Timucuan pantheon. Although it seems that all Timucua could achieve a temporary personal state of purity, it was not the normative state of being. Additionally, it was often dangerous for untrained individuals to interact with these symbols of purity. The state of purity as well as its symbols was associated with the Upper World.

The second state present in the Timucuan cosmology was one of pollution. Although Hudson equates pollution with a negative state and Douglas with symbolic dirt, I postulate that for the Timucua, pollution represented a state that endangered the average person because it was also linked to the sacred. Just as symbols of the sacred had the power to purify individuals, symbols of pollution had the power to alter a person’s state of being in bringing them closer to the Under World, the region of the cosmos

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<sup>28</sup> Third gender individuals are persons who, although possessing the biological body of a man or a woman, are considered by themselves and the community to be neither male nor female. Instead, they are viewed as a distinct category from men and women: not man/not woman or half-man/half-woman. Such individuals are often termed berdache or Two Spirit. For more information on the existence of a third gender among Native Americans, see Will Roscoe, Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998); and Walter Williams, The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).

<sup>29</sup> For a more complete examination of Southeastern worldview, see John R. Swanton, The Indians of the Southeastern United States, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 137 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1946).

associated with pollution. Symbols of pollution in Timucuan culture include menstrual and childbirth blood, dead bodies, and disease. Each of these ideas represents a point in which a member of society enters a state which brings them closer to the sacred, whether in the process of death and dying (thus becoming a sacred ancestor) or through shedding the blood of the lineage (birth, menstruation, and blood sacrifice), which links the earthly family to the sacred family. As with the state of purity, certain individuals within Timucuan society, including shamans, healers, and Two Spirits were able to interact with persons or objects in a state of pollution.

Each of these states of being and collections of symbols were two different faces of the sacred. Both the Upper World and the Under World were sacred areas, associated with beings and ideas that were important in the scope of Timucuan cosmology; gods and ancestors, death and fertility. Thus, throughout this study, I refer to the concepts of purity and pollution as dyads interrelated to the sacred: sacred/pure, sacred/polluted.

Finally, the third state for Timucuan cosmology was the impure. Contrary to Hudson's equation of pollution with impurity, I contend that for the Timucuan, impurity was associated with everyday existence. Impurity simply referred to the profane, the normative state of This World. Timucuan interacted with both the pure and the polluted as a part of the veneration of the sacred. Like other Southeastern peoples, Timucuan conceptions of the sacred were linked to fertility, a so-called "Earth Cult."<sup>30</sup> Both predominant associations with the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted were linked to the fertility of the earth and of the Timucuan culture: the ancestors, the sun, and the gods as life givers to both earth and people, and blood, disease, and dead bodies as part of the cycle that both reproduces the lineages (through menstruation and childbirth blood) and connects the living lineages to the sacred ancestors (through disease/death/dead bodies). Both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted were necessary to the physical and spiritual well-being of the Timucuan culture.

The Timucuan conception of the cosmos: a threefold system with three distinct layers linked through veneration of the sacred and fertility. (see figure 1.1) In many ways, this system parallels the overall Southeastern view of the cosmos as consisting of three worlds: This World, the world of everyday existence and humanity; the Upper World or sky vault, a place of order and harmony associated with the gods the Sun and Moon, and birds; and the Under World, which existed beneath the earth and waters, a place of chaos associated with monsters, reptiles, and water, and the source of fertility.<sup>31</sup>

Timucuan were linked to both the Upper World and the Under World in their religious rites and beliefs. In order to trace how Timucuan manipulated the three states/worlds of the cosmos, this study will examine a variety of different subjects, including rituals, belief systems, and perceptions of and relationships with the world, the

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<sup>30</sup> For more information on the associations of fertility and Southeastern religion and its Mississippian roots, see Timothy R. Patuketat, "Serpents, Female Deities and Fertility: Symbolism in the Early Cahokia Countryside" in *Mounds, Modoc and Mesoamerica: Papers in Honor of Melvin L. Fowler* ed. S. Ahler (Springfield: Illinois State Museum), 511-522; and Susan C. Power, *Early Art of the Southeastern Indians: Feathered Serpents & Winged Beings* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), esp. Chapter 5, "The Artist and the Sacred Landscape" 161-195. For an examination of the role of the veneration of fertility among Southeastern peoples, see Hudson, *Southeastern Indians*, 170-183.

<sup>31</sup> Hudson, *Southeastern Indians*, 122-126, 166. Because the names by which Timucuan referred to the cosmos are unknown, this work will follow the nomenclature of the general Southeastern categorization of the cosmos.

body, and other humans, both within and outside of the group in order to identify and understand the core ideas of the Timucuan culture. Topics such as Timucuan food rituals, healing and curing practices, death and sacrificial rites, understandings of gender (including the Third Gender), and “magical” practices will be analyzed. In particular, the role of shamans in ritual and belief will be carefully considered as one of the primary intercessors between pure, impure, and polluted. Unsurprisingly, shamans received a lot of attention in the documents of the Spanish friars. The Franciscans held ambivalent attitudes towards shamans; although they represented the main threat to the spiritual authority of the friar on the mission, they were a necessary force in the community for their healing activities. Shamanic activity stands at the center of this study, as shamans themselves stand at the center of indigenous belief systems and cosmology. The role of shamans as community leaders, healers, and persons of spiritual power provides a touchstone throughout the study that will be examined again and again as a diverse set of rites and rituals that form a cohesive belief system are examined.

Finally, the study examines Spanish interpretations of and reactions to Timucuan culture. In particular, the relationship between the Franciscan friars and the Timucuan will be examined. Like ecclesiastics all over the Americas, the friars in Florida sought to change and eradicate practices that they found to be anti-doctrinal. Some of the rituals examined in the course of this study, such as sacrificial rituals and magical practices, were marked for extirpation all over the Indies. Other rites that the Florida Franciscans targeted (or failed to target), most notably food and healing rituals, seem to be unique to the Timucua.

## **Chapter Overview**

Chapter Two examines the Timucuan relationship and understanding of the world around them through the study of food rites and rituals, including hunting, gathering, and agricultural practices. A First Fruits complex stands at the center of this relationship. I argue that the time of the First Fruits represented a sacred time of year in which the newly ripening foods held great power and that the Timucuan relationship with food was markedly different during this sacred time, peppered with many rituals and observances that were absent from the profane ways in which Timucuan interacted with food during the rest of the year. Through the yearly veneration of the ritually pure and consecrated First Fruits, Timucuan renewed their relationship with the sun god and reaffirmed the religious and social structure of the society, with the White Deer clan holding the preeminent place.

Chapter Three examines a key component to exploring the Timucuan understanding of the nature self and the body, rituals of healing. Examining the causes, identification of, and treatment of disease is at the center of healing rites and rituals. Disease and injury were seen as pollutants by the Timucua, and constituted a real danger to other members of the society. Consequently, sick individuals were segregated from the village, and only those individuals with the power to withstand the sacred/polluted interacted with the sick. Central to practices of healing were purifying elements, such as the lighting of separate fires and the use of tobacco and black drink. Shamans and other

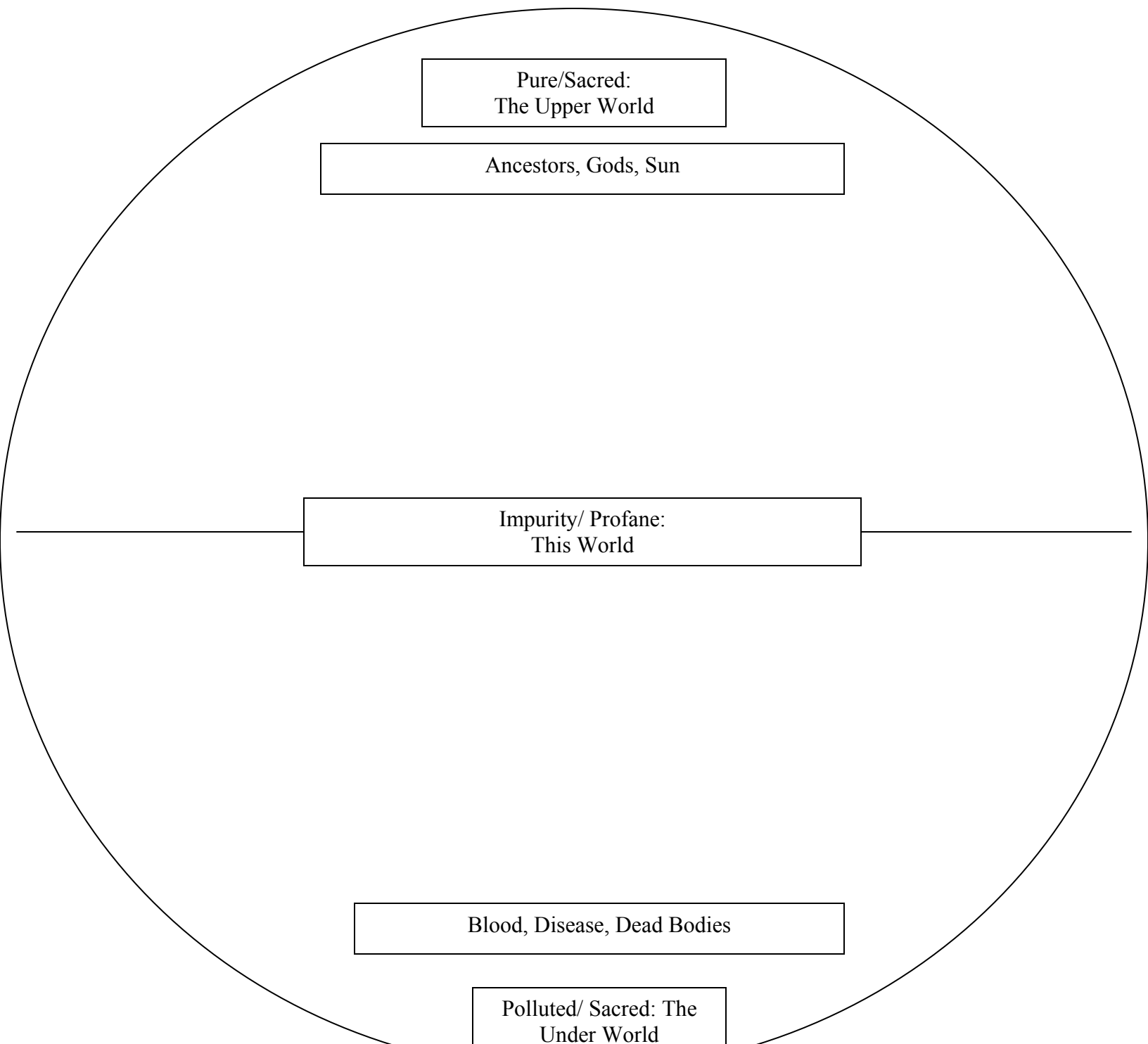


Figure 1.1 Timucuan conceptions of purity, impurity, and pollution

healers employed the sacred/pure to alleviate the condition of sickness or pollution. This restored the individual to a state of impurity, the everyday, profane state.

Chapter Four explores Timucuan conceptions of death and sacrifice, two states that linked the culture to the sacred. Timucuans venerated their ancestors as an element of the sacred, perhaps as links to the gods. The process and rituals of death was a transformative journey that took an individual from a state of impurity (life) to pollution (the physical, dead body) and finally to a pure state linked to the sacred (becoming an ancestor). Central to this transformation were rituals that changed the physical remains from a corpse to ritually purified bones. The process of death and dying was so important to Timucuan cosmology that their kinship system was structured by death. Similarly, blood sacrifice also linked the living/profane with the gods/sacred. Timucuans practiced a variety of sacrificial rites that called attention to the relationships between the living and the ancestors by the shedding of blood by the women of the clans, the living links to the ancestors. In these rituals, blood served as the purifying agent which linked the impure to the pure, invoking the sacred.

Chapter Five deals with Timucuan conceptions of magic and magical ritual. The Timucuans employed four main types of magic: omens, love charms, bewitchment, and war magic. Although the general population had access to some types of magic, such as omens and love charms, either directly or by proxy through a shaman, accessibility to magic was governed by an individual's relationship to the sacred, and by his/her ability to interact with the purifying and polluting substances and ideas associated with magic. Shamans, unsurprisingly, dominated magical activities. However, Timucuan women also possessed powers to manipulate the world around them. Overall, Timucuan magical rites show strong ties to the sun cult. It seems that shamans ultimately received their power from connections with the sun god; war magic venerated the sun; many harbingers of omens, including fire, lightning, and birds were linked to the sun and the sky world over which he had domain.

Chapter Six identifies Timucuan perceptions of gender and gender roles. Timucuan men and women both had important and distinct roles in keeping the relationships between their society and other outside forces. I argue that whereas men were the intercessors who kept the relationships in This World functioning and reliable, it was the power of the women that maintained the connection between This World and the supernatural. Although men and women's roles complimented one another in the balance of interaction with the impure/profane and pure/sacred, both men and women carefully avoided too close contact with pollution: powerful, endangering forces such as death and illness. The third gender, or Two Spirit, filled this role and existed in Timucuan society as a unifier of the genders, an embodiment of the characteristics and the powers of both men and women: a bridge between the cosmological categories of man and woman, able to interact with all three categories of Timucuan cosmology: pure, impure, and polluted. In writing this dissertation, I have come to have a great appreciation for the resilience of Timucuan cultural practices and the strength of their belief system. It is my hope that the dissertation will provide readers not only with a clearer understanding of the Timucua but also with a sense of admiration for a people who resisted colonial power as best they could.

## CHAPTER 2

### FOOD RITUALS AND FIRST FRUITS CEREMONIES

One of the high points of the Timucuan religious calendar came every spring. According to French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne, “the skin of the largest stag [was taken] with its horns still on, and stuff[ed] it with the choicest roots...On its horns, neck, and body they [hung] long garlands of the best fruits. Thus decorated, it [was] carried with music and song to an open, level place and hung on a high tree with its head and breast towards the sunrise.”<sup>1</sup> This consecration of foods to the sun was the centerpiece of a rich tradition of food rituals and observances of the Timucua.

Among the Timucua, food was intimately tied to the veneration of the sacred/pure. Timucuans had a complex relationship with food and how it was obtained, whether it was by agriculture, gathering, or hunting. Practices included the dedication of the first harvest of many food groups to the sun, a group of rituals and beliefs that can be referred to as a First Fruits complex. Moreover, like most Native Americans, Timucuans observed many kinds of food taboos so that individuals might achieve or maintain a personal state of purity. For the Timucua, food was tied to power through these notions of purity and impurity. Therefore, understanding the relationship and significance that food and food preparation held for the Timucua sheds important light on everyday practices that have long eluded historians. While contemporary scholars have ignored studying Timucua food-related practices, Spaniards knew full well the importance that food held for the indigenous people they sought to colonize.

The Spanish friars were very aware of this relationship between Timucuans and food and the means by which it was enacted and affirmed. In the 1613 confessional, Fray Francisco Pareja systematically works his way through all areas of the Timucuan subsistence system, asking questions about every facet of Timucuan food practices. Chief on his list of questions about food are queries about rituals associated with the first harvest of food or first prey taken through hunting and fishing. A secondary theme concerns the various types of food taboos observed by different members of Timucuan society. Questions about food and the First Fruits rituals are so numerous that anthropologists Jerald Milanich and William Sturtevant identify them as among the most prevalent and important themes throughout Pareja’s confessional.<sup>2</sup>

This concern for food production and the rituals associated with it is unique to the Florida confessional. No other confessional consulted in the course of this study, including those from other borderlands areas, shows such concern with food and food rituals. In other confessionals food questions rarely appear, and when they do they tend to be limited to Native observance of Christian food rites, such as questions about eating

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and Engraved by Theodore de Bry, with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida, 1562-1565, and the Virginia Colony, 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), 105.

<sup>2</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja’s Confessionario, 44.

meat during Lent and not fasting on holy days.<sup>3</sup> Other food questions concerned payment to shamans in foodstuffs.<sup>4</sup> The lone question that concerned the relationship between people, food, and the sacred came from a California confessional, and concerned scattering seeds during dances to ensure fertility and a good harvest.<sup>5</sup> As with Timucuan food practices in general, scholars have neglected to address the critical issue of why the Pareja confessional differs so much from other confessionals in regards to the collection and preparation of food. A partial explanation for Florida's unique concern with food lies in the fact that Franciscans who lived on the missions held a vested interest in Timucuan foodways, as they existed on the same diet as the Indians. Also, the issues concerning Timucuan food rituals had greater implications to the Spanish, as Timucua, and later Apalachee, served as the "larder" of Spanish St. Augustine, supplying critically essential dietary goods.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Pareja's concern with food in the confessional reflects political and economic concerns as well as religious ones.

This chapter examines the relationship between the Timucua and food. Timucuan interaction with food, including First Fruits rituals and food taboos, indicate that the Timucua built and maintained a relationship with the sacred through food ritual. The sequence of events that formed the First Fruits process built from small sacrifice to greater sacrifice, concluding with a First Fruits offering to the sun. This crescendo of activity structured the Timucuan conception of time at harvest tide, and marked time in a change from the sacred time of the First Fruits, which were ritually pure and consecrated to the sacred, to the profane time, the time in which Timucuan had a more commonplace relationship with food. The First Fruits rituals represent a renewal of a yearly cycle of seasons and marked a reaffirmation of Timucuan veneration of the sun god and his representatives in This World, the cacique and members of the White Deer clan.

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<sup>3</sup> Madison S. Beeler, Ventureño Confessional of José Francisco de Paula Señan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 33-34; Buckingham Smith, Grammar of the Pima or Névume, a Language of Sonora from a Manuscript of the XVIII Century (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 12.

<sup>4</sup> Pedro Marbán, Catechismo en Lengua Espanola y Moxa, Compuesto por el M R. P. Pedro Marbán de la Compañía de Jesús Superior que Fue de las Misiones de Infiel. que Tienie la Compañía de este Provincia de Perúen las Dilatads Regiones de los Indios Moxos y Chiquitos (Valdúz-Georgetown: Cabildo Press, 1975), 112.

<sup>5</sup> Beeler, Ventureño Confessionario, 25-26.

<sup>6</sup> Jerald T. Milanich, Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians (Washington: Smithsonian Press, 1999), 146-147. Milanich even goes so far as to suggest that labor tribute in the form of Indian agriculture outside of St. Augustine and the surplus corn trade that helped to support the presidio was one of the main goals in establishing the Florida mission system. See Jerald T. Milanich, "Franciscan Missions and Native Peoples in Spanish Florida," in The Forgotten Centuries: Indians and Europeans in the American South, 1521-1704, ed. Charles Hudson and Carmen Chaves Tesser (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 277.

## First Fruit Ceremonies

The observance of First Fruits rituals is a worldwide phenomenon. First Fruits rituals are calendrically determined and tied to the local ecology; the rituals are observed when the world renews itself, whether in the form of springtime, when animals multiply and plants are budding, or in the form of harvest tide, when the crops ripen. For cultures that observe First Fruits rituals, these foods possess a special potency, a quality that can be almost dangerous. Many cultures consider that the First Fruits can be lethal to a person who ingests them before they are offered to the supernatural, e.g. gods, spirits, etc. First Fruits possess these special qualities because of the liminal way in which they combine qualities from two separate domains: the domain of man, as a substance that is ingested on a daily basis, but also the domain of the supernatural, as a symbol of the fruits that are to come throughout the rest of the season. First Fruits do not require consecration; they are sacred in and of themselves. As the first manifestation of the renewal and purification of a cycle that has become polluted and weakened over the course of the year, they are more potent than other foods. Usually, the First Fruits, which have been given to humans by the supernatural or sacred in the process of yearly renewal, are offered back to the gods as a token of thanksgiving. By offering the First Fruits to the sacred, the sacred order of the universe is reestablished and cleansed of the yearly pollution.<sup>7</sup>

First Fruits rituals were one of the most important connections between food and the sacred/pure in the Timucuan culture. They observed many different kinds of First Fruits rituals. There appear to be First Fruits rituals associated with every aspect of the Timucuan subsistence system, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. In some cases, there were multiple types of rituals associated with the same food product. This is especially true of corn.<sup>8</sup> Different members and classes of society performed distinct First Fruits rituals. Pareja's confessional includes several questions about First Fruits ceremonies in a section of questions devoted to chiefs, commanding chiefs and lesser chiefs ("caciques mandadores y chacales"), and more in sections of questions for shamans.<sup>9</sup>

Overall, the First Fruits ceremonies demonstrate several patterns. The most prevalent treatment of First Fruits among the Timucua was to sacrifice them in some way to deities or other supernatural powers. The First Fruits gathered including acorns and "other fruits" were not eaten.<sup>10</sup> The first fish caught in a trap was released and placed

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<sup>7</sup> Crocker, *Vital Souls*, 149-150.

<sup>8</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 124, 126, 129, 185, 207.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 128, 129, 132, 150, 184, 185, 207.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 124.



nearby the trap in order to ensure that more fish would come.<sup>11</sup> The first maize from a new clearing was not eaten.<sup>12</sup>

While it remains uncertain how often these First Fruits ceremonies were performed, by their nature it seems likely that they took place at the moment that the First Fruits of crops and game were gathered or shortly thereafter. The first kills on a hunt were also considered to be First Fruits. Yet it remains unknown how many deer (or bear, or other prey taken) formed the First Fruits: whether they constituted the first prey taken in a hunt, the first prey of the season or the first prey taken by every hunter. The information contained in Pareja's confessional makes it impossible to determine what animals were considered to be First Fruit as he uses only the vaguest terms in his questions.

The most important of Timucuan First Fruits rituals was certainly the annual ceremony described and illustrated by Jacques LeMoyne (see figure 2.1). During the ritual, the skin of a large stag was stuffed with "the choicest roots" and decorated with garlands of fruits. The stag was then carried in procession with accompanying music and song to a large, open spot where it was mounted in a high tree with its head facing towards the sunrise. The chief and shaman offered prayers to the sun to ensure a bounteous year.<sup>13</sup> LeMoyne's identification of the sun as the object of veneration for the ceremony fits with what is known of Timucuan deities. Both the sun and moon were worshipped as the two principal deities.<sup>14</sup> Sun worship was also common throughout the Southeast.<sup>15</sup> After the ceremony was completed, the stag remained hanging in the tree throughout the remainder of the year for the gods to partake of, and as a visual testimony of the annual renewal.

Pareja does not describe this ceremony in the confessional in any detail. However, there are two questions in the confessional that refer to a "ceremony of the laurel" which may correspond to the ceremony described by LeMoyne. The first of these questions appears early in the Ten Commandments section. It asks, "The ceremony of the laurel that is made to the demon, have you made it?"<sup>16</sup> Despite the vagueness of the question, which could refer to any number of ceremonies, Milanich and Sturtevant argue that the question refers to a healing ritual. This argument is based on two tenets; the placement of the question and linguistics. First, the question follows a series of queries

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., fol. 125.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., fol. 124.

<sup>13</sup> Charles E. Bennett, Settlement of Florida (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1968), 72.

<sup>14</sup> René Laudonnière, L'Histoire notable de la Floridæ Situee es Indes Occidentale contenant les trois voyages faits en icelle par certains Capitaines & Pilotes François, descrits par le Capitaine Laudonnière, qui y a commandé l'espace d'un quatrieme: à laquelle a esté adiousté un quatriesme voyage fait par le Capitaine Gourges (Paris: Guillaume Auray, M.D., 1586), 6-7; Loran, New World, 5; and Swanton, Indians of the Southeastern United States, 761.

<sup>15</sup> John H. Hann, A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 115; Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 125-127.

<sup>16</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 124.



Figure 2.1 Ceremony of the Stag

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 105.

referring to illness and healing. Secondly, they note that Timucuan word for laurel (“*tola*”) is also the Creek word for “sweet bay,” which was later used by the Florida Seminoles for healing and in religious ceremonies.<sup>17</sup> It is more likely, however, that the question refers to a First Fruits ritual.

In fact, it is just as likely that the question about the ceremony of the laurel begins a series of questions about First Fruits as it is the close of the series of questions regarding healing. After asking about the laurel ceremony, Pareja goes on to ask seven consecutive questions about First Fruits and food rituals. The placement of the question as the first of the First Fruits series also seems logical. The ceremony described by LeMoyne was certainly a major ritual, and an extremely important religious event. If the “ceremony of the laurel” refers to LeMoyne’s ceremony, Pareja certainly would have begun his questioning here. Any attempt to eradicate the First Fruits rituals would certainly start with the largest, most important ceremonies.

Milanich and Sturtevant also base their interpretation of the laurel ceremony on the word *tola*, which might be a cognate for the Creek word for sweet bay, said by the Seminole to have healing properties.<sup>18</sup> *Tola*, in any case, certainly seems to indicate some kind of tree. Perhaps the word referred to the whole tree rather than its leaves or roots. *Tola* could very well refer to the “high tree” where the stag was hung in LeMoyne’s First Fruits ceremony.<sup>19</sup> The second reference by Pareja to the “ceremony of the laurel” certainly involves some sort of First Fruits offering. It asks, “Have you made with the laurel in order to gather the nuts and palm berries, praying the ceremony you used to?”<sup>20</sup> Again, laurel could refer to the kind of tree used in the ceremony described by LeMoyne. This second reference seems to indicate the same ceremony (or kind of ceremony) as in the first reference. The first question almost certainly refers to First Fruits and not to healing. In all likelihood, it refers to the ceremony (or one very similar) observed by LeMoyne and the French.

This ritual of the stag seems to have been the main First Fruits ceremony of the Timucua. However, the confessional alludes to the existence of many smaller, everyday offerings and rituals.<sup>21</sup> Just as the confessional made no direct reference to the sun when speaking of the “ceremony of the laurel,” Pareja consistently avoids all mention of what is actually done with these everyday sacrificed First Fruits. He implies that some went to shamans as payment for services in the First Fruits rituals.<sup>22</sup> It is probable that other First Fruits were simply harvested, then left at a designated place, much like the yearly ritual described above. Everyday offerings may have been burned or disposed of in some other way. In one instance, Pareja does mention that the first acorns and fruits gathered were

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<sup>17</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, *Pareja’s Confessionario*, 44, n. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 44, n. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Bennett, *Settlement of Florida*, 72.

<sup>20</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, f 129. The question reads, “*Has hecho con el laurel rezando aquella ceremonia que solias hazer?*”

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 125, 129, 132.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 128.

dried and subsequently not eaten.<sup>23</sup> Another logical assumption links the smaller ceremonies with the more important ceremony of the stag. The stag was stuffed with “the choicest roots;” many of the First Fruits must have been reserved for use in this annual rite.

The importance of the ceremony of the stag is evident by the amount of work and effort that went into its preparations and the gathering of the community as a whole to celebrate the ritual. Taken in conjunction, all of the First Fruits rituals could be seen to work together to culminate in this important ritual. LeMoyne indicates that the ceremony of the stag was an annual rite. It was almost certainly held in conjunction with the harvest, the ripening of the gathered foods, and the time when animals are most plentiful: late spring or early summer. This time also would be the most logical for the celebration of the smaller, everyday First Fruits rituals. In fact, when considered as a unit of interrelated activities, the season of spring is the sacred time for the First Fruits.

In The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, Durkheim argues that both society and religion have “natural phases” of sacred and profane times. Ceremonies that occur during a sacred period enact the duties of society to the supernatural and reaffirm both ties to the sacred and ties within the social structure of the community. However, the state of sacred time cannot be kept up indefinitely; sacred time exists in conflict with the needs of everyday life. Durkheim explains this cycle of profane time interspersed with the renewal of the society’s relationship with the sacred through a time set apart as “sacred time” as “an impulse towards periodicity.” The cycle of the seasons overlaps with this periodicity; the seasons are critical periods for nature, just as the sacred and profane times are critical periods for maintaining the relationship between society and the sacred.<sup>24</sup> The overlapping of these two cycles can be seen in the Timucuan society as the First Fruits complex.

For the Timucuans, the period of spring was a period of sacred time, closely associated with the gathering of the First Fruits. During this sacred time, the First Fruits rituals were observed. All of society observed a different sort of association with food, a relationship marked by a heightened observance of fertility and abundance. These everyday rituals were observed in private by individuals or in small groups of people as they gathered, harvested, and hunted. The everyday rituals prepared and heightened the expectation of the greater ritual that brought the sacred period of time to an end. The period of sacred time culminated in the ceremony of the stag, when all of the community gathered together to sing, dance, pray, and offer the First Fruits of the year to the sun. This period of sacred time was marked off from the profane time, the rest of the year, when the Timucuans presumably had a different, more mundane relationship with food. Observation of the First Fruits on a yearly basis at the time of spring, however, ties and

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., fol. 207.

<sup>24</sup> Anne Warfield Rawls, Epistemology and Practice: Durkheim’s “The Elementary Forms of Religious Life” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 208-211. Mircea Eliade also discusses this idea of the distinction between sacred time and profane time within a religious calendar in his The Sacred and the Profane, Chapter 2. Eliade contends that for religious man there were two types of time, sacred and profane. Sacred time was experienced in religious festivals; profane time in ordinary daily life. Religious festivals recreated sacred events from mythical origins; thus, participating in them meant stepping out of ordinary time and into sacred time.

consecrates all food to the sacred and serves as a year-long rite of worship. By consecrating part of the crop to the sun, in synecdochal logic, the entire year's crop, hunt, etc., is dedicated to the god; as Durkheim observes, the part is equal to the whole.<sup>25</sup> Thus, mankind shares the offering made at the time of the First Fruits every time he consumes the offered food throughout the rest of the cycle. The First Fruits unite the worlds of man and the supernatural through their "mutual desires and rights in regards to one another."<sup>26</sup> First Fruits ceremonies function as a kind of ritual contract renewal with the supernatural; it symbolically renews the relationship between society and the sacred every year during a sacred, consecrated time of the year. The lasting nature of the dedication is reinforced by the fact that the stag filled with foodstuffs is not removed at the end of the ceremony, but is left in place as a visual testament to the renewal of the yearly observations.<sup>27</sup>

The Southeastern celebration of the "busk," or Green Corn Ceremony, parallels the Timucuan celebration. Busk was celebrated in one form or another by most of the Southeastern groups, including the Cherokee, the Chickasaws, the Natchez, the Seminole, and the Creek. During the busk, groups of affiliated chiefdoms would gather together for a rite of thanksgiving for the successful corn crop. The social hierarchy was strictly observed and enacted in many ways during this ceremony. For instance, the dress of the elite of different towns indicated their status within the chiefdom. Chiefs entered and exited public spaces and ceremonies in the order of the social hierarchy. In general, the Green Corn Ceremony was thought to be a time of renewal. Some groups fasted in preparation for the Green Corn Ceremony as a rite of purification, followed by feasting. Debts are reconciled, transgressions forgiven. The physical structures of the town may be refurbished as a part of the renewal process. Among many of the Southeastern groups, a new fire was built in the town's gathering place and in all the houses during the period of the busk, and black drink was prepared. The multi-day celebration is concluded with dancing and games.<sup>28</sup>

Like the busk, the Timucuan ceremony of the stag not only renewed the relationship between society and the sacred, but also served as an affirmation of the existing social order. The First Fruits were consecrated to the sun god. Among the Timucuan, the head caciques claimed special ties with the sun god. A letter from a young Frenchman at Fort Caroline in 1564 states that the local Timucuan chief described himself as "the brother of the sun."<sup>29</sup> The elite clan of the Timucua, the White Deer Clan, likely saw the sun as the ancestral clan progenitor. As such, they most likely represented the ultimate religious authority. This again is consistent with the pattern of sun worship found throughout the southeast.<sup>30</sup> Viewed in this light, the use of a stag as the vessel for

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<sup>25</sup> Durkheim, Elementary Forms, 338.

<sup>26</sup> Crocker, Vital Souls, 149-150.

<sup>27</sup> Lorant, New World, 105.

<sup>28</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 365-375; Swanton, Indians of the Southeastern United States, 763.

<sup>29</sup> Charles E. Bennett, Laudonnière & Fort Caroline: History and Documents (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), 66.

<sup>30</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 115; Swanton, Indians of the Southeastern United States, 661-662.

the First Fruits links the White Deer clan with the sun, reinforcing their claim to social, political, and possibly religious preeminence on an annual basis through the veneration of the sacred/pure.

Moreover, LeMoyne describes an unusual ceremonial sacrifice to a Timucuan chief, referred to in no other known document, which bears testimony to chiefs as the ultimate religious authority. In this ceremony, a woman's firstborn son is sacrificed to the chief. LeMoyne states:

On the day of the sacrifice, the chief goes to the place dedicated to that purpose...Not far off is a tree stump about two feet high and as many thick, in front of which the mother of the first-born son squats on her heels, her face covered with her hands in sorrow. One of her women friends or relatives then offers the child to the chief in worship. After the offering is made the women who have accompanied the mother dance in a circle around the stump with great demonstrations of joy. In their midst, singing the chief's praises, dances the woman who holds the child.

Near by stands a group of six Indians. They surround a magnificently decorated man holding a club. It is he who will perform the sacrifice. When the dance ends, he takes the infant and kills it on the wooden stump in honor of the chief. I saw this ritual performed once when I was there.<sup>31</sup>

This ceremony is depicted in figure 2.2. This sacrifice of a first-born son is another kind of First Fruits ritual in itself; an offering of the fertility of the town or chiefdom to the uppermost political or religious authority. Perhaps this ceremony also occurred annually. Unfortunately, LeMoyne makes no reference to the time of year in which the ritual was performed so there is no way of knowing if it occurred during the sacred time of the First Fruits. If LeMoyne was correct in his assessment of who the sacrifice was for, it would seem reasonable that other First Fruits would also be sacrificed to the cacique, possibly as a type of sun worship. LeMoyne's description of this ceremony (and the gravity of the event itself) would lead one to believe that it is a major part of the Timucuan cosmological system. However, there are no other known references to this ceremony. Possibly, this ritual died out shortly after contact. It is also possible that this ritual was only practiced by the Saltwater Timucua, the group of Timucua with whom the French had contact. Human sacrifice which venerated the highest strata of society is not unknown in the Southeast; among the Natchez, the funeral rites of one of the members of the Sun clan was marked by the sacrifice of his or her spouse. In both the Timucuan and Natchez cases, the sacrifice of one of the members of the society was dedicated to the highest clan, but also served to venerate the sun, the deity from which the clans traced their ancestry.<sup>32</sup>

Pareja's questions to chiefs and to lesser chiefs could also provide insight on who were the recipients of the First Fruits. Throughout the confessional, questions about food

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<sup>31</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 103.

<sup>32</sup> Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 661-662.

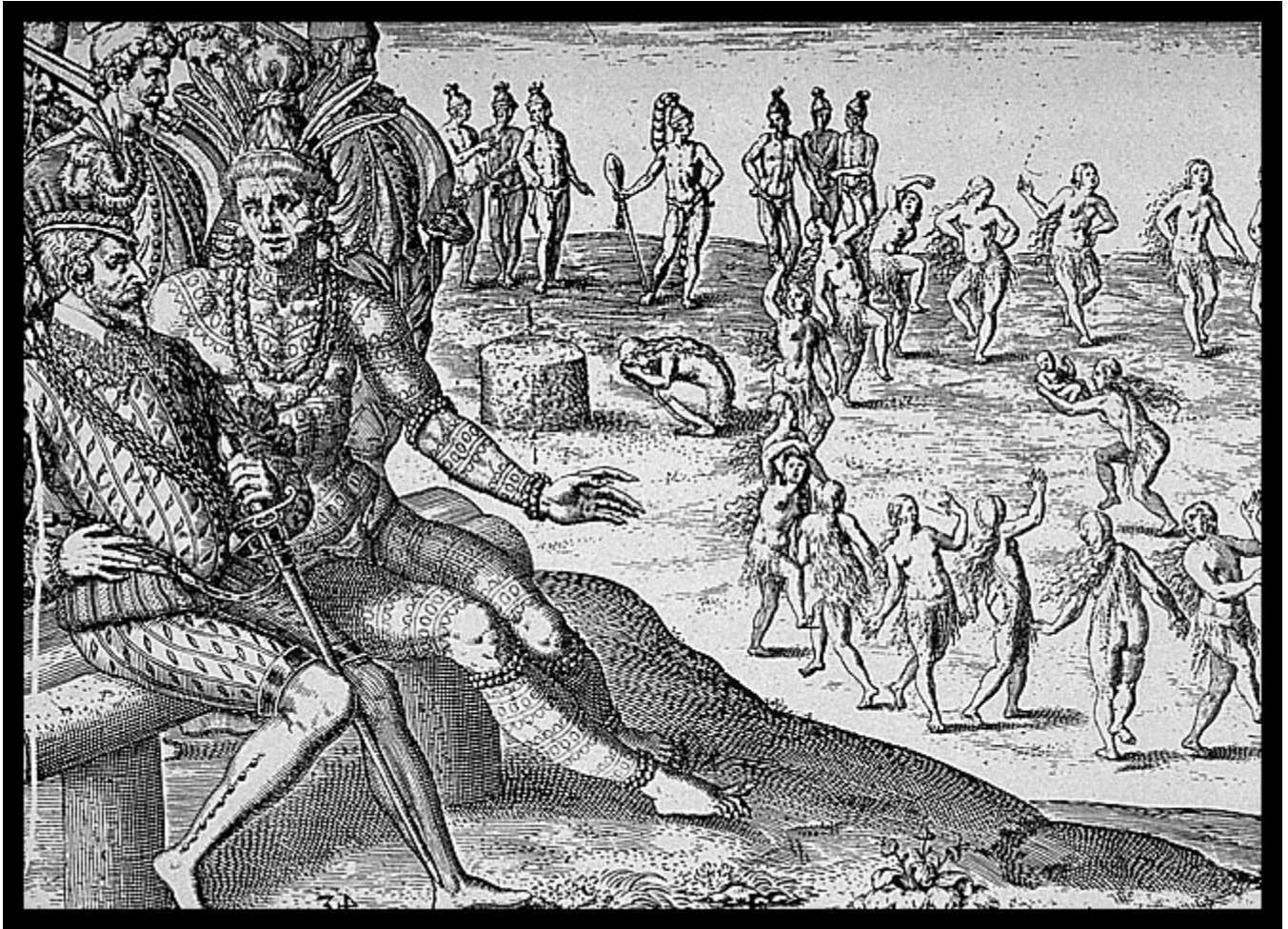


Figure 2.2      Sacrifice of First-Born Children

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 103.

and food rituals tend to fall into two categories: questions about First Fruits and questions about food taboos. First Fruits questions tend to be directed towards chiefs, whereas questions about food taboos tend to be directed towards the rest of the population. In fact, Pareja asks the chiefs twice as many questions about First Fruits and First Fruits rituals than the rest of the population combined. Pareja also refers often to praying to the First Fruits; it is likely that the caciques often led the First Fruits prayers.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, the friar thought that caciques played an important role in the First Fruits rituals. It is possible that Pareja made this connection because the chiefs were the primary beneficiaries of the First Fruits rituals. Additionally, Pareja's questions to the Timucuan chiefs also include several queries about tribute in the form of labor and goods.<sup>34</sup> If the First Fruits were sacrificed to the cacique (much like the first born sons) as the representative of the sun, the friar might have mistakenly construed these offerings as tribute. Finally, the number of questions devoted to caciques certainly stemmed in part from Spanish concerns with building a relationship with and control of the authority figures on the missions.

The Timucuan First Fruits rituals marked an important sacred time in the ritual calendar. Lesser observances of First Fruits rituals likely worked in conjunction with the major celebration of the cycle, the ceremony of the stag. The First Fruits themselves were considered sacred and potent, and unlike regular, profane foods, dangerous to man. The annual gathering renewed the relationship between society and the sacred, as well as reaffirmed the existing social hierarchy of the Timucua.

### **Franciscan Views of the First Fruits Rituals**

In the 1613 confessional, Fray Pareja most often begins or ends questions about the First Fruits with the phrase "have you considered a sin to eat x." The friar certainly chose the word sin as a result of his Eurocentric and Catholic bias. The concept of sin (as the Europeans knew it) was relatively unknown among Native Americans, particularly among the peoples of the Southeast.<sup>35</sup> Although the Timucua considered it wrong to consume the First Fruits, it would not imply a "stain" on the individual or his soul, such as the word "sin" implies. However, the Franciscans considered the "sin" of eating the First Fruits a breach of the First Commandment. If the Timucuans "sinned" by eating the First Fruits, they must be sacred to another deity. This, in turn, would be a violation of the First Commandment, "Thou shall have no other gods before me."

In general, Pareja's questions about First Fruits and food rituals raise even more questions for scholars. Pareja is remarkably quiet about a subject that he apparently considers to be so sinful. The friar repeatedly mentions prayers to the First Fruits, but neglects to clarify to whom or to what the Timucuans prayed. He never discloses what

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<sup>33</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 128, 129.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 184.

<sup>35</sup> For information on the religious practices and beliefs of the Southeastern indigenous, a classic source is Swanton's *Indians of the Southeastern United States*.



happens to the First Fruits during or after the prayers and rituals. He also never specifies how often the rituals are performed. It is possible that Pareja neglects to mention these facts in his questioning because the subject of First Fruits rituals was well known to the friars of the Timucua province, the intended audience of the confessional. Yet this seems very improbable, as new friars assigned to the province would need to be apprised of what kinds of rituals occurred. Pareja describes other practices that would have been unfamiliar to the new friars throughout the confessional. For example, he describes the practice “sucking” an illness from the body, in detail, calling it “a secret that has not been comprehended until now.”<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it would seem that Pareja would describe to the best of his ability the First Fruits rituals so that they might be more efficiently eradicated throughout the Timucuan province.

John Hann suggests that the lack of documentation about the Timucuan religion is directly due to Timucuan secretiveness. He argues that religious knowledge is one of the kinds of knowledge which is kept a secret from all outsiders and which is even kept secret from the low ranking Timucuan.<sup>37</sup> It is true that there is remarkably little information about the Timucuan religion in any of the documents left by the friars, and still less in other non-religious documents. If the caciques were in fact the primary religious leaders of the society as well as a living connection to the sun, the principal god of the Timucua, it makes sense that they would in fact harbor knowledge that was not available to the rest of the population. The veneration of the sacred/pure through the First Fruits complex may have been one of these avenues of specialized knowledge that allowed the caciques to exert power over the population. The caciques had a vested interest in keeping the practices secret, and gained power through control of knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

It is also possible that the friars recorded much more about Timucuan religious practices than has come to light today. In other areas of the New World, friars were able to gather information about even the most secret indigenous practices through the use of informants. Informants proved to be especially useful to priests and to the religious orders in the campaigns to extirpate idolatry.<sup>39</sup> According to Bishop Díaz Vara Calderón, the Florida Franciscans had informants “deputized to report to them concerning all parishioners who live in evil.”<sup>40</sup> Transgressors were punished by incarceration or whipping, as it was “so necessary to their good education and direction.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 153. For more information on the Timucuan practice of sucking and Pareja’s views on the subject, see chapter 3.

<sup>37</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 115.

<sup>38</sup> Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 57-59, 70-73.

<sup>39</sup> See Nancy M. Farriss, Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 290; Steve J. Stern, Peru’s Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 62, 176; and William B. Taylor, Magistrates of the Sacred: Priests and Parishioners in Eighteenth-Century Mexico (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 62-73.

<sup>40</sup> Gabriel Díaz Vara Calderón, A 17<sup>th</sup> Century Letter of Gabriel Díaz Vara Calderón, Bishop of Cuba, Describing the Indians and Indian Missions of Florida, trans. and transcribed Lucy L. Wenhold, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections 95, no. 16 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution,

The confessional makes no mention of a specific deity receiving First Fruits offerings. Instead, it refers to prayers to the First Fruits as being made to “*el Demonio*” (“the demon”).<sup>42</sup> Throughout the Ten Commandments section of the confessional, Pareja consistently uses *demonio* (rather than *Diablo*, Devil) when speaking of Timucuan prayers and offerings to deities. Pareja could possibly mean to indicate the Devil by this term. Other scholars have in fact apparently accepted that the friar was in fact speaking of Satan. In Milanich and Sturtevant’s publication of the Ten Commandments section of the confessional, Emilio Moran consistently translates the term “*demonio*” as Devil.<sup>43</sup> The Spanish often associated the Christian figure of Satan or the Devil with precolonial practices; the influence of the Devil was also often said to be the source of Native idolatry.<sup>44</sup>

However, this interpretation that demon and Devil are one and the same seems too facile. Why would Pareja specifically state that the prayers were offered to “*el demonio*” when he could just as easily have said “*el Diablo*”? Pareja specifically avoided mentioning the Devil in association with any Timucuan practice throughout the entire Ten Commandments section of the confessional. This must have been intentional, and possibly reflected the influence of Bartolomé de las Casas’s *Apologética Historia Sumaria*, in which he defended indigenous religious practices not as satanic but rather as not having been aware of Christian practices.<sup>45</sup>

Two possible interpretations of why Pareja consistently used “*demonio*” rather than “*Diablo*” can be posited. First, Pareja could have been referring to the Timucuan gods and deities without specifically naming them. Obviously, the Timucuan penitents would know the identity of the gods to which Pareja refers; why should the friar give the Timucuan gods the legitimacy of naming them? Instead, he referred to the deities as demons, followers of Satan whose position as lackeys lacked the powers of the Devil because they did his bidding in leading souls to perdition. The continual reference to demons would serve several purposes for Pareja. As mentioned above, Pareja took away some of the power from these gods in his refusal to identify them by name. It reinforced

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1936), 14.

<sup>41</sup> David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 113.

<sup>42</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 130, f 131.

<sup>43</sup> For Moran’s English translation of the document, see Milanich and Sturtevant, *Pareja’s Confessionario*, 23-39.

<sup>44</sup> Fernando Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World: The Impact of Diabolism in New Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 14-16, 33, 51-3. Las Casas and Garcilaso opposed the idea that the Devil was the source of Indian idolatry. For information on their arguments opposing this idea, see 75-76. Robert Ricard is perhaps best known for this idea this school of thought, taken directly from the religious accounts from New Spain. For more information, see Robert Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: An Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain: 1523-1572*, trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), esp. 284-290.

<sup>45</sup> Bartolomé de las Casas, *Apologética historia sumaria: Edición preparada por Edmundo O’Gorman, con un estudio preliminar, apéndices y un índice de materias* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1967).

the idea that certain Timucuan practices (including First Fruits rituals) were heretical. The practice also lumped all Timucuan deities into one demonic being; this would have prevented Timucuan children from hearing about the deities in confession, and hopefully inspired their parents to stop educating their children in the worship of these deities. Finally, the use of the term demon was meant to scare the penitent into stopping idolatrous practices.

Alternatively, Pareja's use of "demonio" and his silence on the deities to whom the First Fruits were dedicated could be simply because he did not know the particulars of the rites. If, as previously posited, the Timucuan caciques kept much of their religious knowledge secret, this secrecy certainly would have extended to the mission friars. Pareja's lack of specificity on this subject could suggest this explanation; in other rituals and rites, the confessional gives as much detail as possible so that other mission friars would be able to identify the idolatrous practices and eradicate them.

### **The Relationship between the Friar and Food**

The Florida Franciscans lived much like their parishioners. They lived in wattle and daub structures. Their diet was nearly identical to that of their congregation. In fact, the only foodstuffs yearly given to each friar as part of the *situado* were 730 lbs. of wheat flour, 365 *quartillos* (184 liters) of table wine, 3 *botijuelas* (19 liters) of oil, 3 *botijuelas* (19 liters) of lard, 3 *arrobas* (48 liters) of vinegar, and 6 *arrobas* (150 lbs) of salt.<sup>46</sup> Certainly this was not enough food to make a European diet. Instead, the friars relied on the *sabana*<sup>47</sup> system for much of their caloric intake. The missions' friars were supplied much like the caciques and other high-status Timucuan individuals; lower-status individuals farmed the *sabana* allocated for the friar for him. John E. Worth suggests that when the process of missionization began, the friars were incorporated into the *sabana* system as shamans.<sup>48</sup>

If this is true, surely there was some tension resulting from the inclusion of friars in the *sabana* scheme. This incorporation may have meant fewer resources for shamans. Of course, it is possible that the friar was allocated an entire *sabana* to himself. However, this may have provoked tension for the men and women who had to engage in extra work for the friars. Additionally, if the friars were taking the shamans place in the *sabana*, were they also entitled to part of the First Fruits? Shamans received part of the First Fruits as payment for their services in prayer and rituals. Pareja himself alludes to this in several of his questions. Pareja writes that shamans received the first deer killed on hunts

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<sup>46</sup> John E. Worth, The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida Volume 1: Assimilation (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 172.

<sup>47</sup> The *sabana* system refers to agricultural units that were worked by the common clans for caciques, shamans, and other high-status individuals of Timucuan society, including members of the White Deer clan.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

and half of the catch of fish.<sup>49</sup> It is possible that the Timucuan shamans, much like the caciques, received foodstuffs (including meat and gathered items) regularly as payment for their various services, including First Fruits services. How did the friars come by their meat? There is no indication of who supplied meat to the friars in any document. If the Franciscans were to fit into the Timucuan subsistence strategy, they would be paid for their religious services with foodstuffs. Presumably the friars, like the shamans, would receive part of the First Fruits as payment.

This restructuring of the Timucuan subsistence patterns may also explain, in part, Pareja's concern with the First Fruits. If much of the springtime diet of the friars came from the First Fruits proceeds, it is likely that he would want more control over the disposal of the foodstuffs. Thus, the First Fruits rituals were not only heretical, they were a possible threat to the diet of the friars of the Timucuan province and a source of additional tension between the shamans and the friars.

### **The Importance of Corn**

The settlement of St. Augustine lay at the very edge of the Spanish world, and sometimes lived on the very edge of existence. Food shortages occurred frequently, and famine was not unheard of in the settlement. Spain's yearly supplies and monetary support of Florida, called the *situado*, was extremely ineffective, and consistently arrived extremely late (often years late), when it arrived at all. The *situado* often fell victim to shipwreck, piracy, and other accidents at sea.<sup>50</sup>

General food shortages and lack of necessary items drove the price of goods in the city sky high. Merchants often engaged in price gouging during the shortages, charging whatever the market would bear.<sup>51</sup> In fact, it is probable that Spaniards living in the *presidio*<sup>52</sup> lived a much more hand-to-mouth existence than their counterparts on the mission frontier, including the friars, the ranches such as La Chua, and the Spanish settlement at mission San Luis de Talimali in Apalachee province.<sup>53</sup> During the peak of

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<sup>49</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 128.

<sup>50</sup> For a complete examination of the economy of colonial Florida and its economic relationship to the greater Spanish empire, see both of Amy Tuner Bushnell's excellent works The King's Coffers: Proprietors of the Spanish Florida Treasury, 1565-1702 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1981) and Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida, American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers, no. 74 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994).

<sup>51</sup> Weber, Spanish Frontier, 176-177.

<sup>52</sup> A *presidio* refers to a military fortress or outpost. The term *presidio* often is used to reflect not only the fortress itself, but its inhabitants and the surrounding town or settlement.

<sup>53</sup> Bonnie G. McEwan, "Hispanic Life on the Seventeenth-Century Florida Frontier," in The Spanish Missions of La Florida, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993); Elizabeth J. Reitz, "Animal Use at the Missions of Spanish Florida," in The Spanish Missions of La Florida, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 376-398, 391-392.

mission cattle ranching activity, for example, beef consumption at St. Augustine actually declined.<sup>54</sup> Thus, St. Augustine and the Spanish colonial government were forced to rely heavily on their native allies in the mission system to feed the settlement in times of shortage. Corn filled this void, and became increasingly important to the settlement over the years. At first, only the forty royal slaves were fed with surplus corn from the missions. By 1611, the corn was a major part of the diet of the Spanish soldiers of the garrison.<sup>55</sup> Corn was the easiest food to ship, as it could be shucked and processed before transport (via indigenous load bearers) to St. Augustine.<sup>56</sup>

Although the missions fared much better than St. Augustine in keeping themselves fed, the delay (or complete lack) of the yearly stipend for the missions in the situado was felt as much (and perhaps more) in the missions as it was in St. Augustine. Church ornaments and vestments for Mass were always scarce. Indeed, Pareja himself sent a letter of complaint (along with Fray Pedro Ruiz) to the Crown, saying that they had been reduced to fashioning a chalice for Mass out of lead. Pareja further stated that the government officials in St. Augustine were in the habit of appropriating the mission stipend for other uses “since it seems to them that the soldiers are the necessary ones [here], and that we are of no use...but we are the ones who bear the burden and the heat, and we are the ones who are conquering and subduing the land.”<sup>57</sup> The friar’s allusion to subduing the land certainly refers to the pacification of the Indians, but also could refer to the missions’ agricultural activities, which supplied all of Spanish Florida. The trade in surplus corn became perhaps the biggest moneymaker for the missions. Extra corn from all of the Florida provinces was sold for trade goods and money. Worth even maintains that corn was somehow sold or traded for some kind of credit towards the future purchase of church ornaments.<sup>58</sup>

This pattern of trade was most successful for the Apalachee and Guale provinces, whose stable corn surplus furnished the provinces with a level of personal wealth much greater than that of individuals and churches in the Timucua province.<sup>59</sup> Sale of surplus corn provided a viable means of helping to keep the provinces supplied with religious articles and ornaments. Although Apalachee and Guale were more successful in producing surplus corn, they did not dominate the corn trade until after 1643. Before this date, Timucuan missions dominated the nascent trade. However, the corn trade did not become lucrative for the missions until the mid-seventeenth century, and was probably only a minor source of funds for the Timucuan missions.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Kathleen Deagan, “St. Augustine and the Mission Frontier,” in The Spanish Missions of La Florida, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 90.

<sup>55</sup> Worth, Assimilation, 133.

<sup>56</sup> Milanich, Fields of the Lord, 146.

<sup>57</sup> Michael V. Gannon, The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1993), 53-54.

<sup>58</sup> Worth, Assimilation, 177.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 178-179.

<sup>60</sup> Worth, Assimilation, 178-179.

Francisco Pareja's confessional seems to show a definite bias towards food questions specifically about corn. Although many different kinds of produce was grown on the missions, all questions in the confessional relating to agricultural products mention corn specifically, possibly an indication that Pareja was thinking of trade rather than subsistence needs.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, questions about corn seem to concern surplus amounts that went unconsumed (and, presumably, not shipped or traded to St. Augustine). Indeed Pareja even formulates questions about food taboos concerning corn, such as the Timucuan custom of not eating corn from a dead relative's field or from a field that has been struck by lightning.<sup>62</sup> It is likely that Pareja viewed these food taboos as being some kind of violation of the First Commandment, as lightning is a powerful force that is often linked with worship of a sky or sun god. The Apalachee, neighbors of the Timucua, worshipped a god of lightning who shared a close association with a ceremonial ball game.<sup>63</sup> The Timucua played a variation of this ball game; they may, in turn, have shared a common lightning deity. It is possible that the Timucuan custom of not eating corn from a field struck by lightning comes from a belief that a lightning or sky/sun god has marked that field and its produce as its own. Similarly, eating corn from a dead man's field might anger a deity associated with death and dying. However, it is also possible that Pareja included these questions as a measure to decrease the amount of "wasted" corn in the mission province, thus freeing up more corn to be traded to St. Augustine. This in turn would generate more money for the missions for the purchase of church vestments and other necessities. Although the corn trade was not very profitable in 1613, Pareja may have harbored hopes of improving the condition of his church with future profits of the trade.

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For the Timucuan, the observance of First Fruits rituals constituted a sacred time, probably occurring in spring. The entire society observed these rituals on a daily basis throughout the time of the First Fruits. There are some indications that the rituals varied according to circumstance and social status. The First Fruits were probably offered in a variety of ways, including saving them for inclusion in the major ceremony of the cycle. First Fruits were sacred and potent, and unlike profane food, dangerous to man. The sacred time marked by rituals of the First Fruits culminated in the ceremony of the stag, an offering to the sun. Like the Green Corn Ceremony observed in other parts of the Southeast, the ceremony not only renewed the society's relationship with the sacred, but also reaffirmed the societal hierarchy.

Pareja's confessional for the Timucua Indians of Florida is unique in its concern for food and particularly in its concern for the First Fruits of the year and the rituals associated with them. It is probable that the friars were concerned with food rituals for many reasons, including religious, economic, political, and personal ones. Religiously,

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<sup>61</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 124, 129, 132, 184.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 126, 124.

<sup>63</sup> John H. Hann, *Apalachee: Land Between the Rivers* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1998), 79.

the First Fruits rituals were a violation of the First Commandment and a continuation of the old “pagan” rites that the Franciscans sought to eradicate. Politically, concern for the First Fruits may have grown out of tensions on the mission settlement. First Fruits rituals may have been a possible source of tension between friars and shamans, friars and those who had to farm the friar’s sabana, and tensions between the friar and head and lesser caciques, who held the most important role in the First Fruits rituals. Given the fact that the chiefs received many gifts and possibly tribute items as representatives of the sun god, the caciques may have been reluctant to stop the rituals.

Economically, the First Fruit rituals and other food taboos would have been a source of concern for the friars, as they probably represented a “waste” of corn to the friar. This corn could have been traded to the presidio for money, church vestments, or other items necessary for the mission. Finally, the First Fruits probably concerned the friars personally, as they may have had a direct impact on the diet of the friars. If the caciques, shamans, and other high-status individuals on the mission received their meat as payment for First Fruits rituals, how was the friar to be supplied with meat? The friars seem to have been incorporated into the Timucuan sociopolitical structure in the same manner as shamans. This, of course, could have been extremely maddening and offensive to the friars (if, of course, they understood Timucuan social structure well enough to comprehend their incorporation). On the other hand, replacing shamans as spiritual authorities served to strengthen the friars’ influence. Eradication of the First Fruits rituals would prove to be beneficial for the friars in all of these concerns; it would be better for the souls of their parishioners, would secure their place (and their subsistence) in the social hierarchy of the Timucua, undermine some of the power of the cacique, and provide more corn for trade with St. Augustine.

Finally, given Pareja’s lack of specifics about the First Fruits rituals in the confessional, it is very possible that Pareja did not have a real working knowledge of how the rituals were carried out. This also would present a great problem for the friars, as they had no idea what kinds of idolatry their parishioners practiced. The Franciscans would have seen the eradication of the rituals as the best course of action for themselves, their missions, and their parishioners.

The First Fruits complex constituted one of the main ways in which Timucuan venerated the sacred/pure. The next chapter turns to one of the primary observations of the sacred/polluted in Timucuan culture: rituals of healing.

## CHAPTER 3

### HEALING AND CURING

After examining many different Timucuan ceremonies and rituals of healing, Francisco Pareja advised his fellow friars to counsel shamans and other healers “to heal only with herbs and medicines, since they were made by God for our health and for our illnesses without mixing them with useless words and words of the Devil.” Pareja concluded his examination of healing by expressing his faith in the efficacy of the healers, writing that if they “cure with the name of Jesus and the sign of the cross, that God willing he will cure...And that if He is not served by this [act of healing], no matter what he [the healer] does, it will be to no avail.”<sup>1</sup> Yet what could have caused a Spanish friar to take a seemingly tolerant attitude towards Timucuan healing practices? Aside from the admonition to keep out the “Devil,” Pareja suggests that friars should accommodate many precolonial practices. The situation differs greatly from other places in Spanish America where Spaniards attempted to suppress indigenous practices wholesale without making any clear distinction between acceptable and unacceptable rituals.<sup>2</sup>

As demonstrated by the intense interest and concern that Pareja shows in the confessional, acts of healing and curing were of vital interest to the Spanish friars in Florida. Disease was a constant threat to the missions. The friars in the countryside lacked access to physicians trained in European medicine, making it necessary and even vital for Native healers to continue their practices. The mix of herbal medicine, magical healing, and prayers to “heathen” gods employed by these healers made the Franciscans wary of their practices, and put even the most innocent traditional medical procedure under scrutiny. Out of necessity, however, the Church and its friars held a very ambivalent attitude towards native medical practitioners, allowing and even encouraging some of their healing practices, and condemning other acts of healing as heretical and even satanic. Through the confessional, Pareja tried to provide a means for the friars to control the behavior of the Timucuan healers by using the sacrament of confession to encourage healing practices that he considered beneficial, and to censure the practices that he deemed heretical.

The descriptions and analyses of these healing rituals observed by the Franciscans and other Europeans offer great insight into how Timucuan viewed their relationship with the world and the sacred. Healing rituals employed the most potent objects and symbols known to a culture to combat disease, to purify the sick, and to connect with the

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<sup>1</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 152, 153. The original reads, “sólo con las yerbas y medicinas cure, pues Dios las crio para nuestro remedio y enfermedades sin mesclar palabras essquisitas y del Demonio...Que para curar comience, con el nombre de Jesús, y la señal de la Cruz, que así Dios queriendo sanará, &c. Y que si el no es servido por mas que se haga no aprovechará, &c.”

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the suppression of indigenous practices by Spaniards in the Americas, see Pete Sigal, *From Moon Goddess to Virgins: The Colonization of Yucatecan Maya Sexual Desire* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); and Karen Spalding, *Huarochiri, an Andean Society Under Incan and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).



sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. For the Timucua, the use of fire, black drink, tobacco and corn purified and offered power to combat disease through the application of the sacred/pure. Conversely, disease and blood provided a connection to the sacred/polluted, as both the state of illness and the shedding of blood represents a point in which a member of society enters a state which brings them closer to the sacred, whether in the process of death and dying (and thus becoming a sacred ancestor) or through shedding the blood of the lineage, which links the earthly family to the sacred family. In each case, this connection to the sacred (polluted and pure) venerates fertility, the basis of Timucuan and Southeastern cosmology.

Healing rituals also offer insight into a culture's view of the body and how it functions. Based in part on healing rituals, it appears that blood was considered to be the most potent and vital part of the body for the Timucuans. Finally, healing rituals offer insight into those individuals of society who have the most power to interact with the sacred. Individuals who were able to negotiate both the pollution of disease and the sick individual and the purifying forces of the cures used in fighting disease represented a special class of persons with greater powers than the rest of society. Among the Timucua, these groups included shamans, herbalists, *parteras* (midwives) and Two Spirits.

### **Disease and the Timucua**

The Timucuans, like nearly all Natives of the Americas, suffered an enormous demographic collapse from the introduction of Old World diseases.<sup>3</sup> As a result of how diseases spread, this collapse started even before the physical introduction of the missions to Florida; at least six epidemics swept through Florida in the years 1519-1559. They likely suffered from smallpox, mumps, influenza, and the bubonic plague.<sup>4</sup> The introduction of missions in Florida ensured the continuation, and even the increase, of depopulation because of greater contact with Europeans and the concentration of people in the mission communities. Often, several Timucuan villages were collapsed into one larger *doctrina*, or mission settlement, resulting in much larger communities than the typical Timucuan model, heightening the dangers of disease.<sup>5</sup> Several epidemics ran through the province shortly after the establishment of missions, including one

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<sup>3</sup>The historiography on depopulations proves to vast to cite in its entirety. See for example Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1972); and Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Numbers Became Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983).

<sup>4</sup> Henry F. Dobyns, "Demographic Patterns and Changes in Mid-Seventeenth Century Timucua and Apalachee," in *Native American Demography in the Spanish Borderlands*, ed. Clark Spenser Larsen, Spanish American Sourcebooks 2 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 174-175; and Clark Spencer Larsen, "On the Frontier of Contact: Mission Bioarchaeology in La Florida," in *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993).

documented in 1595, the year that Franciscans began missionization efforts in the province in earnest.<sup>6</sup> A series of epidemics during the years 1613-1617 killed half the Timucuan living in missions. In 1617, the friars of the Florida province, led by Francisco Pareja, wrote a letter to the King in which they claimed, “from four years ago down to the present half of the Indians have died because of the great plagues and contagious diseases that they have suffered...eight thousand Christians remain alive.”<sup>7</sup> Over the years, the number of Christianized Timucuan dropped dramatically; by 1700, there were only several hundred left.<sup>8</sup>

Although modern scholars hypothesize about the exact diseases present in pre and post contact Florida, the available sources, both archival and archaeological, do not explicitly identify which diseases were present and problematic in the mission province. The friars’ letters are vague, almost always referring only to “plagues” (*pestes*) and unspecified diseases.<sup>9</sup> Archaeological evidence also cannot provide exact information on disease among the Timucua, although some information has been preserved in the skeletal record. Anthropologist Clark Spencer Larsen has been able to show that there was a “striking increase” in the number of nonspecific infections (periosteal reactions) from the pre-contact period in the Southeast to the missionization period in Florida.<sup>10</sup> Larsen also states that because of the concentration of the Timucua in the mission settlements, it would be safe to assume that the Timucua probably suffered from all the diseases common among the Native American populations after contact, including those introduced by the Europeans, such as influenza, smallpox, chicken pox, measles, and those which were native to the Americas, such as tuberculosis, and treponematosi, an organism which is linked to syphilis.<sup>11</sup> Similar conclusions were reached from skeletal analysis of other southeastern indigenous groups.<sup>12</sup> Anthropologist Henry Dobyns has also studied the demography of the Timucua in great detail, concluding that Timucuan suffered at least six different epidemics in the years after European contact, but before the colonial period, and six more during the period of the Spanish missionization of Florida.

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<sup>6</sup> Jerald T. Milanich, “The Timucuan Indians of Northern Florida and Southern Georgia,” in Indians of the Greater Southeast: Historical Archaeology and Ethnohistory, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 11.

<sup>7</sup> Francisco Pareja et al. to the King, 17 January 1617, Woodbury Lowery Collection, Library of Congress (hereafter referred to as WLC).

<sup>8</sup> Milanich, “Timucuan Indians of Northern Florida,” 11.

<sup>9</sup> Milanich, The Timucua, 201.

<sup>10</sup> Larsen, “Mission Bioarchaeology,” 340.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 340. For more information on treponematosi and its relationship to syphilis, see Crosby, Colombian Exchange, Chapter 4, esp. 141-147.

<sup>12</sup> Marvin T. Smith, “Aboriginal Depopulation in the Postcontact Southeast,” in The Forgotten Centuries: Indians and Europeans in the American South, 1521-1704, ed. Charles Hudson and Carmen Chaves Tesser (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 261.

These epidemics likely included outbreaks of smallpox, gastrointestinal infections, mumps, bubonic plague, typhus, yellow fever, and measles.<sup>13</sup>

Each of the diseases, particularly those that came from Europe, was responsible for recurrent epidemics among the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Like other natives of the southeastern United States the Timucua fought the onslaught of these diseases with methods they had developed before the contact period: among them the use of herbs and plants to treat and cure, bloodletting, purging, sweat baths to cleanse and purify, and the removal of disease through the process of sucking it out of the body. The Timucua used each of these methods in their healing practices. The French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne substantiates such practices in his illustrations. (see figure 3.1).

### **Spanish Medical Practices**

Whether out of selfishness at losing valuable auxiliaries or genuine humanitarian issues, the Spanish friars who witnessed these epidemics and indigenous efforts to fight the diseases were extremely concerned for the health of their parishioners, and encouraged efforts to combat disease. However, their ideas about “legitimate” means of healing were profoundly influenced not only by religion, but also by their preexisting ideas about the nature of disease and the field of medicine. By the fifteenth century, Western European physicians had, through their contact with Moorish and Sephardim physicians, developed an extensive medical repertoire, based largely on scientific observation rather than religious intervention. Standard practice included procedures such as bloodletting, vomiting, sweating, and treatment by herbal and chemically based medications. Medicine benefited from the Renaissance with the publication of Greek and Roman medical texts, such as those by Galen. European medical theory of the fifteenth century based itself on the Galenic model, which was most concerned with the balance of humors in the body. Sickness was caused by an abundance of evil humors; treatment by one of the means above removed these humors and aided the healing power of the human body, hastening recovery. Overall, the main thrust behind European medicine of the times was an overwhelming concentration on scientific education for doctors as the basis of cures.<sup>14</sup>

The Spaniards and Spanish physicians in the Indies observed a variety of indigenous medical treatments. Most of the Spanish treatments, such as herbal remedies and the purging of the body through sweating, vomiting, and bloodletting, were already incorporated into the Native American model. However, local practices differed from the European model in many ways. Medical practice in the Americas included “scientific”

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<sup>13</sup> Dobyns, Numbers Became Thinned, 254-284.

<sup>14</sup> Guenter B. Risse, “Medicine in New Spain,” in Medicine in the New World: New Spain, New France, and New England, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987).



Figure 3.1 How they Treat their Sick

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 75.

healing like the European model, but also contained more than a healthy dose of magic and magical healing.<sup>15</sup> Yet in some ways magic continued to play a key role in European notions of healing well into the late Early Modern period, especially in the case of “folk healing.” However, doctors often considered folk healing to be quackery at best, and many of these methods of folk healing were officially ridiculed by Spaniards and in some cases later investigated by the Inquisition.<sup>16</sup> While Spanish doctors quickly recognized the validity and the efficacy of the indigenous herbal treatments, they singled out many of the native practices such as “sucking” the illness out of the body in their writings as ineffective quackery.<sup>17</sup> All over the Americas, Europeans adopted the use of indigenous plants, even exporting them back to Europe, while simultaneously rejecting other kinds of Native knowledge of medicine, subjugating the validity of this knowledge in part out of ethnocentrism.<sup>18</sup> Out of necessity or desire, the Florida Franciscans came to similar conclusions.

### **Herbal Medicine Among the Timucua**

The healing of disease by means of herbal cures was accepted by the Florida Franciscans as one of the most “legitimate” indigenous means of curing disease, a conclusion borne out by Pareja’s repeated mention of the validity of herbs as a curative therapy.<sup>19</sup> Herbal remedies served the Timucuan in a variety of contexts, and certainly formed one of the chief means of fighting disease. Timucuan used herbs in healing disease, slowing down or accelerating childbirth, and in aborting unwanted fetuses.<sup>20</sup> Presumably, the friars would have proscribed the use of herbs for unacceptable practices. Identification of specific herbs and their applications as indicated in the confessional is difficult, as it never specifies any particular herb, instead relying on the amorphous term *yerba*.<sup>21</sup>

Although the confessional fails to make distinctions between the types of herbs employed by the natives of Florida, Augustinian lay brother Alonso de Leturiondo

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of Early Modern notions of science, see Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> Risse, “Medicine in New Spain,” 32-33.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-51.

<sup>18</sup> Mark Blumenthal, “New World Plants, New World Drugs,” in Columbus and the New World: Medical Implications, ed. Guy A. Settignano (Providence: Ocean Side Publications, 1995); and Sandra L. Orellana, Indian Medicine in Highland Guatemala: The Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Periods (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987).

<sup>19</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 127, 152.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 120, 149, 146.

<sup>21</sup> *Yerba* refers to an unknown kind of herb.

compiled a long list of plants used by Florida natives to cure illnesses and heal wounds. Leturiondo designated two of the herbs, *itamo* and *chitubexatica*, to be the most important medicinal herbs of the province.<sup>22</sup> Leturiondo does not specify the uses for *itamo*, but he did write that *chitubexatica* “possesses such power that efficacy for healing wounds, which, however deep and numerous they may be, are cured, purged, and cleansed in a very few days.”<sup>23</sup> Clearly then *chitubexatica* served at the very least as an astringent and disinfectant and quite possibly as an antibiotic.

The Creek, a close geographic neighbor and cultural relation of the Timucua, employed one herb, *Aralia spinosa* (Devil’s walking-stick), as an antihemorrhagic.<sup>24</sup> Devil’s walking-stick grows throughout central Florida in a wooded environment, and is present throughout the summer.<sup>25</sup> Two other plants, *Eryngium yuccifolium* (button snakeroot) and *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush) were used as a “blood medicine.”<sup>26</sup> Both plants grow in the Timucua area, but spicebush is categorized as a rare or hard to find plant.<sup>27</sup> The Timucua would have had easy access to either *A. spinosa* or *E. yuccifolium*. Either plant could be Leturiondo’s *chitubexatica*. Of course, the possibility that the Timucua also engaged in trade for other healing plants that did not grow in their area cannot be ruled out. However, as specific information about Timucuan trading patterns is unavailable, it seems prudent to focus on plants and herbs that grew readily in North and Central Florida, the area inhabited by the Timucua.

Leturiondo goes on to name many different types of plants employed by the indigenous peoples of Florida in medical practice. Among these are several common flowers and plants, including rose, clover, sorrel, and violet.<sup>28</sup> Of these, roses, sorrel, and violets have no medical indication among the Creek.<sup>29</sup> However, the Cherokee used several kinds of violets as an analgesic.<sup>30</sup> Since clover is native to Europe and Asia it is probable that Leturiondo was referring to a plant resembling European clover, as it is

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<sup>22</sup>Unfortunately, these herbs are named only in the Timucuan language, which is not yet fully understood by scholars.

<sup>23</sup> Alonso de Leturiondo, “Memorial to the King Our Lord in His Royal and Supreme Council of the Indies,” circa. 1700, John Bannerman Stetson Collection, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida. (Hereafter SC). Also found as “Translation of Alonso de Leturiondo’s Memorial to the King of Spain,” trans. John H. Hann, *Florida Archaeology* 2 (1986): 165-225.

<sup>24</sup> Daniel E. Moerman, *Medicinal Plants of Native America, Volume Two*, University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology Technical Reports, no. 19 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1986), 815.

<sup>25</sup> Richard P. Wunderlin, *Guide to the Vascular Plants of Central Florida* (Tampa: University Presses of Florida, 1982), 278.

<sup>26</sup> Moerman, *Medicinal Plants*, 815.

<sup>27</sup> Wunderlin, *Vascular Plants*, 190, 282.

<sup>28</sup> Leturiondo, “Memorial,” SC.

<sup>29</sup> Moerman, *Medicinal Plants*, 815-816.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 794.

doubtful that the Timucua would have incorporated the plant in to their medical practices so quickly after colonization. Maidenhair fern of the spring is another plant reputedly used in medical practice. Two genera of *Adiantum*, *A. capillus-veneris* and *A. tenerum*, are commonly known as maidenhair fern. Each grows throughout central Florida in the summer and fall.<sup>31</sup> Neither of these plants is employed by any of the Southeastern tribes. However, the Cherokee do use another member of the genera, *A. pedatum*, in many ways, including as a remedy for rheumatism, a “pediatric aid,” and as an emetic.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, Leturiondo refers to the chinabrier root as a common remedy.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, French expedition leader René Laudonnière refers to the chinaroot tree as “very good medicine.”<sup>34</sup> Both the chinabrier and the chinaroot are members of the *Smilax* genera, and are, respectively, *S. tamnoides* and *S. bona-nox* or *S. auriculata*. Each of these trees grows throughout the Timucua area, and is present to this day in wetland areas. The Creek, Cherokee, or Chippewa did not use any of these plants (or any members of the genera, for that matter) as a cure for venereal diseases of any kind, although smilax was used in a variety of other applications.<sup>35</sup> The most famous and common remedy for syphilis among Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, guaiacum wood,<sup>36</sup> did not grow in Florida at this time, but was imported by the Europeans from the West Indies, and was cultivated in Spanish settlements throughout Florida.<sup>37</sup> There is no known reference to use of guaiacum wood among the Timucua; none of the other Southeastern tribes appear to have utilized it, either.<sup>38</sup> Instead, French chronicler Charlevoix records that the Timucuans used esquine (probably a species of smilax) to combat venereal diseases.<sup>39</sup>

Tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*), perhaps the most common medicinal plant used among the indigenous peoples of the Southeast, was cultivated alongside of the food staples.<sup>40</sup> The Cherokee used tobacco in a multitude of ways, including as a pain reliever

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<sup>31</sup> Wunderlin, Vascular Plants, 36.

<sup>32</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants, 76-803.

<sup>33</sup> Leturiondo, “Memorial,” SC.

<sup>34</sup> Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 5.

<sup>35</sup> James Mooney, “Comments on Cherokee Plants and their Uses in the Formulae, from Swimmer, Takwatihi, and Hawanita, or Awanita,” MS 2235, National Anthropological Archives (hereafter NAA).

<sup>36</sup> Crosby, Columbian Exchange, 154-155.

<sup>37</sup> Virgil J. Vogel, American Indian Medicine (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 77.

<sup>38</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants, 803.

<sup>39</sup> P de Charlevoix, S.J., Histoire et Description Generale de la Nouvelle France, avec le Journal Historique d’un Voyage Fait par Ordre du Roi dans l’Amérique Septentrionale (Paris: Chez la Veuve Ganeau, 1744), 45-46.

<sup>40</sup> Åke Hultkrantz, Shamanic Healing and Ritual Drama: Health and Medicine in Native North American Religious Traditions (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992), 105.

(analgesic), an anticonvulsive, a cathartic, a diaphoretic, an emetic, and as “ceremonial medicine.” Rabbit tobacco (*Gnaphalium obtusifolium*) was also used for many of the same purposes.<sup>41</sup> The Choctaw and the Creek also used tobacco and rabbit tobacco for similar purposes.<sup>42</sup> Jacques LeMoyne indicates that the Timucua also used tobacco medicinally, stating that, “they have a plant which the Brazilians call *petum* and the Spaniards *tapaco*...they inhale the smoke so deeply that it comes out their mouths and noses; by this means they often cure infections.”<sup>43</sup> LeMoyne furnishes an illustration of this practice (see figure 3.1). A man sits in the background of the picture, smoking from a very long pipe; a woman stands nearby, handing him dried tobacco leaves.

The use of yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) was also very widespread throughout the Southeast. The leaves of the yaupon were dried and toasted and a tea made from these leaves. The resulting drink is called *casina* or black drink. Black drink was most often used as an everyday drink and for ceremonial purposes. Additionally, the Timucua used black drink as a purifying agent in a variety of applications, including preparations for warfare.<sup>44</sup> The tea was also used as a powerful emetic, which was part of the reason that the Timucua and other Southeastern Indians viewed it as a purifying agent.<sup>45</sup> Charlevoix states that when the Timucua wished to employ the black drink as an emetic, they mixed the tea with a quantity of seawater, which “occasion[ed] great evacuations.”<sup>46</sup> The drink was taken morning and night by the Timucua, and was seen as a preventative medication, as they “believe[d] that they should fall sick if they leave off drinking it.”<sup>47</sup>

Milanich and Sturtevant suggest that Pareja’s generic reference to herbs (la yerba) used often throughout the confessional refers to black drink, *I. vomitoria*. In particular, they believe that Pareja refers to black drink twice in the confessional, once in a question to shamans and once in a question directed to herbalists or midwives.<sup>48</sup> Here, Pareja asks, “When a woman has labor pains, have you prayed the prayers of the Devil with the

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<sup>41</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants, 794-806.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 811, 815-816.

<sup>43</sup> Lorant, New World, 75.

<sup>44</sup> P. de Charlevoix, S.J., Journal d’un Voyage Fait par Ordre d’u Roi dans L’Amerique Septentrionale: Adresse á Madame la Duchesse de Lesdiguieres (Paris: Chez la Veuve Ganeau, 1744), 221-222; Hann, History of the Timucua, 26; Lorant, New World, 81; and William Roberts, An Account of the First Discovery and Natural History of Florida, with a Particular Detail of the Several Expeditions and Descents made on the Coast (London: T. Jefferys 1763), 6.

<sup>45</sup> Lyda Averill Taylor, “Field notes and ethnographic material on Alabama, Choctaw, and Koasati,” MS 4658, NAA.

<sup>46</sup> Charlevoix, Journal d’un Voyage, 221-222.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 221-222.

<sup>48</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja’s Confessionario, 45-48. See nn. 4, 31, and 40.



herb?”<sup>49</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant likely base this conclusion on the fact that black drink is a powerful stimulant, containing large amounts of caffeine. However, as *I. vomitoria* was not used by any of the southeastern tribes as a labor or gynecologic aid, it seems unlikely that “yerba” refers to black drink in this case.<sup>50</sup>

The Spanish and other Europeans quickly incorporated black drink into their own pharmaceutical applications.<sup>51</sup> Black drink, it was believed, cleansed the urinary passages and prevented distemper in the veins. Its use even spread to France, where Charlevoix saw it taken as an emetic. However, he contended, the manner in which the French prepared the beverage was not nearly as effective as the Florida preparation, as the French doubled the dose and boiled the tea for far too long. The Spaniards of Florida took to drinking the casina tea as well, and regarded it as medicinal.<sup>52</sup>

Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) was another widely used medicinal plant that was appropriated by the Europeans. The root was cut up, boiled, and taken orally as a remedy for fever. Both the Spanish and the French quickly adopted its use.<sup>53</sup> Sassafras was an extremely common and popular medication throughout the Southeast. The Cherokee, Chippewa, Creek, and Choctaw all used sassafras for a variety of ailments.<sup>54</sup> Sassafras became a popular remedy in Europe as well.<sup>55</sup> Finally, Europeans adopted use of an unknown plant known as beads of St. Helen, known to the Timucuan as *apoyomatsi* or *patzisiranda*. The Timucuan bruised the leaves of this plant between two stones in order to extract a juice with which they rubbed their bodies after bathing with the conviction that it strengthened the skin. The Spanish used this herb in other ways, including taking the juice orally in wine to facilitate the passing of kidney stones or an obstruction. For diseases of the chest, the plant was pounded and taken in a decoction. Finally, beads of St. Helen was used in plasters to stanch blood, to strengthen the stomach, and to allay the pains of the womb.<sup>56</sup> Although Charlevoix noted that the Spanish developed these additional applications of the plant, it is likely that the Spanish learned these cures from the Timucuan, just as they did the initial healing powers of the plant.

Three different types of Timucuan healers are specified in Pareja’s confessional; one specific kind was an herbal specialist (*herbolario*). Herbalists aided in childbirth as well as in healing the sick, and were also able to affect the outcome of races and games

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<sup>49</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 211.

<sup>50</sup> Hultkrantz, Shamanic Healing, 105-112; Moerman, Medicinal Plants; and Vogel, Indian Medicine, 78-79.

<sup>51</sup> Charlevoix, Journal d’un Voyage, 222; Díaz Vara Calderón, Letter of Gabriel Díaz Vara Calderón, 12.

<sup>52</sup> Charlevoix, Journal d’un Voyage, 222.

<sup>53</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 45-46.

<sup>54</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants, 794-806, 808-812, 815-816; Taylor, “Field Notes,” MS 4658, NAA.

<sup>55</sup> Vogel, Indian Medicine, 359-365.

<sup>56</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 48.

by giving the players herbs that would enhance their performance or make them faint.<sup>57</sup> Herbs were employed in aborting unwanted fetuses. Although questions relating to abortions are addressed to all women in the confessional, it seems likely that herbalists would be consulted in such a situation. The last question in the set of questions for herbalists supports this idea; Pareja asks, “Have you advised or desired her to have a bad birth?”<sup>58</sup> Although Pareja uses the phrase “mal parir” in these questions, his meaning is obvious, for the counsel and advice following the questions is entitled “To make graver this sin of abortion.”<sup>59</sup>

Nearly all of the herbal remedies utilized by the Timucuan had a basis in the physiological; that is, herbal medications were taken internally, rubbed on the body, and inhaled into the lungs in order to cure disease. Notably, of all the plants indicated in the Timucuan medical lexicon, only one was used in a form of “magical” rather than physiological healing: corn. Corn was used as a prayer offering to implore the gods to heal the sick; the shaman or herbalist left it in conjunction with prayers made verbally in the doorway of the house where the sick individual was located.<sup>60</sup> Other applications of corn as a mechanism of healing may be captured in the archaeological record. At the Baptizing Spring site, archaeologist Lana Jill Loucks unearthed a structure that contained a great amount of burned corncobs that had been harvested during different times of the year. The variously sized corncobs had been stored and burned in different proveniences within the household. One of the possible explanations for this unusual assemblage posited by Loucks was that the corn had been utilized in various types of healing ceremonies.<sup>61</sup>

Judging by the number of questions pertaining to herbal medicine and the care of herbal specialists, the use of herbal remedies was an important part of the Timucuan medical lexicon. Herbal medications were also an important part of treating disease for European physicians, and they quickly appropriated the use of plants that they found to be useful, including guaiacum wood, sassafras, quinine, and ipecac.<sup>62</sup> These products were exported back to Europe and were also consumed by Europeans throughout the Indies. Spanish physicians of all types in the Indies often recommended indigenous herbs in place of scarce European medicines. In his Tractado Brebe de Anathomia y Chirugia of 1592, Agustin Farfán recommends almost sixty different treatments made from indigenous products for many different ailments.<sup>63</sup> In addition to the use of herbs and

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<sup>57</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 148, 149.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 146. The original reads, “*Has aconsejado o deseado hacerle mal parir?*”

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 147. The original reads “*Para agravar este pecado del aborto.*”

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 124.

<sup>61</sup> Lana Jill Loucks, “Political and Economic Interactions Between Spaniards and Indians: Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Perspectives of the Mission Sites in Florida”(PhD Dissertation, University of Florida, 1979), 325.

<sup>62</sup> Blumenthal, “New World Plants,” 60.

<sup>63</sup> Risse, “Medicine in New Spain,” 48-49.

plants in medical remedies and cures, the Europeans found other Native American medical practices, including bloodletting, familiar.

### **Timucuan Bloodletting Practices**

Bloodletting (phlebotomy) is a medical treatment in which a doctor or other healer or medical practitioner cuts the flesh of a sick individual in order to let a certain amount of blood drain from the body. Bloodletting was an extremely popular procedure throughout Europe and in Spain, and was also present in many tribes in the Americas. In Europe, its roots stretched all the way back to Galen.<sup>64</sup> The Spanish employed bloodletting as one of their primary medical practices, used in health as well as in sickness. Phlebotomy, along with proper diet, was used as a means to control the humors of the body. In De consideracionibus operas medicine, physician Arnau de Vilanova held bloodletting to be the exemplar of all therapeutic activity for physicians. All classes of Spaniards practiced bloodletting, and both surgeons and common barbers performed the procedure. The role of the barber in bloodletting is probably one key to the popularity of the remedy, as it was cheap and readily available to the poor of Spain.<sup>65</sup>

Bloodletting was also an important means of healing throughout indigenous cultures of the Americas. In a manner similar to Western European practices, in North America, many tribes practiced phlebotomy as a means of relief for headache, fever, aches, and swellings. Although it was not a widespread practice in the Southeast, the Alabama and Cherokee practiced phlebotomy on a limited basis.<sup>66</sup> The practice of bloodletting was far more commonly practiced among the Timucua. The French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne gives a detailed account of Timucuan bloodletting practices witnessed during the French expedition of 1564. Platforms were built for the sick individuals, who were laid out to receive the ministrations of the shaman or herbalist. LeMoyne indicates that if a patient were placed on the platform face up, the treatment for the sickness would include the purging of blood. A shaman or an herbalist performed the bloodletting by cutting the forehead of the patient with a sharpened shell. Then, the shaman sucked out an unspecified amount of blood from the cut and spit it into a gourd bowl or an earthen jar.<sup>67</sup> Pareja includes only one question about bloodletting in his confessional, asking, "Have you ruptured someone?"<sup>68</sup> The question is directed only to

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>65</sup> Michael R. McVaugh, Medicine before the Plague: Practitioners and their Patients in the Crown of Aragon, 1285-1345 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 149-153; and Guy A. Settipane, "Introduction: Columbus: Medical Implications" in Columbus and the New World: Medical Implications, ed. Guy A. Settipane (Providence: Ocean Side Publications, 1995), 4.

<sup>66</sup> James Mooney, "Cherokee Theory and Practice of Medicine," The Journal of American Folklore 3, no. 8 (January-March 1890): 48-49; Taylor, "Field Notes," MS 4658, NAA.

<sup>67</sup> Lorant, New World, 75.

<sup>68</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 152. The original reads, "*Hecho potroso a alguno?*"

*hechizeros*;<sup>69</sup> this may indicate that only shamans were able to perform this procedure. Yet the seemingly benign attitude taken by the confessional towards bloodletting, likely the result of familiarity with the practice in Europe and or the colonies,<sup>70</sup> indicates that the Franciscans viewed the practice as a medical, at least tolerable procedure rather than a magical, heretical one. The fact that the confessional addresses questions about bloodletting to shamans only, however, shows that it was likely that Timucuan likely regarded bloodletting as a supernatural, “magical” means of healing.

### **Magical Healing Rites and Rites of Purification**

Throughout the Americas, many indigenous groups regarded the ultimate source of disease as the result of a disturbed relationship with the supernatural. Because disease had its origins in the supernatural, it had to be cured in a supernatural way. In most cultures, the practitioners of these supernatural or magical cures is a shaman, a person who has “supernatural sanction” to cure and heal. In this type of healing, shamans act as a “magico-religious” practitioner. The use of the term magic in reference to healing is certainly ambiguous at best; however, for lack of a better term indicating a specially sanctioned relationship with the supernatural or sacred, it is employed by anthropologists and historians alike.<sup>71</sup>

For the Timucua, contrary to the “legitimate” practice of bloodletting, the “magical” practice of sucking was a constant target of extirpation. In this practice, a shaman or other healer would ritualistically heal by “sucking” the disease out of the sick individual with their mouth or a specialized instrument. Often, small bits of matter representing the cause of the disease were sucked from the body. These items included bits of trash and other “unclean” things. Practitioners of this rite were referred to as “*chupadores*” by one of the confessionals consulted.<sup>72</sup>

This practice was prevalent throughout the Southeastern United States and was practiced by the Timucua. In the Timucua culture, the shamans were the practitioners of

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<sup>69</sup> In the 1613 confessional, Pareja consistently refers to a group of people as *hechizeros*, persons capable of making magic and casting spells. Questions throughout the confessional indicate that these persons were seen as a distinct, high status group not only by the friar, but also by Timucuan society. Based on their role as described in the confessional as healers, magicians, and intercessors to the sacred, I refer to these *hechizeros* as shamans.

<sup>70</sup> Robinson A. Herrera, Natives, Europeans, and Africans in Sixteenth-Century Santiago de Guatemala (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 75-76, 90; James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Social History (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 58, 110, 118.

<sup>71</sup> Hultkrantz, Shamanic Healing, 14-19; John Reed Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 614-615. Originally published as “Religious Beliefs and Medicinal Practices of the Creek Indians,” 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1924/1925).

<sup>72</sup> Smith, Grammar of the Pima or Nevume, 29.

sucking out illnesses. The individual was laid out for examination. A special biconical pipe was used to suck the sickness out of the afflicted body part. The shaman, likely using sleight of hand, then produced some sort of object that had been sucked out of the body. Apparently, the extraction of objects as the cause of the sickness was common among the Timucua; Pareja says that these objects usually consist of “a little piece of coal, at other times a small lump of dirt and other unclean things, things alive or as if alive.”<sup>73</sup>

Pareja devotes a lengthy section of the confessional to the magical methods of healing of the Timucuan shamans, which he describes in detail so that other friars will recognize the rites. In the first ritual, the shaman places white feathers, new suede, the ears of an owl and arrows stuck in the ground in front of the sick individual in order to draw out the sickness.<sup>74</sup> He then describes the method of sucking illnesses from the body, which he identifies as another deceitful practice. The rite must be trickery, he alleges, as “it cannot be, since no hole is left in the body.”<sup>75</sup> These two practices may be parts of a larger healing ceremony, as suggested by Milanich.<sup>76</sup>

Pareja dismisses these healing rites as nonsense and superstitions, and argues that the shamans of the Timucua deceive those they purport to cure with these rites. What Pareja saw as trickery or an act that “the Devil must have managed subtly” actually represents an act of healing through magic.<sup>77</sup> Magical healing has a very strong tradition throughout the Americas, and is often undertaken to cure many kinds of disease, including diseases that were caused by curses and other forms of magic, such as the “evil eye.” Such diseases were common in the Southeast, and could be inflicted on an individual by living individuals (including shamans), ghosts, dreams, and plant or animal spirits.<sup>78</sup> Disease could also be caused by inadvertent yet improper behavior, such as by sitting in a chair too recently vacated by another individual, stealing the residual body heat of the person who had left.<sup>79</sup> It is possible that the Timucua utilized this magical type of healing to cure magically inflicted diseases such as the aforementioned maladies. The fact that Pareja addresses questions regarding sucking disease from the body to hechizeros only would seem to support this; his terminology denotes that he considers shamans to be the experts in magic.

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<sup>73</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 152

<sup>74</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja's Confessional, 32. The original reads, “*Plumas blancas y gamuza nueva y las orejas del buho y flechas hincadas.*” This passage was drawn from Emilio Moran's translation of the document.

<sup>75</sup> Pareja, Confessionario fol. 152.

<sup>76</sup> Milanich, The Timucua, 180.

<sup>77</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 153.

<sup>78</sup> Lee Irwin, “Cherokee Healing: Myth, Dreams, and Medicine,” American Indian Quarterly 16, no. 2 (Spring, 1992): 245-249; Mooney, “Cherokee Plants and Uses,” MS 2235, NAA; and Taylor, “Field Notes,” MS 4658, NAA.

<sup>79</sup> Taylor, “Field Notes,” MS 4658, NAA.

The act of sucking is singled out in many confessionals consulted as heretical. The confessional to the Pima singles out chupadores for questioning, making sure that these people do not perform the act and do not teach anyone else the rite. The section concludes by telling the healers to stop performing the act because “it is not good, and God also hates it very much.”<sup>80</sup>

Disease could also be “magically” controlled through purification of the environment. The lighting of separate fires for a sick individual is a constant theme of the confessional; the lighting of a separate fire served in many contexts, all significant as “an important part of rituals on occasions of transition and impurity.”<sup>81</sup> Making fires separate from the main cooking fire of the household seems to have been one of the most important healing practices among the Timucua, and was practiced during illness, menstruation, and after childbirth. Fires were also lit in the council house when a man became a chief.<sup>82</sup> In each case, the affected individual is moving from one state of being to another (sick to well, pregnant to postpartum, member of society to chief). Similarly, the fire represented a connection between three states of the Timucuan cosmology; fire (sacred/pure) was used to nullify illness or bloodshed (sacred/pollution) in order to restore the individual to a normative state of impurity. The lighting of a separate fire was both practical and symbolic; it delineated their separation from society and purified the separate environment and perhaps even the individual present within its immediate vicinity.

Fire was used in a variety of applications in the healing process. Beyond its symbolic value, it served as a conveyor of medication. In some cases, seeds or plants were thrown into the fire during treatment of a sick individual; the smoke from these seeds was inhaled as a purge, expelling poisons from the body and driving out the sickness.<sup>83</sup> This practice of purging oneself by inhaling the smoke of medicinal plants is unusual in the Southeast; tribes were far more likely to purge by vomiting or in a sweatbath.<sup>84</sup> In some cases, the purifying aspects of the fire were directly conveyed to the individual through the actions of a shaman. Among the Cherokee, for instance, shamans used the heat of separate fires to facilitate the “laying on of the hands” to alleviate the pains of toothache and stomachache.<sup>85</sup>

Separate fires also served a functional purpose. Pareja indicates that these fires were lit to cook the food of the sick individual, away from the food of the rest of the household. The contemporary explanation indicates that food was cooked separately in order to control the spread of disease and to protect the rest of the household. It is possible that the Timucua correctly assumed that this was the case. This explanation is

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<sup>80</sup> Buckingham Smith, Grammar of the Pima, 29.

<sup>81</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja's Confessionario, 44.

<sup>82</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 185.

<sup>83</sup> Lorant, New World, 75.

<sup>84</sup> Hultkrantz, Shamanic Healing, 105-112.

<sup>85</sup> Mooney, “Cherokee Theory,” 48-49.

not at all farfetched, as other Southeastern groups made the connection between diseases and the “white man.” The Creek and Cherokee both felt that there were many dissimilar sources of disease, including many different kinds of spirits, animals, and the “white man.”<sup>86</sup>

Other Timucuan practices would support the idea that the separate fire during illness was lit to keep diseased and healthy individuals separate. LeMoyne notes that the “hermaphrodites” of the Timucua, men who took on the cultural roles of women (the Two Spirits) looked after individuals sick with contagious diseases until they were well. He further noted that the Two Spirits took the sick people to “places selected for the purpose,” and were responsible for feeding the sick.<sup>87</sup> What is known of Timucuan structures would also suggest that the sick individuals were moved out of the house.<sup>88</sup> The central fire of the household was lit in a 40-80 inch depression in the center of the home, precluding an additional fire in the household.<sup>89</sup>

### **Menstruation, Childbirth, and Abortion**

Separate fires were also closely linked to menstruation and childbirth. Pareja indicates that lighting a separate fire was a monthly ritual during menses. Additionally, a separate fire was lit during or after the delivery of a child.<sup>90</sup> It was considered dangerous or inappropriate for others to approach this post-delivery fire.<sup>91</sup> Women were evidently expected to cook separately from men and other, non-menstruating women for an indeterminate period of time after giving birth, and every month during their period. Although it seems logical to assume that the separate fire remained lit until the end of menstruation, the length of time the post-delivery fire remained lit is uncertain. No mention of the duration of the “impure” or otherwise vulnerable period after delivery is made in the confessional or any other known document. However, the Creek and Cherokee thought that some diseases were contracted through contact with menstruating women, so a similar belief about birthing blood among the Timucua would not be

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<sup>86</sup> Swanton, Southeastern Indians, 782.

<sup>87</sup> Lorant, New World, 69. Despite his controversial assertions Trexler’s work remains useful to the understanding of the Native American Two Spirit. See Richard C. Trexler, Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 114-115.

<sup>88</sup> One of the structures in the Timucua province that is proposed to be an aboriginal structure is estimated as being 9x13 meters in size, making it unlikely that there would be enough room to light a second fire within the household. Brent R. Weisman, “Archaeology of Fig Spring Mission, Ichetucknee Springs State Park,” in The Spanish Missions of La Florida, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993).

<sup>89</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 87-88.

<sup>90</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 133.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., fol. 124.

unusual.<sup>92</sup> An alternative and possibly more accurate explanation of the practice of ritual separation of menstruating and postpartum women was offered by anthropologist James Mooney, who spent several field seasons living with the Cherokee. He explains that separation of sick individuals is to guard against accidental contact with menstruating or postpartum women, for any contact with such a woman would neutralize all of the effects of the shaman's medications.<sup>93</sup>

Hann suggests that the Timucua practiced ritual separation of men and women during menstruation and just after childbirth during the precolonial era.<sup>94</sup> During these times, women withdrew to menstrual huts, built just outside of the village, to avoid contact with men. It is presumed that this separation was based on a notion of impurity that was associated with the blood of childbirth and menses, which would supposedly pollute or otherwise damage a man and his goods. Such a belief fits with the ideas that separate fires are linked with pollution; the separate fire in the menstrual hut keeps the pollutant of menstrual blood away from men (and possibly non-menstruating women). Furthermore, if a woman had just given birth, a separate fire was lit. This fire fits both of Milanich and Sturtevant's criteria for separate fires, marking childbirth as both a time of impurity<sup>95</sup> and a time of transition.

More recently, however, gendered analyses of women's rituals have changed the way in which anthropologists and historians think of women's rituals and in particular, rites associated with menstruation and childbirth. As more and more women entered the field of anthropology, they were allowed an insider's view of women's rituals. Their findings indicate that often, menstruating and postpartum women were separated from the rest of society because of the power of their fertility; the blood that they shed during these times was especially potent and powerful.<sup>96</sup> In this case, the blood is still "polluted," that is, dangerous; but rather than tainting the person it comes in contact with, instead, the blood overpowers the individual, as stated by Mooney's informants.<sup>97</sup> This fits well within the Timucuan cosmological category of sacred/polluted; the blood is the physical representation of the fertility of both the individual woman and the lineage, and is strongly connected to the sacred/polluted and thus the Under World, and dangerous to the average person.

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<sup>92</sup> Swanton, Southeastern Indians, 782.

<sup>93</sup> Mooney, "Cherokee Theory," 48.

<sup>94</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 87.

<sup>95</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant here use the term "impurity" to indicate a polluted state, not the normative state of This World that this study holds impurity synonymous with.

<sup>96</sup> Patricia Galloway, "Where Have All the Menstrual Huts Gone? The Invisibility of Menstrual Seclusion in the Late Prehistoric Southeast," in Reader in Gender Archaeology, ed. Kelly Hays-Gilpin and David S. Whitley (London: Routledge Press, 1998), 203-204, 206; Theda Perdue, Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 4, 34-37; and Michelene E. Pesantubbee, Choctaw Women in a Chaotic World: The Clash of Cultures in the Colonial Southeast (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 24, 121, 151-152.

<sup>97</sup> Mooney, "Cherokee Theory," 48.



Although there is no explicit documentary of archaeological evidence of the existence of menstrual huts among the Timucua, Hann is in agreement with anthropologist John Swanton that this tradition fits the Timucuan ethnological background, which is similar to that of the Creek, who also practiced ritual separation during these times.<sup>98</sup> It is possible that the archaeological evidence of menstrual huts in Florida is present, but has been misidentified; Patricia Galloway has argued for such a case for the BBB site, based on the presence of jimsonweed (used for abortions), and an association of artifacts with menstruation, including a large red crystal and a figurine of a woman whose outstretched arms end in fruit rather than hands, symbolizing the woman's fertility. This site was previously identified as a ritual space for men's purification rites.<sup>99</sup>

The Timucua also practiced other prohibitions during menstruation and after childbirth. After birth, a woman dressed her hair with bear grease for an undetermined number of months. The black bear was fairly common in Florida at the time of contact, and was hunted by many peoples; Swanton indicates that bear grease was a common hair dressing among the Southeastern Indians.<sup>100</sup> Although there is no explicit suggestion that there was any religious or healing connotation connected with this practice, the bear is the largest and most powerful animal in the habitat of the Timucua. It seems plausible that post-partum women applied the bear grease in order to absorb its strength in the trying recovery period shortly after birth. The evidence suggests that bear grease served to strengthen the body. Natchez mothers rubbed bear grease on their children's bodies "to keep the sinews supple and strong."<sup>101</sup>

Eating meat and fish was also prohibited during menstruation and after childbirth.<sup>102</sup> There is no other indication in any part of the document as to how long this period of ritual fasting lasted after delivery, but might have been linked to the duration of the separate fire. The prohibition against fish is especially interesting, as many Southeastern cultures identified fish as belonging to the Under World, the space connected with water, life, death, and fertility.<sup>103</sup> Cherokee women, for instance, avoided eating fish during pregnancy.<sup>104</sup> In one of the Cherokee origin myths, mankind originated after First Man struck his sister First Woman with a fish, and she became pregnant.<sup>105</sup> For the Timucua, the connection between fish and fertility is also strong; in addition to the taboos prohibiting postpartum and menstruating women from eating fish, other taboos conflate the two. According to Timucua beliefs hunters who have had sex with their

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<sup>98</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 87, 93; Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 651.

<sup>99</sup> Galloway, "Menstrual Huts," 204-205.

<sup>100</sup> Swanton, Southeastern Indians, 499.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 717.

<sup>102</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 132, 133.

<sup>103</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 128-129; Perdue, Cherokee Women, 34.

<sup>104</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 321.

<sup>105</sup> Perdue, Cherokee Women, 34.

wives would find empty fish traps while shamans who performed the most dangerous magical spells refrained from both having sex and from eating fish so as not to endanger themselves.<sup>106</sup>

Like other groups, the Timucua also practiced geophagy, presumably during pregnancy. Pareja notes that some women were known to have eaten charcoal, dirt, bits of pottery, fleas, and even lice.<sup>107</sup> Swanton suggests that women consumed these substances not out of nutritional need, but as a medicinal remedy.<sup>108</sup> However, pregnant women require extra vitamins and minerals; like many different cultures, the Timucua diet may not always have supplied enough varied foods to fill this need, forcing the women to resort to geophagy.<sup>109</sup> Alternatively, geophagy during pregnancy even has religious connotations in some areas; for instance, among the Garifuna of Belize, women sometimes eat white clay tablets associated with the cult of the Black Christ during pregnancy.<sup>110</sup>

Midwives or herbalists attended childbirth, addressing prayers and offerings to an unknown god during childbirth, a common practice during all kinds of medical treatment in the Americas.<sup>111</sup> These healers had the power to delay and speed up birthing through the use of herbs. This is a common practice, and a variety of herbs may be employed for this purpose. Southeastern Native Americans used several families of plants for this purpose, including plants from the families of polygonaceae, quercus, ulmus, and vitis.<sup>112</sup> One particularly popular drug used as a gynecological/obstetrical aid in the southeast was *Ulmus Americana* (American elm), which is very common in the Timucua area and undoubtedly easy for Timucua to find.<sup>113</sup> It is very possible, then, that Timucuan midwives and herbalists were able to help women in childbirth through the use of herbal drugs. The 1613 confession indicates that among the Timucua, medical practitioners were able to extort women by using or withholding the appropriate drugs.<sup>114</sup> Apparently, the medical attendants used these powers to extort a better payment for their services.

After giving birth, women lit a separate fire, indicating that she was separated from the rest her family. Perhaps this separate time was for the mother and child to

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<sup>106</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 126, 132, 207.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. fol. 133.

<sup>108</sup> John R. Swanton, Early History of the Creek and Their Neighbors, Bulletin 73, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1922), 362.

<sup>109</sup> Andrea S. Wiley and Solomon H. Katz, "Geophagy in Pregnancy: A Test of a Hypothesis," Current Anthropology 39, no. 4 (August-October 1998): 532-534.

<sup>110</sup> John M. Hunter and Renate de Kleine, "Geophagy in Central America," Geographical Review 74, no. 2 (April 1984): 157-160, 162-165.

<sup>111</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 149.

<sup>112</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants.

<sup>113</sup> Wunderlin, Vascular Plants, 163.

<sup>114</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 149.

recover from childbirth in a quiet setting. The Two Spirits may have even prepared her meals for her, as they did for the sick individuals of the culture.<sup>115</sup> This time of separation, quiet, and rest after childbirth has a very strong tradition in the Americas. Southeastern groups, including the Creek, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Natchez all practiced postpartum separation from four days to two months after the birth of their child. These women refrained from cooking their husband's food, and also observed food taboos.<sup>116</sup> In Mesoamerica, women also observed a ritual period after childbirth for ten to twenty or more days, during which they received visitors, who "admonished the mothers to be careful with themselves and the baby."<sup>117</sup> Among Spaniards the common prescribed time was the *cuarentena* (forty days). The ritual period after birth for all societies may have originated from medical concerns; even today, doctors advise new mothers to take six weeks (42 days) off from work and to abstain from heavy lifting, exerting exercise, and sexual intercourse during this time.<sup>118</sup>

In addition to information about birthing rituals, the 1613 confessional is filled with questions about abortion (*abortar*) and miscarriage (*mal parir*). Abortion of fetuses conceived outside of marriage was standard practice among the Timucua.<sup>119</sup> Pareja makes mention of this practice in the confessional, stating, "If she were single and it were known she is pregnant, it is to be said to her that she is not to abort or choke the unborn child as they are accustomed to do."<sup>120</sup> This practice was apparently very ingrained into the culture, as it continued long after the establishment of missions throughout the province. In 1694, visitor Joaquin de Florencia passed judgment on a woman who was living apart from her husband, yet was known to have terminated several pregnancies through ingestion of a liquid called *verudises*.<sup>121</sup>

The Timucua used various herbal medications as a form of birth control. The confessional contains two questions back to back on this topic. The first asks, "Have you taken some herb so that you would not become pregnant?" The second reads, "Have you taken some herb in order to become sterile?"<sup>122</sup> These two questions may indicate that there was a perceived difference between the two kinds of medication. It is possible that

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<sup>115</sup> Lorant, New World, 69.

<sup>116</sup> Swanton, Southeastern Indians, 713-718.

<sup>117</sup> Frances F. Berdan, The Aztecs of Central Mexico: An Imperial Society (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Publishers, 1982), 83.

<sup>118</sup> Arlene Eisenberg, Heidi E. Murkoff, and Sandee E. Hathaway, B.S.N., What to Expect When You're Expecting (New York: Workman Publishing, 1996), 396-411; George E. Verrilli, M.D, F.A.C.O.G. and Anne Marie Mueser, Ed.D., While Waiting: Written by an Obstetrician and a Mother: The Information You Need To Know About Pregnancy, Labor, and Delivery (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2002), 172-179.

<sup>119</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 121.

<sup>120</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 147.

<sup>121</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 121.

<sup>122</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 215.

one herb may have been taken to prevent pregnancy for a short period of time; the other had the explicit goal of making the individual incapable of ever conceiving. It is also possible that the former remedy may have been taken after sex to prevent pregnancy, while the later was taken on a continual basis, much like birth control pills today. The Southeastern peoples had access to many different contraceptive herbal remedies.<sup>123</sup> Unfortunately, we will probably never know the exact plant used by the Timucua given the scant descriptions. The fact that none of the herbs utilized by the Southeastern tribes for this purpose is indigenous to Florida further complicates an accurate identification.<sup>124</sup>

Several methods of inducing abortion are mentioned in the confessional. It was thought that any woman could cause another woman to have a miscarriage by striking the pregnant mother, through an unspecified use of an herb (possibly in a drink), or by causing her to have a great fright. The pregnant woman herself could cause a miscarriage by taking a drink (possibly of the same herb mentioned above) by striking herself, by “squeezing [her] belly to choke it [the fetus]”, and by “lying badly across the bed and putting [her] arm on top...suffocating the unborn child.”<sup>125</sup>

Although the confessional records the various methods of women to miscarry or abort, the confessional makes no mention of abortion or miscarriage in any question for herbalists, midwives, or shamans. Since abortion and infanticide seems to have been such a common practice among the Timucua, it is possible that the general population had no need to consult specialized healers. Instead, these practices would fall under a general routine of health maintenance for individual women. There is no mention of ritual separation for women who have aborted or miscarried a fetus, although the common factor of fertility and the shedding of blood would indicate that a ritual separation and the purifying factor of a separate fire were necessary for the woman’s (and society’s) well being. The lack of information in the confessional regarding rituals associated with abortion and miscarriage is probably a reflection of Pareja’s status as both male and cultural outsider.

### **Blood, Healing, and the Sacred/Polluted**

A recurring theme throughout the corpus of Timucuan healing rituals is the importance and power of blood. Timucuan shamans (and possibly herbalists) shed blood to cure illness; Timucuan women segregated themselves while they were shedding blood at various stages of their reproductive cycles; nursing and pregnant women drank the blood of young men to strengthen their unborn children and their milk. Persons with serious injuries involving cuts and bleeding probably also segregated themselves from the rest of the community. This is never overtly stated, but is implied by LeMoynes’s

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<sup>123</sup> Moerman, Medicinal Plants.

<sup>124</sup> Wunderlin, Vascular Plants.

<sup>125</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 133, 134, 146, 147.

description of the role of the Two Spirits, who carried injured warriors from the battlefield and cared for them until they recuperated.<sup>126</sup>

The representation of blood in these healing practices is ambiguous at best. Blood was evidently a dangerous substance, something to be closely controlled. The general population was kept segregated from spilled blood. Yet for nursing and pregnant women, blood was an agent that strengthens and fortifies. Nursing mothers often drank the blood of “strong young men” to enrich their breast milk.<sup>127</sup> This practice could be limited to the duration of the ritual separation or might have continued for the entire time a woman nursed her baby. Paradoxically, LeMoyne states that these women drank blood that was extracted from sick individuals by a shaman, especially if it was from a “strong young man.”<sup>128</sup> Pregnant women and nursing mothers were likely an exception to the rule of blood avoidance because they existed in a heightened state of fertility, linked to amenorrhea, the absence of their menstrual blood during pregnancy and the early stages of breastfeeding. The connections between blood and fertility through the Under World and the sacred/polluted could suggest that drinking the blood of young men was seen to enhance and increase the future fertility of the women through a “replacement” of her menstrual blood. But why take the blood from sick men instead of healthy? Several interpretations suggest themselves. Perhaps the women were considered to be protected from illness or danger caused by spilled blood during these times during which they themselves shed no blood. It is also possible that LeMoyne witnessed shamans taking blood from healthy young men to give to the women, and based on prior observations of bloodletting, assumed that they were sick individuals. Given the dangers associated with blood, it is most likely that bloodletting and the deliberate spilling of blood was confined to times of illness and to ritual self-sacrifice (discussed in Chapter 4); thus, the only source of blood for the consumption of women was from sick individuals.

The Spanish certainly were not ignorant of the importance of blood in the cosmology of indigenous peoples. Spanish observations about the role of blood among the Maya and Mexica attests to their familiarity with blood rituals as foundations to indigenous cosmologies. Among the Maya, for instance, blood was a sacred substance that had religio-political importance. Sacred blood was closely tied to the elite class who engaged in bloodletting rituals on behalf of the lower classes and for the good of their city-states. Blood was so important to the cosmology of the Maya that the shedding of blood of rulers, elite Maya families, and that of high-ranking captives was deemed necessary for the stability and the continuation of the culture.<sup>129</sup> Blood was also of key importance in Mexica cosmology, as the ritual spilling of blood was necessary to ensure the continuation of the universe. All bloodshed was, in theory, dedicated to the sun, but sacrifices and bloodletting were also dedicated to specific gods, including Tlaloc and

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<sup>126</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 69.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>129</sup> Michael D. Coe, *The Maya* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1999), 212. For more information on the importance of blood in the Classic Mayan era and many illustrations of bloodletting rituals, see Linda Schele and David Friedel, *A Forest of Kings: The Untold Story of the Ancient Maya* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1990).

Huitzilopochtli. Bloodshed was undertaken in many forms including auto-sacrifice, the cutting of oneself, and human sacrifice. The overwhelming majority of human sacrifice victims were captives of war; however, theoretically, everyone in the society was a possible sacrificial victim.<sup>130</sup> Thus, as educated men of their time, the Franciscans were certainly cognizant of the kinds of roles that blood could play in the Timucuan cosmology.

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Although Francisco Pareja and the Florida Franciscans objected to many of the ceremonies associated with healing and curing in the Timucuan culture, such as sucking out impurities and praying to gods and supernatural powers, they were strongly in favor of keeping the population of the Timucuan missions as healthy as possible. Thus, the Timucuan confessional encourages all types of healers (including herbalists, midwives, and shamans) to “cure only with herbs and medicine:” in other words to follow the European model of medicine. Ironically, Pareja might have misinterpreted some acts of healing as medical and not magical, such as bloodletting in the Timucuan culture.

Pareja also encourages the healer to serve all portions of the mission population, even the poor Timucuan. This should not be surprising, as the many epidemics that swept through the Florida missions threatened to make the Christianized Timucua extinct. Florida reflects to a magnified degree the problem faced by the Church throughout the Americas: The Church was forced to let the curanderos, herbolarios, hechizeros, and parteras continue to practice, as there were far too few Spaniards to service so many indigenous peoples. Florida’s lack of physicians trained in European medicine left the missionaries no choice but to let the native healers continue in their trade in order to ensure a healthy congregation. Yet the friars did seek to control the practices of the indigenous healers and mold them into a more acceptable, European, model that fit better into their understanding of medical practices.

The confessional’s in-depth examination of healing rituals offers great insight into the Timucuan culture and its belief structure. The ritual separation of the ill and injured indicates that disease was considered to be a danger (whether physiological or psychological) to the healthy members of the society, a result of its connections to the sacred/polluted. The segregation of the sick protected the bulk of the population while offering an environment in which the sick individuals could undergo treatment which included interaction with the sacred/pure through the lighting of a separate fire and treatment with purifying agents such as black drink, tobacco, and corn.

Herbal remedies made up the bulk of Timucuan medical treatments, and seemed to be utilized in the physiological treatment of disease. Magical treatments, such as sucking diseases from the body and possibly bloodletting, were practiced by the Timucua, and may have been restricted to the treatment of psychological or supernaturally caused diseases such as the “evil eye.” Treatment through magical practices seems to have been limited to shamanic practitioners, whereas both shamans and herbalists administered herbal treatments. Finally, the Timucuan ascribed great importance to blood, surpassing all other parts of the body. Blood was simultaneously

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<sup>130</sup> Berdan, *Aztecs of Central Mexico*, 111-118.

dangerous and nurturing. The next chapter further examines Timucuan views of blood and its importance in sacrificial rites.

## CHAPTER 4

### DEATH AND BLOOD SACRIFICE

In his 1630 memorial, Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesus observed that Timucuan and other Florida Indians “are a most pious people toward their deceased, and thus they practice various ceremonies and superstitions relative to them, which they renounce and abandon with great ease on receiving our Holy Catholic Faith.”<sup>1</sup> Fray Alonso was correct in his assessment of the importance of death to Timucuan cosmology; however, the prevalence of grave goods interred with individuals after missionization belies his conviction of the facileness with which they abandoned their “superstitions.”<sup>2</sup>

For the Timucuan, death marked the most important event of the life cycle. Elaborate mortuary rituals were celebrated for Timucuan of all social standing, and caciques in particular received special treatment in death. Rituals associated with funerary rites include the public mourning of women, cutting hair as a symbol of mourning, and some sort of sacrifice. For lower-status individuals, this consisted of relations shedding blood for the departed; in the case of caciques, human sacrifice was performed.

Death was viewed as a transformative process that changed the individual from a profane, earthly member of the community into one of the ancestors. The process of death united the three states of Timucuan cosmology: the Upper World, the Under World, and This World. Similarly, the rites and rituals associated with death paralleled this transformation that moved the individuals through the states of the cosmos, employing symbols of both the sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. Overall, the interaction of the community with death was divided into two phases. The first phase was the immediate period after death, which was associated with the body’s decay. During this phase, symbols of the Under World dominated the death rites. Blood sacrifice was offered to the dead; symbols of fertility were avoided, and women (themselves agents of fertility) mourned publicly. During this time, the deceased was commemorated in absentia while the body was kept away from the populace. The second phase occurred after the body had been purified and destroyed by fire, after which the lineages and/or community was able to interact with the dead. The symbolism of the second phase revolved around releasing the soul, including the bodily destruction by fire to produce a sacred/pure ancestor.

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<sup>1</sup> Francisco Alonso de Jesus, “1630 Memorial of Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesus on Spanish Florida’s Missions and Natives,” trans. John H. Hann, *The Americas* 5, no. 1 (June 1993): 99. Original housed in the Archivo de Indias, Seville.

<sup>2</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 127; Martin F. Dickinson and Lucy B. Wayne, “Archaeological Testing of the San Juan del Puerto mission site (8Du53), Fort George Island, Florida. August 1985,” PK Young Library of Florida History Special Collections, University of Florida; Lisa M. Hoshower and Jerald T. Milanich, “Excavations in the Fig Springs Mission Burial Area,” in *The Spanish Missions of La Florida*, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993); and Larsen, “Mission Bioarchaeology,” 322-356.



The relationship between death and the transformation of the individual into an ancestor was so key to Timucuan cosmology that the society's kinship system incorporated death into its very structure. The terms by which an individual (ego) called his close relations changed after their death; in some cases, the death of a close relation also resulted in ego changing the terms by which he referred to his living family. The changing of kinship terms was the culmination of the transformative process of death for the Timucua; with the changing of the term by which living members of the clan refer to the dead, she or he was recognized now as no longer of This World or of the sacred/polluted Under World, but was now associated with the Upper World, the sacred/pure.

Sacrifices, and blood sacrifice in particular, marked these funerary rituals and linked the Timucians to the sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. Timucians also practiced other forms of blood sacrifice, including human sacrifice, in contexts outside of death rituals. Yet all sacrificial acts served the same purpose: they formed a connection to the sacred. Blood sacrifice was enacted in a variety of situations: in veneration of the sun; to assist in summoning a deity; and in thanksgiving for victory in warfare. In specific cases, the Timucua employed human sacrifice rather than blood or self-sacrifice. Children were the sacrificial victims in these cases, and their death marked an occasion of the veneration of the cacique, the sun's representative on earth. In all cases of sacrifice (blood, self, and human), the blood of children and the blood of enemies were especially powerful and desirable.

### **Timucuan Mortuary Rituals**

The importance of death in Timucuan cosmology is reflected in the number and importance of funerary rituals that they celebrated. Of all the turning points of the human life cycle, the Timucians devoted the most time, energy, and attention to rituals of death, a pattern among Southeastern Indians that can be traced back as far as the Woodland Period.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the extant sources reveal that death seems to have been the pivotal event of the individual life cycle. Indeed, when compared to other ceremonies associated with birth (including taboo observances during and after childbirth),<sup>4</sup> coming of age rituals (including the practice of segregating menstruating women),<sup>5</sup> or descriptions of marriage ceremonies,<sup>6</sup> the sources that describe rituals associated with death prove much more numerous, detailed, and elaborate.

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<sup>3</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 327.

<sup>4</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 124, 133, 146, 149.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 127, 133; Hann, History of the Timucua, 87, 93, 117; and Swanton, Indians of the Southeastern United States, 713-716.

<sup>6</sup> Descriptions of marriage are confined to ceremonies involving caciques. See Lorant, New World, 109-113.

For Southeastern peoples, death was associated with the Under World, the place where life, death, and fertility all originate and are connected.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the Southeast, attitudes towards death had three common features. First, all held a general belief that some kind of soul exists after death. Secondly, the living had to show respect to the dead soul; and finally, death rites reflected the stratification of the society.<sup>8</sup> Each of these criteria is true of the Timucua. In particular, the Timucuans practiced ancestor veneration by “feeding” the bones of their dead a bit of the family’s main meal. In this way, Timucuan families maintained a daily, constant relationship with their ancestors and thus the sacred/pure.

Given their importance, it is not surprising that the best documented of Timucuan ceremonies of death are the rituals associated with the death of a cacique. LeMoyne writes that after the death of a cacique, the entire village mourned him by fasting for three days. Other chiefs fasted and mourned during this time as well. Members of the village also mourned the cacique by cutting off half of their hair. This represented a sacrifice in honor of the deceased, for many of the early contact sources speak of how much the Timucuans valued their own hair and that of their conquered enemies in the form of scalps.<sup>9</sup> (see figure 4.1)

At the end of the three days, the cacique was interred in the earth. His drinking cup, a shell vessel, was placed on top of the grave, and the grave itself was outlined with arrows sticking into the ground.<sup>10</sup> The shell vessel is significant as a symbol of the cacique’s leadership and masculinity; during council meetings (attended by men only) and before times of war, the cacique would drink the casina tea (black drink) from it.<sup>11</sup> Because of this association, the shell as the primary grave good interred with the cacique is also significant in its symbolism of the sacred/pure, which follows the cacique into death, the realm of the sacred/polluted, uniting the two worlds. The arrows were a reflection of the cacique’s prowess in war; after death, he still commanded the weapons of his followers, and was protected by their arrows. Although LeMoyne does not mention the type of grave in his text, the graves of caciques were likely mound structures, a tradition firmly associated with the precontact Timucua and their ancestors.<sup>12</sup> The graves

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<sup>7</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 327-328; Perdue, Cherokee Women, 34; and Pesantubbee, Choctaw Women, 152-153.

<sup>8</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 327.

<sup>9</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42; Francois Coreal, Relacion des Voyages de Francois Coreal aux Indes Occidentales, Contenant una Description exacte de ce qu’il y a vû de plus Remarquable Pendant son Séjour, depuis 1666. Jusques en 1697 (Bruxelles: Chez Francois Foppens, 1736), 6-7; Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 4,5, 8-9; and Lorant, New World, 65, 67.

<sup>10</sup> Lorant, New World, 115; Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 6-7.

<sup>11</sup> Charlevoix, Journal d’un Voyage, 221-222; Lorant, New World, 93.

<sup>12</sup> For more on moundbuilders in Florida, see Jerald T. Milanich, Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), esp. 173-185, 215-220,235-242,343-347, 368-370, and 401-412.

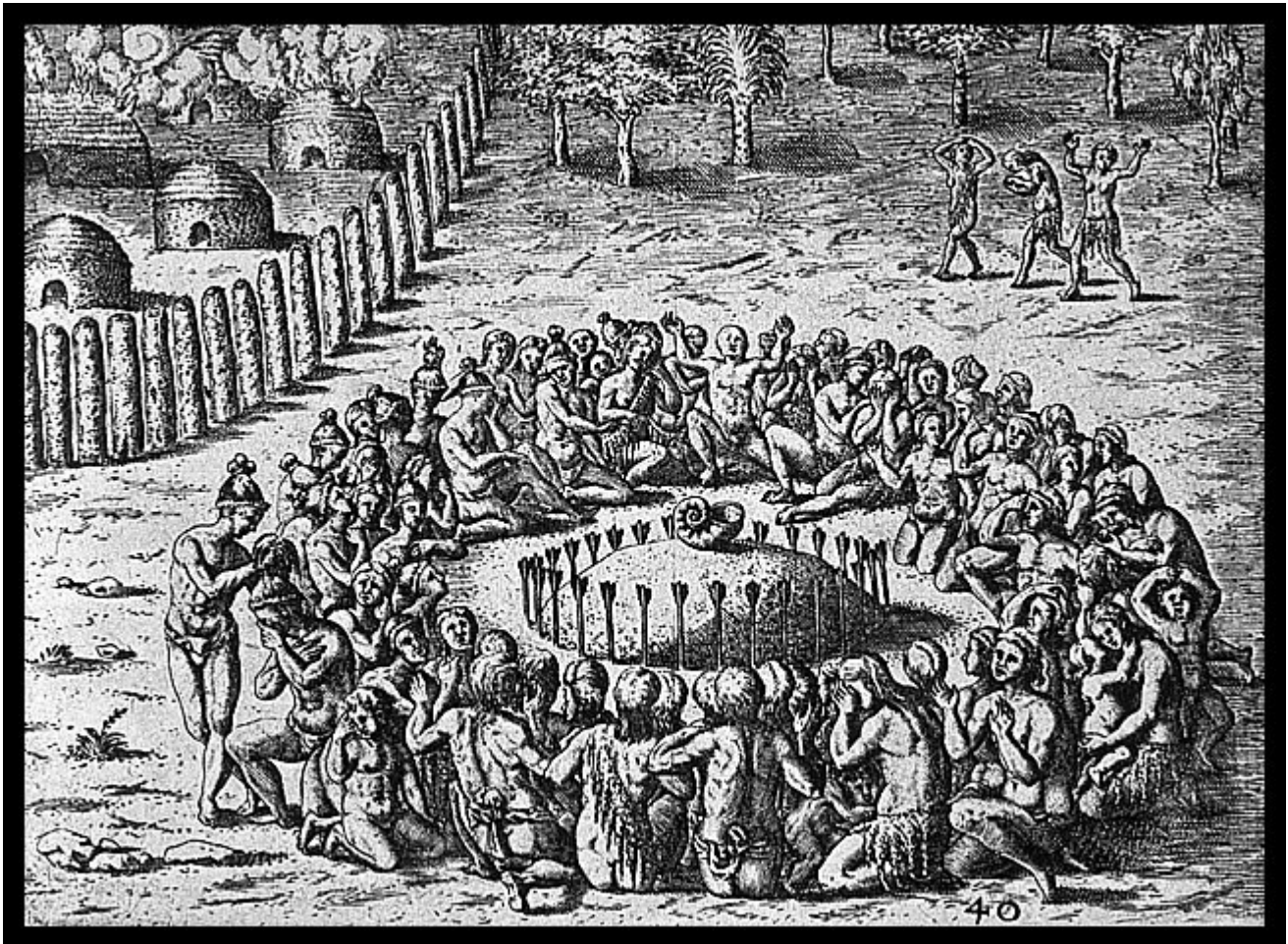


Figure 4.1 Burial Ceremonies for a Chief or Priest

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 115.

of caciques were described as “separate from the rest and on the highest hills distanced from the settlement.”<sup>13</sup> After the burial of the cacique, his belongings were placed in his house, which was burned to the ground. Selected women ritually mourned the cacique three times a day- at morning, noon, and night- for six months after his death.<sup>14</sup>

The selection of women as official mourners is not unusual. Women played a significant role in mortuary rituals for both the Timucua and throughout the Southeast. Women, as the individuals who carried on the lineages, were the obvious choice to represent the clans in death rituals. Moreover, their connections to fertility through both their reproductive abilities and through their agricultural activities firmly associated their activities with the Under World, the land of death and life.<sup>15</sup> In the case of the Timucuan women who publicly mourned the dead cacique, their cries served as a daily reminder of the obeisance of the clans that they represented to the ruling White Deer clan. This not only reaffirmed societal ties, but also served to bolster support of the newly appointed cacique, also a member of the White Deer clan.

Shamans also received special treatment in burial. After death, the shaman’s body was buried inside his house. The house, containing all of the shaman’s belongings, was then burned.<sup>16</sup> Like caciques, shamans were sent to the afterlife with the entirety of their goods and possessions, consumed and purified by fire. In both cases, the purification of all the goods of the individual by fire could indicate that for these high status individuals, their goods followed them into the realm of death.

Common burial was very different from chiefly funerary rites. After death, the individual was placed in a charnel house until the flesh was consumed. The bones were then purified by fire and placed in a small leather trunk. These trunks were placed on raised platforms and maintained in tombs or little houses (*casillas*) in a separate locale from the village. Relatives visited the bones every day to “feed” the bones, offering them a small amount of whatever the family ate.<sup>17</sup> The presence of a multiplicity of *casillas* probably indicates that each clan maintained its own funerary house. Just as members of each lineage would be responsible for feeding the bones of the deceased, the most logical means of separating the dead into different houses would be into clans, one of the most important social markers of Native American society.

A variety of different mourning practices marked the death of an individual. Crops from the deceased’s fields were not eaten by members of the lineage (and possibly all clan members), but were instead given away to other members of the community. Relatives cut their hair in mourning, and abstained from eating fish during their bereavement.<sup>18</sup> Female relations mourned their dead by publicly crying for a period of 30

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<sup>13</sup> Jesus, “1630 Memorial,” 99.

<sup>14</sup> Laudonnière, *L’Historie notable*, 6-7; Lorant, *New World*, 115.

<sup>15</sup> Among the Choctaw, the association of women with corn made their connections to fertility especially potent; corn was the one plant that had connections to the Upper World, the Under World, and This World. Pesantubbe, *Choctaw Women*, 152.

<sup>16</sup> Laudonnière, *L’Historie notable*, 6-7; Lorant, *New World*, 115.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus, “1630 Memorial,” 99.

<sup>18</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 126, 127.

days. Men cried in silence, although unlike women their bereavement was given no specified period of time. In some provinces, all the blood relatives of the deceased cut their upper arms and thighs with sharp flints and shed blood for the dead.<sup>19</sup>

Each of these rites holds cosmological significance and a connection to the sacred/polluted. Giving away the crops of the dead and abstaining from eating fish were both linked to an observance of the Under World or sacred/polluted because of their associations with fertility.<sup>20</sup> Again, the mourning activities of women are marked as more significant than that of the men, probably because of their own associations with fertility and because of their position as the physical embodiment of the lineage. Finally, the blood of the lineage was shed; blood was one of the primary symbols associated with the sacred/polluted.

After the death of her husband, a widow appeared before the cacique, hiding her face in her hands and squatting on her heels in sorrowful posture. She asked him to provide for her during her widowhood and to allow her to remarry at the end of the mourning period. If a husband was killed in war, the widow begged the cacique to avenge his death. After the cacique heard and agreed to the requests, the widow returned home, where she publicly cried and lamented for a period of days to show her love for her husband. Finally, the widow cut her hair, which she scattered on the grave of her husband. She also placed her husband's drinking cup and weapons on the grave. A widow's period of mourning was ended when her hair had grown long enough to cover her shoulders.<sup>21</sup> The French marked these rituals performed by Timucuan widows as special and different, largely because of the importance that they assigned husbands due to French gender biases. However, the practices have much in common with other death rituals; women mourned publicly, cut their hair, and assigned symbols of masculinity as the primary grave goods.

Although each type of burial was very different, on the whole, the rituals had key similarities. Overall, the interaction of the community with death was divided into two phases: the immediate period after death, when the deceased was commemorated in absentia while the body was kept away from the populace, and the period after purification of the body by fire, when the lineages and/or community was able to interact with the dead. The period immediately after death was associated with the sacred/polluted, and symbols of the Under World dominated the death rites. Blood sacrifice was offered to the dead; symbols of fertility were avoided, and women (themselves agents of fertility) mourned publicly. After a set period of time, the dead individual (and in the case of high status individuals, his goods as well) was purified by fire, an agent of the sacred/pure, marking a transformation from polluted, dead body to sacred/pure ancestor.

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<sup>19</sup> Jesus, "1630 Memorial," 99.

<sup>20</sup> As previously discussed in chapter 2, fish were linked again and again to fertility in Timucuan cosmology, probably as a result of their association with the Under World as products of water.

<sup>21</sup> LeMoynes's description and illustrations of a grave as an interred body probably represents a regional variation from the charnel house burial described by Fray Alonso de Jesus. Lorant, *New World*, 73, 75.

Both LeMoyne and Laudonnière noted the presence of a group of people within the Timucuan community that prepared the dead for burial.<sup>22</sup> This group, who the Frenchmen referred to as “hermaphrodites,” is known today as Two Spirit people, or a third gender.<sup>23</sup> After the death of an individual, the Two Spirits took charge of the body of the deceased, taking it to the burying ground (or charnel house), where the body was prepared for burial. It is likely that the Two Spirits were also responsible for this phase of the death rituals, including the de-fleshing and purification of the body.

LeMoyne notes that the Two Spirits bound the bodies of the dead with skins around the torso, the thigh, and the lower leg. Another skin was sometimes placed under the head of the deceased. LeMoyne does not speculate as to the significance of the bindings, but does note that bodies were bound differently depending on the circumstance.<sup>24</sup> These bindings could represent anything from clan affiliation to the cause of death for the individual.

The separation of the body from the general populace until the time of its purification, the involvement of a special group of people in preparations associated with death, the subsequent sacrifices to the dead through the cutting of hair, the shedding of blood, and the feeding of bones, as well as the prevalence of death rituals among all rituals of the life cycle all indicated that Timucuan observed ancestor worship as a part of their belief system. Death was a transformative process that ritually changed an individual from a member of the community to one of the ancestors, a being that was much more closely connected to the sacred than his earthly relations. The sequestering of the body immediately after death protected the general community from its polluting influence. For the Timucua the power of death was linked to the sacred. The public and private observances of commemorating the dead, including the feeding of the bones and the mourning of caciques, could be viewed as the dead being appealed to as intercessors to the sacred. By venerating and caring for the ancestors through sacrifice, Timucuan sought to protect and enhance their lives in this world. This cycle of transformation was observed among other Southeastern peoples; primary burial was observed to allow the flesh to decompose and the pollution of death to degrade. After this period, the final interment was observed, at which time the soul was admitted to the land of the dead and the mourners were re-incorporated into the community.<sup>25</sup>

### **Death and the Timucuan Kinship System**

The marking of death as a vital transformation and the most important life cycle event for the Timucuan is best shown in the Timucuan kinship system, which incorporates death into its very structure. Socially, kinship formed the most significant

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<sup>22</sup> Laudonnière, *L’Historie notable*, 8-9; Lorant, *New World*, 69.

<sup>23</sup> The role of Two Sprits in the Timucuan community will be examined at length in a later chapter.

<sup>24</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 69.

<sup>25</sup> Pesantubbee, *Choctaw Women*, 153-154.

terms of relationships for the Timucua. Fray Francisco Pareja's 1612 catechism outlines Timucuan terms of kinship, and serves as the main source of our knowledge of how the Timucua determined familial relationships.<sup>26</sup> In general, Timucians followed matrilineal kinship system; that is, familial relationships were recognized through the maternal line, and less (or no) importance was assigned to paternal relations. The preeminence of maternal relations was recognized in the kinship terminology; for example, sisters called both their own and each other's children *ulena*, "my own child."<sup>27</sup>

The Timucuan kinship system, however, contains many unusual and aberrant patterns first noted by linguist Albert Gatschet, who listed terms but did little in the way of analyzing them. Relationships within the Timucuan kinship system were structured by death, and the terms by which Timucians related themselves to the deceased (now ancestors) changed after death. For example, after the death of a person's (ego's) mother, he stopped speaking of her as "mother," (*isa*) but instead referred to her by a term that Gatschet translates as "she who was my breast" or "she that gave me milk." Additionally, the death of a relation often changed the terms by which ego addressed other relations. Again using the death of ego's mother as the example, ego would stop addressing both his father and his maternal uncle(s) by their kinship terms (*itina* and *nebaye*, respectively), and refer to them both thereafter as *itora*, "grandfather."<sup>28</sup>

In both cases, a death in the family transformed the relationships within the kinship unit, making the relationships between living and dead more distant and formalized. When ego abandons the use of the term "mother" in favor of "she that gave me milk," he recognizes that the human relationship between himself and the woman he called mother is forever changed, replaced with a new relationship with an ancestor that once nourished and raised him in the same way that she now protects and nourishes his relationship with the sacred. Although a modern understanding of "she who gave me milk" might be construed as a pejorative term, the phrase in actuality sums up one of the most important performative aspects of femaleness: nursing a child. Another reason for changing the terms of relationship with the living could reflect the older family members approaching death themselves; thus "father" and "uncle" become members of a symbolic older generation, closer to becoming ancestors.

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 illustrate the ways in which the death of family members altered the kinship terms by which Timucians referred to one another. As can be observed, this restructuring of kinship terms was employed only upon the death of a near relation; that is, someone within the nuclear family. Because the Timucians were a matrilineal society, this included maternal uncles and aunts. Terms of kinship altered by death included ego's mother, father, maternal uncle, husband or wife, and brothers. If ego

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<sup>26</sup> Francisco Pareja, Catecismo en Lengua Castellana y Timucua. El el qual se contiene lo que se les puede enseñar a los adultos que an de ser bautizados. Compuesto por el P. F. Francisco Pareja, Religioso de la Orden de Seraphico P.S. Francisco, Guardian del Convento de la Purissima Conception de Nuestra Señora de S. Augustin, y Padre de la Custodia de Santa Elena de Florida (Mexico: Impreta de la Viuda de Pedro Ballo por C. Adriano Cesar, 1612), 22-52.

<sup>27</sup> Albert S. Gatschet, "The Timucua Language," Proceedures of the American Philosophical Society 101 (1878): 495-497.

<sup>28</sup> Gatschet, "Timucua Language," 493-494; Pareja, Catecismo en Lengua Castellana y Timucua, 22-52.

Legend:

- =Ego
- = Female
- △ =Male
- (with dots) = Changed kinship term referring to deceased individual
- (with dots) = Changed kinship term because of death of a close relative- kinship relation of deceased relative to ego listed under figure
- (with diagonal lines) = Kinship term is changed in cases of both individual's death or because of death of a close relative- kinship relation of deceased relative to ego listed under figure

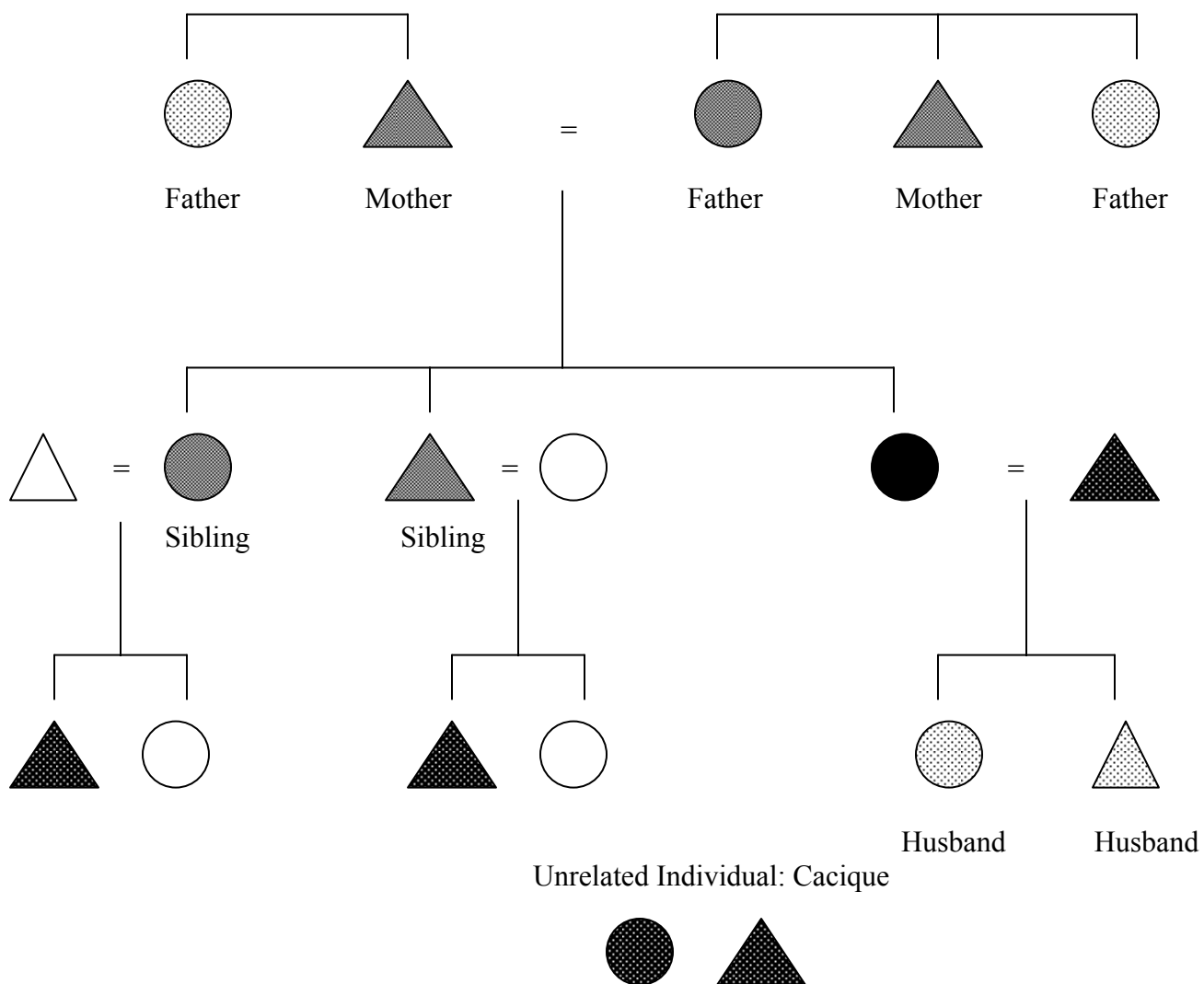


Figure 4.2 How death structures the Timucuan kinship system from ego female point of view



Legend:

- ▲ =Ego
- = Female
- △ =Male
- = Changed kinship term referring to deceased individual
- ◐ = Changed kinship term because of death of a close relative- kinship relation of deceased relative to ego listed under figure
- ◑ = Kinship term is changed in cases of both individual's death or because of death of a close relative- kinship relation of deceased relative to ego listed under figure

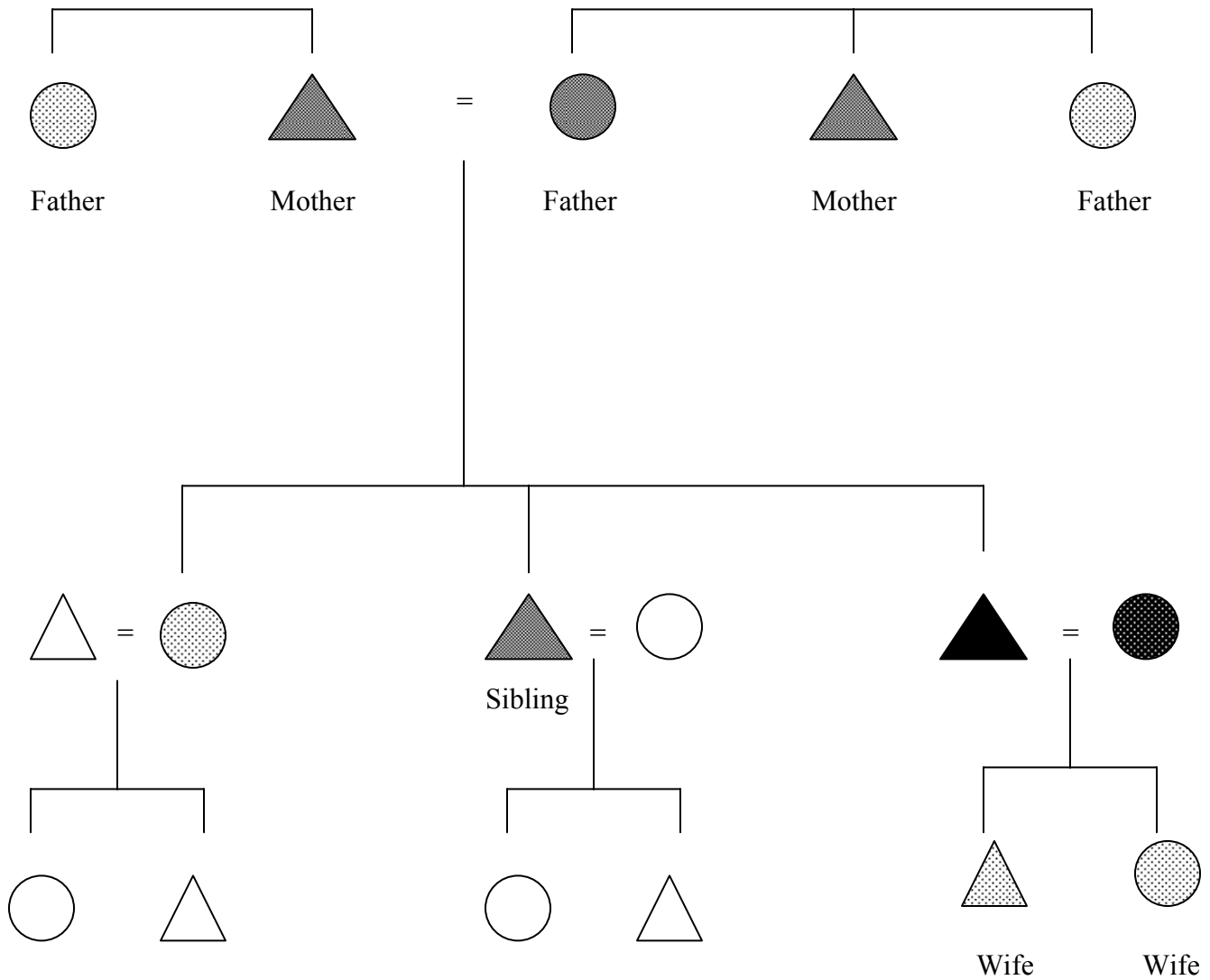


Figure 4.3 How death structures the Timucuan kinship system from ego male point of view

cacique (*aymanino neletema*). Men did not use this term to refer to the deceased cacique.<sup>29</sup>

The terminology used to describe the relationship between living individuals was also affected by death of a near relation. The death of mother, father, spouse, or siblings resulted in changing terms for living parental/child unit, including the way in which sibling addressed one another and both maternal and paternal aunts, also part of the extended nuclear family unit. There is one exception to the confinement of this changing terminology to immediate family; Timucuan society in general used different terms to distinguish mothers and fathers of living children from mothers and fathers of deceased children.<sup>30</sup> This could reflect the special nature of the loss; although child mortality rates were high, the loss of a child was probably seen as especially traumatic. It transcended recognition by just the nuclear family to include the entire society, perhaps because the death of children was a threat to the well-being of the entire society, rather than the natural, transformative state that the death of older members of society represented. Overall, several patterns can be discerned from the changes in kinship terminology. The preeminence of women is observable from the greater number of relationships that are altered by death for women. This reflects the special relationship that women, as primary relations within the clans and lineages and as the primary mourners of the death rituals (and thus agents of fertility and thus the Under World) had with the ancestors. The primacy of women in the Timucuan association with death is reflected here again, this time in the relationship with the sacred/pure: the incorporation of ancestors within the living kinship system through these changing kinship terms. The changing of kinship terms is the culmination of the transformative process of death for the Timucua; with the changing of the term by which living members of the clan refer to the dead, she or he is recognized now as no longer of This World or of the sacred/polluted Under World, but is not associated with the Upper World, the sacred/pure.

### **Blood Sacrifice and the Sacred/Polluted**

Blood sacrifice formed one of the central portions of sacrifice to the deceased. Shedding blood functioned as symbol of the sacred/polluted, as well as an observance of mourning. Timucians also observed blood sacrifice in a variety of other ceremonies dedicated to the observance of the sacred including the shedding of blood during religious ritual, blood sacrifice associated with rituals of warfare, and human sacrifice to both living and dead caciques.

Timucians practiced self-sacrifice through bloodletting during the funerary rites of relations; they also spilled the blood of their relations during another ceremony, a feast dedicated to a deity called Toya. The purpose of this annual ceremony is unclear, but Laudonnière states that the Timucians “observe[d it] as strictly as the Sabbath.”<sup>31</sup> The

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<sup>29</sup> Gatschet, “Timucua Language,” 493-497; Pareja, *Catecismo en Lengua Castellana y Timucua*, 22-52.

<sup>30</sup> Gatschet, “Timucuan Language,” 493-494.

<sup>31</sup> Laudonnière, *L'Historie notable*, 16.

ceremony began with the men of the village gathered to observe three shamans dancing and singing. After this, the men of the village rushed into the woods and remained there for two days and nights. The women gathered in the square, “lamenting.” From time to time the women, seemingly roused to fury, rushed at their daughters and cut them on the arms with mussel shells. After this, the women filled their hands with the blood and flung it up into the air, calling “He Toya!” three times. Charlevoix relates that one of the Frenchmen who observed the ceremony was told that during the time in the woods, the shamans invoked the god Toya in hopes that he would appear to them.<sup>32</sup> It seems that in this instance, the shedding of the blood is meant to assist in summoning the deity, as he is invoked after the blood is shed and thrown into the air. The blood of children (in this case, daughters) is spilled in sacrifice. In this case, the sacred/polluted is signaled in two ways: through the blood itself and also through the targeting of young women and girls, the future fertility of the lineages. The power of spilled blood forms a powerful connection to the sacred/polluted, and the spilling of blood captures the attention of the god.

Other blood sacrifices observed included war offerings and observances. Blood sacrifice was observed both during and after battle in the form of taking and venerating war trophies. The scalps of enemies were highly esteemed by the Timucua as war trophies.<sup>33</sup> LeMoyne states that as soon as one of the enemies fell, he was dragged off of the battle field by a group of men, who built a fire, scalped the enemy, and smoked the scalp over the fire.<sup>34</sup> After the battle, Timucuan warriors cut off the arms and legs of fallen enemies, which were also smoked over the fire. These war trophies are carried home on the end of their spears.<sup>35</sup>

The returning warriors were greeted by the residents of the village in celebration of their victory. The scalps were presented to the old women of the society (probably the matriarchs of the clans), who led the procession to the ceremonial ground, dancing and singing praises to the sun. The victory of the warriors was attributed to the influence of the sun.<sup>36</sup> After arriving at the ceremonial grounds, the war trophies were attached to the tops of tall poles and offered to the sun. The men and women sat in a circle before the poles while the shaman, who stood in the center of the circle holding a small image, cursed the enemy, chanting in time to accompanying music of a drum and rattles.<sup>37</sup> (see figure 4.4)

By taking and venerating these war trophies, Timucuan were performing a rite of blood sacrifice that emphasized their prowess in war, their dominance over their enemy,

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<sup>32</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 49-50.

<sup>33</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42; Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 5.

<sup>34</sup> Lorant, New World, 65.

<sup>35</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42; Lorant, New World, 65.

<sup>36</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42; Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Lorant, New World, 67.



Figure 4.4 War Trophies and Ceremony after a Victory

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946, 67.

and their praise to the sun for a victorious battle. The spilled blood of the enemy is an offering to the sacred/polluted and the Under World, associated with the death. Perhaps this offering functioned to venerate the warrior ancestors who gave their own life in battle.

French chronicler Charlevoix also contends that Timucuan warriors also sought to take live captives, and states that captive men were immolated to the sun as an offering. Afterwards, he contends, their flesh was ritually consumed.<sup>38</sup> The ritual torture of male captives was a widespread practice in the Southeast; most often, captives were tied to a post or a wooden frame and cut, clubbed, and beaten.<sup>39</sup> However, no other source mentions cannibalism in connection with the Timucua. It is likely that Charlevoix, who had spent time in Canada among the Huron and Iroquois, conflated the rituals of these culturally and geographically diverse societies. Additionally, claims of cannibalism on the part of Europeans often have more to do with the exoticization of the “Other” than they do with actual events observed.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, Charlevoix describes an unusual war ceremony of blood sacrifice that was related to him by Laudonnière’s pilot Vasseur. Vasseur and his party were sent out to scout enemy territory on behalf of their commander and his ally, Satouira. Upon their return, a warrior asked the party if they had taken any scalps. When Vasseur answered in the negative, the man seized an arrow that had been sticking in the ground<sup>41</sup> and turning to a man sitting nearby, plunged the arrow into him. He then replaced the arrow into the ground and then seizing back up, struck the man again. During this time, the cacique muttered “Thimagoa, thimagoa” (the name of the enemy) in a soft and doleful tone. The wounded man was carried off by weeping men and women, then rubbed with a soft moss that had been warmed over a fire by the women. To Vasseur’s surprise, the man had not been wounded badly at all. It was then explained to him that whenever a war party came back without a scalp, the favorite child of the cacique had to be struck in order to “renew and impress more deeply on their minds the injuries received from them [the enemy], and to animate them [the warriors] more to vengeance.”<sup>42</sup> This display certainly could have had motivational purposes, but it also served a more ritualistic purpose. By shedding the blood of the cacique’s child, the warriors offered the blood of a living descendant of the sun, the god to whom they attribute their victories in war, to the sun god, represented by the cacique. Sacred blood was both spilled and offered, ensuring future victories against the enemy.

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<sup>38</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42.

<sup>39</sup> Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 255-256.

<sup>40</sup> Other early chroniclers conflated “evil traits” as well as different cultures; in his Crónica del Perú, for instance, Cieza del León links sodomy with cannibalism. See Trexler, Sex and Conquest, 148-149.

<sup>41</sup> Lorant, New World, 101. The Timucuan method of declaring war was to stick arrows with locks of hair attached to the ends into the ground along all the “public ways.” It is likely that the arrow seized by the warrior was one of these arrows.

<sup>42</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 65-66.

## Human Sacrifice

In some cases, blood sacrifice went beyond the mere spilling of blood; the death of the sacrificial victim was deemed necessary. The sources describe two different kinds of human sacrifice performed by the Timucua. In each case, children were sacrificed to the cacique.

In the first instance of human sacrifice, Fray Alonso de Jesus describes a variation of the chiefly mortuary rituals in which a number of children of the common clans were killed and buried along with the cacique during his funeral rites. For their sacrifice, the parents of the child were “held and esteemed as leading people from then on [and] enjoy their privileges.”<sup>43</sup> The importance of their sacrifice was manifested in their change in status. Although it is unclear what Fray Alonso refers to in his characterization of “leading people,” it is possible that the parents were adopted into the preeminent White Deer clan as a new relation of the deceased cacique. The “privileges” referred to by the friar would then include not only greater status, but an exemption from physical labor and inclusion in the *sabana* system, agricultural units that were worked by the common clans for caciques, shamans, and members of the White Deer clan.<sup>44</sup> Such was the importance of caciques that in some of the mission provinces, the servants of the cacique were sacrificed and interred with him as well.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to the death ritual, French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne described another ceremonial sacrifice of a child to a Timucuan chief. In this ceremony, a woman’s firstborn son is sacrificed to the living cacique.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, due to the lack of descriptive information about the sacrifice to the dead cacique, it is impossible to compare the performative aspects of both kinds of sacrifice. Nevertheless, some observations can be drawn from the information given. First, while the rite for the living cacique specifies that a firstborn be sacrificed, the rite for the dead cacique only specifies that a child be sacrificed. Whereas the French observer LeMoyne would look on and stress the importance of the sacrifice being a firstborn son, and thus the inheritor of the family’s goods, the carrier of the family name, and the most valued child, Timucuan would assign a different sort of value to the firstborn son. As a matrilineal society, Timucuan would value daughters, and particularly the firstborn daughter, as the inheritor

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<sup>43</sup> Jesus, “1630 Memorial,”99.

<sup>44</sup> For more information on the sabana system, see Amy Turner Bushnell, [Situado and Sabana: Spain’s Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida](#). Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History (Washington, D.C.: American Museum of Natural History, 1995); and John E. Worth, [The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida, Volume 1: Assimilation](#) (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> Letter of February 29, 1576, “Las Memorias de los Costumbres de los Yndios de la Florida,” WLC. Although filed in the collection under the date of February 29, 1576, Lowery notes that the original document bore no dates and the document’s author was unknown. The document bore a label attached by the archives with the date 1569. The document was found enclosed with a document relating to Pedro Menendez Marquez bearing the date February 29, 1576.

<sup>46</sup> Lorant, [New World](#), 103. This ceremony was described in chapter one as a kind of First Fruits rite.

of the family goods and as the continuation of the lineage into future generations. Sons were destined to marry into other clans and produce children that would enrich his wife's clan. Sons were valued instead for the labor that they undertook for the clan, for his work on the lineage's sabana, for his hunting skills, and for his prowess as a warrior, which reflected well on the clan. The sacrifice of a firstborn son, therefore, was not quite as dramatic as LeMoyne's European sensibilities would make it out to be. If the ritual demanded the sacrifice of the most valued child, undoubtedly the Timucua would have sacrificed the firstborn daughter.

Why, then, specify firstborn sons? Perhaps the ceremony was meant to ensure the well-being of the living cacique by offering a male child to enhance and reaffirm the virility of the leader. Moreover the cacique, as a member of the White Deer clan, derived his elevated status and authority from tracing his descent from the sun, the foremost deity of the Timucua.<sup>47</sup> The cacique served as a living representative of the god on earth. By offering a sacrifice to the living cacique, Timucua reaffirmed the relationship of the White Deer clan with the god and the social, political, and religious preeminence of the clan. Why a firstborn? Although LeMoyne does not specify the age of the child, the accompanying image (if it is to be believed) depicts an infant being offered in sacrifice. This offering of a firstborn is a powerful offering of fertility, a powerful force that the Timucua respected and venerated.

In examining both blood and human sacrifice among the Timucua, the blood (and lives) of children was demanded in specific circumstances that venerated the sacred/pure. Specifically, the human sacrifice of children was demanded in veneration of living and dead caciques, the blood of the child of the cacique was offered in war ceremonies, and the blood of the village's daughters was shed to invoke the god Toya. Each of these cases involves imploration or veneration of the gods (the sun, in the case of the children sacrificed to the cacique and in war ceremonies) and the sacred/pure. Perhaps the blood of children was deemed to be more powerful than that of adults, making child sacrifice appropriate and even necessary.

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Timucuan society was deeply observant of the connections between death, the spilling of blood, and the sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. Death marked the most important event of the Timucuan life cycle, and the rituals enacted after death represented the transformation of the individual from a profane member of the community and the lineage to a state of sacred/polluted, and finally to one of the sacred/pure ancestors. The process of death unites the three states of Timucuan cosmology: the Upper World, the Under World, and This World. Similarly, the rites and rituals associated with death paralleled this transformation that moved the individuals through the states of the cosmos, employing symbols of both the sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. The death and transformation of the individual was so central to the Timucua that the kinship

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<sup>47</sup> Pareja, Cathecismo en Lengua Castellana y Timucua, 51-52.

system was structured in a way that reflected the death of a family member and his or her transformation into a sacred/pure ancestor.

Sacrifices, and blood sacrifice in particular, marked these funerary rituals and linked the Timucians to the sacred/polluted and the sacred/pure. Blood sacrifice was enacted in a variety of situations: in veneration of the sun; in sacrifice to the sun's living representative on earth, the cacique; to assist in summoning a deity; and in thanksgiving for victory in warfare. Specifically, the blood of children and the blood of enemies were especially powerful and desirable.

Blood sacrifice formed only one means of interaction with the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted; the Timucians were also able to manipulate symbols of both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted in order to exact their will in This World: magic.



## CHAPTER 5

### MAGIC, OMENS AND BEWITCHMENT

Through the manipulation of symbols of the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted, Timucuan were able to overpower the ordinary course of events in This World: to make magic.<sup>1</sup> For the Timucua, magical activities fell under four main types of categories: bewitchment of individuals, love charms, war magic, and observations of omens. Accessibility to magic was governed by an individual's relationship to the sacred, and by his/her ability to interact with the purifying and polluting substances and ideas associated with magic. Shamans, unsurprisingly, dominated magical activities because of their close relationship to both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted. Beginning shamans received their training from a more experienced master shaman, although ultimately, they may have received their powers from the sun god.

Bewitchment spells were one of the kinds of magical activities dominated by shamans. These spells may have had several levels of severity. Although it is not certain what kinds of effects each bewitchment spell was supposed to produce, one type of spell was undertaken to bring about the death of another individual. This kind of bewitchment showed strong ties to the sacred/polluted, and may have functioned as a type of assault sorcery or "dark" magic.

Both shamans and women were able to perform love charms to entice or ensnare the object of their desire. Moreover, shamans could perform love charms for another individual, providing means of magical expression for Timucuan men in this arena. Timucuan women seem to have been unique among Southeastern cultures in their power to enact love charms. It is possible that this power can be traced to their close connection to the sacred/polluted through their fertility or to the sacred/pure through their bloodline and lineage.

Men played a much more limited role in magical activities than women. Although men were most closely associated with war magic, their role was observational rather than participatory. Shamans and chiefs dominated war magic. These ceremonies and rituals prominently featured the Earth elements: fire, air, earth, and water. By extension, then, war magic utilized symbols of the Upper World (fire, sky), This World (earth), and the Under World (water). In particular, war magic was closely connected to the cult of sun worship through the veneration of fire and sky.

Omens played an important role in the Timucuan world as portents of either good or bad future events. Omens were observed and applied universally and not just to shamans or other important individuals. Timucuan omens were influenced by Christianity and missionization, and in some cases show hybrid traits. Omens can be divided into two

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<sup>1</sup> Describing and recording activities that conflate the spiritual and material has long been a problem for anthropologists and historians alike. I employ the word "magic" in this chapter for lack of a better term. Although every study defines magic differently, here I adopt Robert Shanafelt's definition of magic: the alteration of "the ordinary course of nature by non-material, spiritual means... [magic is] a type of manipulation of ultra-natural forces to bring about desired results." Robert Shanafelt, "Magic, Miracle, and Marvels in Anthropology," *Ethnos* 69, no. 3 (September 2004); 336.

basic groups: those that are foretold by some twitching of the body and those that are foretold through the actions of an animal. In particular, birds were important harbingers of the future, possibly because of their relationship to the Upper World and the sacred, suggesting that they might have found their origin in the activities of the gods or the ancestors.

## Shamans

As the main force of magical activities in society, shamans served many roles for the Timucua, including acting as healers, diviners, and intercessors with the gods and the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted. They distinguished themselves from the rest of the society both physically and psychologically, by their dress and by the respect and even fear that they cultivated through their activities and their lifestyle. The English traveler William Roberts described shamans as “clothed in long robes, made of the skins of beasts, carry[ing] always a grave deportment, speak[ing] little, liv[ing] abstemiously, and tak[ing] every suitable precaution to preserve the influence they have gained over the minds of their countrymen.”<sup>2</sup> René Laudonnière claimed that shamans gained respect and influence “partly because they are such skillful magicians...[and] partly because by family descent they are ordained to make sacrifices.”<sup>3</sup> While the sources do not indicate whether shamans originated from a specific clan, many of the actions of shamans allude to membership in the White Deer Clan. Their elevated status and the practice of burning their body and house upon the death of the shaman (which resemble Timucuan chiefly death rituals) suggests that shamans, like chiefs and other leading men, were drawn from this important clan.<sup>4</sup>

Although a certain lineage or clan may have been traditionally associated with shamans, the evidence also suggests that talent or aptitude was likely just as important (if not more important) in selecting a shaman. Throughout the Southeast, shamans served long and arduous apprenticeships that trained them to fulfill their role in society. Among the Alabama, men and women trained to become shamans by paying for and then practicing one cure or ritual at a time until the training shaman endorsed an apprentice’s mastery of skills.<sup>5</sup> Repetition and practice under the supervision of a master shaman was also key to completing shamanic training among Muskogee speakers.<sup>6</sup> Like their

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<sup>2</sup> Roberts, Account of the First Discovery, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Taylor, “Field notes,” MS 4658, NAA. In the original field notes, Taylor’s informants use the term “doctor” rather than shaman to indicate the individual who is apprenticing and the master under whom he apprentices. For the sake of clarity and cohesiveness, I have chosen to employ the term “shaman.”

<sup>6</sup> Pamela Innes, “Medicine-Making Language Among the Muskogee: The Effects of Changing Attitudes,” in Linguistic Diversity in the South: Changing Codes, Practices, and Ideology, ed. Margaret Bender, Southern Anthropological Society Proceedings 37 (Athens: University of Georgia, Press, 2004), 90-103.

counterparts, Timucuan shamans trained under older master shamans.<sup>7</sup> The actual rituals of training for Timucuan shamans are not recorded; however, at the end of their training period, the “holiness” of the shamans was tested through a rite of fire.<sup>8</sup> Although the ritual is not described, the use of fire as a testing device is significant as a symbol of the sacred/pure. Fire represented one of the most potent purifying agents in the Southeast and in Timucuan culture.

The association of shamans with fire is present not only in the context of testing, but also in many shamanic rituals and magical acts and may indicate that they ultimately derived their power from the sun. For many cultures, the power that fire brought to rituals and observances was ultimately traced to sun worship. While dated in some aspects, J. W. Fewkes’ description still proves useful. He contended that, “as the sun is the source of heat, sun rites should be connected with those of fire...fundamentally sun and fire worship are considered phases of a reverence for life and a desire for production.”<sup>9</sup> In other words, sun worship was associated with rites of fertility and abundance, such as the Timucuan first fruits festivals. In Timucuan cosmology, sun worship linked both the sacred/pure (via the Upper World, realm of the sun) and the Under World (via fertility). By proving their holiness through surviving some sort of rite of fire, shamans demonstrated their ability to interact with the sacred and manipulate the ritually pure and polluted. Passing the test of fire may also have demonstrated the approval of the sun god. The idea that Timucuan shamans derived their power from the sun also would work in support of the White Deer clan’s politico-religious dominance over Timucuan society, supporting the clan leaders’ claims of ancestry from the sun and their claim to political and religious authority.

Shamans performed a variety of acts that were both magical and mundane. All involved linking the sacred (polluted and pure) and the profane realm of This World. Thus, shamans acted as one of the main forces of hierophany in This World; their actions, by connecting the three realms of the Timucuan cosmos, revealed the fixed point around which primordial chaos is ordered into a cosmos, or universe.<sup>10</sup> Timucuan shamans made marriages, prayed to the gods in a variety of ceremonies, healed individuals, and were able to alter the outcome of games through giving competitors special herbs that enhanced their performance.<sup>11</sup> Magical acts performed by the shamans fell into general categories such as the securing of a good food supply (blessing the maize fields, hunting magic, and blessing the corn in the storehouse), the manipulation of the physical environment (making rain, finding lost items), divination (especially predicting war), and

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<sup>7</sup> Coreal, Relacion des Voyages, 35.

<sup>8</sup> Alonso Gregorio de Escobedo, “La Florida,” ed. J. Riis Owre, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, 142.

<sup>9</sup> J. W. Fewkes, “Hopi Fire Worship,” Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1920), 600.

<sup>10</sup> Eliade, Sacred and the Profane, 2-3. Eliade defines hierophany as “an act of manifestation of the sacred.”

<sup>11</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 132,149, 150.

the manipulation of people (love charms and bewitchment).<sup>12</sup> Of all the kinds of magical activities performed by shamans within Timucuan culture, the most dangerous and serious appears to have been the bewitchment of other individuals.

### **Bewitchment**

The 1613 confessional speaks of several means by which a shaman could bewitch another person. The exact meaning of the term “bewitch” is unclear, although it suggests that the individual casting the spell would gain control of another’s actions and perhaps even his thoughts and emotions. Presumably, spells of bewitchment would be used to benefit the controlling person. There were three separate methods of bewitching individuals. Each of these methods involved the shaman in some way, either through two differing methods of direct involvement (the shaman casting the spell himself) or indirect involvement (the shaman giving the spell to another person). Shamans were the main force in this practice, and were ultimately in control of who became bewitched. Bewitchment, or causing death and /or harm to another individual, is a common form of witchcraft all over North America and the Southeast. Among the Creek and Alabama, for example, shamans could effect bewitchment-like magic. Anthropologist John Reed Swanton writes that Natives believed that shamans could “take the heart and the spirit out of living men and cause their death.”<sup>13</sup>

In the first instance of bewitchment described for the Timucua, the shaman eats an unspecified herb in order to gain the ability to bewitch.<sup>14</sup> This method of bewitchment warrants only brief mention in the sources; perhaps it was the most benign form of bewitchment and thus its relative absence from the historical record. As opposed to the other two methods of bewitchment, which could involve others in spell casting or in hiring the shaman to cast spells, this form of bewitchment seems to have been used solely for the shaman’s benefit. There is no mention in the confessional of the intended results of this form of bewitchment.

The second method of bewitchment involved casting a spell. In this variant, the shaman was able to give (or more likely, sell) the spell to another individual. Presumably, anyone could approach the shaman for a spell, as no sort of prohibitions against specific individuals working with a shaman are cited. After the shaman had given the bewitchment spell to a person, it appears that in some cases they in turn could pass the spell on to another individual for his use.<sup>15</sup> First, the shaman would cast a spell on the individual seeking the power to bewitch. After this, the person was then able to cast the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., fol. 132,149, 150.

<sup>13</sup> Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 632. Swanton referred to these individuals who used their powers in a negative way as “wizards;” again, I have chosen for the sake of clarity and cohesiveness to employ the term “shaman.”

<sup>14</sup>Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 149.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., fol. 150.

actual spell of bewitchment himself. In some cases, this kind of spell could fail; moreover, individuals were able to take some kind of antidote to prevent bewitchment. Presumably, one would also obtain the antidote from the shaman.<sup>16</sup> Selling bewitchment spells and their antidotes may have been a lucrative business for shamans.

Finally, there appears to be a third kind of bewitchment that could only be cast by a shaman. This type of spell appears to have been much more serious than the others, as Pareja notes that the spell's intended effect was the death of the bewitched individual. This form of bewitchment could also have dire consequences for the shaman; if the spell failed and the bewitched individual lived, the shaman himself would die. In order to effect this spell, the shaman somehow used or possibly ate the skin of a poisonous snake or of the black snake, black guano, and other herbs. During the time in which it took the spell to take effect, the shaman could not sleep with his wife, eat fish, or paint himself.<sup>17</sup> The observance of taboos by the shaman during the duration of this spell indicates that he existed in a state that was dangerous to himself and/or others; safety was ensured only through the careful control of his behavior. This form of bewitchment (and possibly all forms of bewitchment) was powerfully connected to the Under World through the symbols employed, taboos enacted, and the outcome of the spell. The use of snakeskin to enact the spell coupled with the avoidance of other agents of fertility connected to the Under World (sex and fish)<sup>18</sup> resulted in death for either the bewitched individual or the shaman himself. At the end of this transition between the employment of the sacred/polluted and the return to the profane, shamans reentered everyday existence through means of purification. In this case, after the death of the cursed individual, the shaman bathed to ritually cleanse himself, signaling an end to the dangerous state. After this purifying bath, the shaman could again resume the forbidden activities associated with the transitory state.<sup>19</sup>

Although the shaman was the only person who could enact this charm, he could undertake "a similar thing," perhaps another ceremony for causing the death of a bewitched individual, assumedly on the behalf of another person.<sup>20</sup> This spell may in fact be the same death-causing spell as the first, for Pareja refers to the shaman taking "water and moss and other things."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps Pareja sought to indicate that the shaman could enact this spell for his own benefit or another person could engage the shaman to perform this spell.

The shaman demanded an unspecified payment for these services of providing and performing bewitchment spells. Presumably, the price was great, for if the clients did

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., fol. 150.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., fol. 151.

<sup>18</sup> As previously discussed in chapter 2, analysis of food taboo suggests that like the Cherokee, the Timucua may have regarded fish as a symbol of fertility, barring it from the diet of those who were in transitive states, including menstruating and postpartum women.

<sup>19</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 150, 151.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., fol. 151. Pareja words this question very oddly, asking "*Y para hacer otra cosa semejante a esta, has ido a preguntar a otro y tomando agua y guano, y otras cosas hiciste este maleficio?*"

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., fol. 151.

not pay, the shaman could threaten to kill all of the individuals who requested this service. Additionally, the grave consequences for a failed spell in the case of the most serious kind of bewitchment would indicate a large payment of some kind.<sup>22</sup>

At least some Timucuan shamans possessed “dark” powers that were used to cause harm to others and/or were used for personal gain. Although this kind of assault sorcery has been characterized in the past as part of a “revenge cult,” acts such as bewitchment in fact form a vital part of the cosmological system. For instance, Neil Whitehead has shown that *kanaimà* of Guyana is part of the idea of an “active spiritual malignancy,” a primordial force that has structured the universe and formed the world.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, Whitehead contends that the practice of *kanaimà* has been influenced by colonization. He argues that *kanaimà* is linked to the violence of economic and political development, and that there is reason to suppose that a growth of *kanaimà* occurred in the era following colonialism because of the link between assault sorcery generally and the “conduct of warfare.” As colonial forces suppressed indigenous warfare, Whitehead reasons, and as population itself declined, practitioners of *kanaimà* were left unchecked physically and spiritually.<sup>24</sup> It is possible that in the face of missionization, Timucuan shamans (or even a subset of “dark shamans”) experienced a similar flourishing.

Bewitchment was not the only kind of “dark” magic attributed to Timucuan shamans; other magical acts intended to cause harm included causing illness or injury in the legs or feet, altering the outcome of races and other games, and the seduction of women.<sup>25</sup> Of all of these kinds of magic, the seduction of women functions as a part of a larger pattern of magical activities: love charms.

## Love Charms

Pareja’s confessional includes a number of questions dealing with love charms and enchantment, spells cast by an individual to make the object of their desire fall in love with them. Love charms took the form of spells, special baths, song, and manufactured items, such as specially perfumed skirts. Based on the questions in the confessional, it appears that both shamans and Timucuan women were able to enchant individuals that they desired.<sup>26</sup> There is no indication that men other than shamans possessed this power.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., fol. 151.

<sup>23</sup> Neil L. Whitehead, Dark Shamans: Kanaimà and the Poetics of Violent Death (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 52-53.

<sup>25</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 148, 149, 151, 152.

<sup>26</sup> Throughout the confessional, reference to love magic intimate that it is used on members of the opposite sex. Timucuan sexual practices, however, were not confined to opposite-sex desire. (See Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 211, 212, 213, 214,215.) Instead, the Spanish friars tried to force indigenous gender systems into binary models that they found intelligible. For a more detailed examination, see Ramón A. Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New

Shamans appear to have been particularly effective at enchanting others. In a section of questions addressed specifically to “sorcerers,” (shamans), Pareja asks, “Have you taken a woman from her house by singing your charms?”<sup>27</sup> This reference to “taking a woman from her [own] house” seems to indicate that the shaman was able to enchant any woman in the Timucuan society. The confessional continues by asking, “Have you put some herb in the mouth of some woman so that she will love you a lot?”<sup>28</sup> Again, the lack of specificity (some woman) implies that the power of the shaman in bewitching women in to loving him is unlimited. The social position, age, and or marital status of a woman did not seem to impede the power of a shaman to cast spells. Shamans, then, at least in the case of love potions, easily transcended the social boundaries closed to other members of society. This stands in contrast to the rest of the questions about love charms in the confessional directed at women, which indicates that women were limited in their powers of whom they could enchant. Shamans possessed this ability perhaps as a result of their own elevated stats as members of the preeminent clan compounded with their own powers.

The confessional does not indicate whether or not the shaman was able to make love charms or enchant people for other individuals. There are no questions directed to men about love charms in any part of the confessional; neither are there any questions directed to shamans about their involvement in other people’s love lives. Finally, the questions directed to women concerning their own form of love charms make no mention of shamans participating in the creation of potions or spells. It could be that shamans were able to use this power only for themselves or it could reflect Spanish gender norms in which men supposedly did not often resort to using charms. However, buying a love charm from a shaman is an extremely common practice in other cultures of the Southeast.<sup>29</sup> It is likely that this was also true of the Timucua. If love charms were limited to work only for the shaman, it would leave ordinary men without recourse. Although shamans might enjoy the power that love charms gave them over women on an individual basis, it seems far more likely that shamans would use the “business” of love charms to enhance both their wealth and their power.

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Mexico, 1500-1846 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); and Sigal, From Moon Goddesses to Virgins. Moreover, Europeans were not without their own kinds of love magic that operated outside of the binary oppositional system of gender: see, for example, Guido Ruggerio, “The Strange Death of Margarita Marcellini: *Male*, Signs, and the Everyday World of Pre-Modern Medicine,” The American Historical Review 106, no. 4 (October 2001): 1141-1158; and Martha Few, Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala, 1650-1750 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 151.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., fol. 151.

<sup>29</sup> Taylor, “Field Notes,” MS 4658, NAA.; Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna Gritts Kilpatrick, Muskogean Charm Songs Among the Oklahoma Cherokees, Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology 2, no. 3. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1967); and Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna Gritts Kilpatrick, Notebook of a Cherokee Shaman, Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology 2, no. 6 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1970).

Different kinds of love charms performed by the shamans produced different effects. Like other Southeastern cultures, Timucuan shamans possessed differing levels of enchantment. Manipulation of a woman's emotions, or causing her to love someone a lot, is a very standard kind of magic that is widely practiced throughout the Southeast. The Cherokee, Alabama, Choctaw, Koasati, Creek, and other Muskogee speakers all possessed this kind of magic and used it regularly.<sup>30</sup> For instance, Muskogee speakers had spells for divining the outcome of a love affair and for making a woman lovesick.<sup>31</sup> The Cherokee possessed songs and chants to destroy a rival in a love affair and to make a woman lonely, a condition that was described as "a state of ecstatic yearning, an otherworldly melancholia."<sup>32</sup>

A more serious kind of Southeastern love magic resembles the Timucuan shaman's ability to "take a woman out of her house by singing [his] charms."<sup>33</sup> In this version of a love charm, the object of the enchantment is not to alter a woman's emotions and to compel her to love a certain man, but instead to remove any obstacles that prevent a man from having sex with the woman upon whom he casts the spell. Almost universally, a shaman would perform this kind of spell for the benefit of another person. Among the Cherokee, there were two possible barriers that the spell would overcome: in some cases, the woman would sleepwalk out of her house to join the man; in other cases, it would cause the members of the woman's household to fall so deeply asleep that the man was able to enter the house and have sex with the sleeping woman. These soporific spells were considered to be a much greater danger than the more benign kind of love spells; use and even knowledge of the sleep-producing spells was held to be reprehensible by the average Cherokee. In the 1960s, anthropologists Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna Gritts Kilpatrick noted that the contemporary use of these spells was infrequent, little evidence of them existed in print.<sup>34</sup> The serious, "dark" nature of this type of love charm could be linked to greater patterns of "dark" magic in Timucuan culture, such as bewitchment. If this is so, it is likely that the same kinds of symbolism would be associated with this spell; that is, symbols that invoked the Under World, fertility, and the sacred/polluted. Possibly, this kind of spell could also have serious consequences for the shaman, as in the case of failed bewitchment.

Timucuan women were also able to use love charms and enchant individuals whom they desired, although with much less far-reaching implications than the love charms of the shamans. Women were also able to control the sexual behavior of their husbands through the use of these charms. Different actions were taken to charm their husbands and to charm other, unspecified individuals. When a Timucuan woman's

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<sup>30</sup> Taylor, "Field Notes," MS 4658, NAA; Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick. Notebook of a Cherokee Shaman; Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick. Muskogean Charm Songs, 33-35; and Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 635-636.

<sup>31</sup> Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick, Muskogee Charm Songs, 33-35.

<sup>32</sup> Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick, Notebook of a Cherokee Shaman, 98-100, 101.

<sup>33</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 151.

<sup>34</sup> Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick, Notebook of a Cherokee Shaman, 95-97.



husband left her, she bathed “with certain herbs” in order to facilitate his quick return. In the event that a woman suspected that her husband might leave her, she perfumed some *guano*<sup>35</sup> with incense, made a skirt from it, and wore it to ensure that her husband would not leave her.<sup>36</sup>

Guano could also be perfumed and worn as a skirt to attract potential mates. However, a woman was also required to fast in order to attract the attention of a man who was not her husband. At the end of the series of questions related to love charms and enchantment, Pareja asks of the female Timucuan penitents, “And thus did you with someone go on to the night, and in order to eat and drink, did you make the ceremony?”<sup>37</sup> It is uncertain what the friar is referring to when he speaks of “the ceremony.” It is possible that he is referring to sex, possibly because sex, like food and drink is related to gluttony and lust. There arises the possibility that to the Timucua, some kinds of sexual intimacy took place within a ritualized context in which the consumption of food and drink played crucial roles. Possibly Pareja is referring to a more lasting kind of bond, such as a codified marriage ceremony. However, it seems most likely that the ceremony he refers to is another, unspecified kind of love charm or enchantment.

Why, then, would Timucuan women have the power to enact love charms, and not men? Perhaps women were more closely linked to the sacred/polluted than men through their own fertility, giving them a limited kind of power over some kinds of magic. Other kinds of magic that yield control over other individuals (spells of bewitchment) employ symbols of the Under World and thus the sacred/polluted; perhaps love magic, as another kind of controlling magic, was also connected to the sacred/polluted. Certainly the sexual overtones of this kind of magic link it to fertility, an aspect of the Under World.

Timucuan women appear to be alone in their magical abilities in regards to love charms; no other source on the Southeast describes anyone other than shamans possessing the ability to make a love charm, although others could perform love charms obtained from a shaman. It is possible that women were able to perform this kind of magic because of their heightened connection to the sacred/polluted; conversely, women might have had greater access to the sacred/pure through their blood connections to the ancestors. Timucuan women certainly performed a special and heightened role in ritual sacrifice and interactions with the gods and the ancestors alike; perhaps this greater power (as compared to men) to interact with the sacred allowed them limited access to magical acts.

## War Magic

Although women were able to manipulate elements of the magical world through their own powers, men also had magical acts that were specifically associated with their

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<sup>35</sup> Guano refers to Spanish moss, which the Timucuan women fashioned into skirts. Hann, History of the Timucua Indians, 257, 289.

<sup>36</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 133.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., fol. 133.

gender: war magic. Men, however, participated in magical acts in a much more limited way than women; whereas women actually performed the magical acts themselves, men were for the most part observers of magic performed on their behalf. Like other kinds of magic, shamans were the chief power behind war magic.

Both Pareja's confessional and the account and illustrations of French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne indicate that the Timucua had a large number of rituals and magical ceremonies associated with warfare. Many of these practices seem to have been related to preparing for warfare and to the prediction of impending war. LeMoyne provides detailed descriptions of many of the war rituals witnessed by the French in the mid-1560s. Pareja's confessional mentions some of these same rites, confirming that they were still practiced in the mission environment 50 years after having been first witnessed by Europeans. Although the Franciscans tried to keep the mission Natives of Florida from going to war, there ultimately proved to be far too few Spaniards in the province to keep the Timucua and other missionized Natives from engaging in occasional warfare, including raids against other indigenous groups and rebellions against Spanish authority.

At the time of the publication of the confessional in 1613, the Timucua had only lived within the mission system for less than 20 years. These first years of missionization were fairly peaceful in the Timucua province proper. Guale, the province immediately to the north of Timucua, did rise against the mission system and the Spanish in 1597. Francisco Pareja himself may have had firsthand knowledge of some of the ceremonies of warfare in this province, as he was visiting the San Pedro mission on Cumberland Island when the rebellion erupted. It is also possible that there was a sizeable population of Timucua at this mission; a Timucuan Indian reportedly sounded the alarm before the impending attack on the mission.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps Pareja had even witnessed some of the Timucuan war ceremonies at this time.

The questions in Pareja's confessional all relate to ceremonies, omens, and rituals performed before the eruption of war. Clearly, the confessional intended to alert other friars as to what to look for in trying to stop an impending war, rebellion, or raid. Pareja mentions two omens associated with the prediction of impending war. Hearing the fire in the fireplace pop<sup>39</sup> and the sight of lightning were both thought to predict the outbreak of a war.<sup>40</sup> The everyday nature of both events suggests the frequency of war among the Timucua. But their mundane nature also argues for specific symbols and or signs associated with the omens that remained unknown to the friars. Likely decipherable only by trained shamans, reading war omens remained elusive to the friars. On the eve of warfare, shamans were called upon to make specific predictions about the upcoming war; shamanic training certainly would have included common predictors of war such as the aforementioned omens. The association of fire and impending warfare may be united in the association of each with the sun god. Perhaps the sun god served as the impetus behind the omen, sending the message through his associated vehicle of worship, fire.

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<sup>38</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja's Confessionario, 10.

<sup>39</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 125.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 131.

Prayers were offered to the sun both before and after battle, making it extremely likely that the sun was the principal deity associated with warfare.<sup>41</sup>

Shamans were also able to make more detailed and specific predictions about the unfolding and outcome of an impending war. The confessional does not mention how the shamans were able to accomplish this task, but only states that they were able to “look with the arts of the demon.”<sup>42</sup> Most likely, this refers to the shaman’s appeal to a certain god, possibly the sun god. LeMoyne furnishes a much more detailed description of the ritual. Laudonnière and his troops witnessed the event described by LeMoyne during a joint expedition of the Timucians and the French. A shaman was called forward to predict the outcome of the forthcoming battle. The shaman first borrowed a shield from a French lieutenant. He then laid it on the ground, drew a circle around it, and inscribed the circle with “various signs.”

Then, kneeling on it, he whispered some unintelligible words and made gestures as if he were engaged in animated conversation. After a quarter of an hour, his appearance became so frightful that he scarcely looked human; he twisted his limbs until the bones snapped out of place, and did many other unnatural things. Then suddenly he became calm. He stepped out of the circle, saluted the chief, and revealed to him the number of the enemy and the place where they were to fight.<sup>43</sup>

LeMoyne also provides an illustration of this event; the effect is truly grisly and unnatural (see figure 5.1).

The significance of the use of a French shield in the ritual is questionable; perhaps a Timucian shield would have been used in the absence of the French shield. But why should the shaman choose to use a French shield in the ritual? The choice might reflect a physical symbol of the Timucua/French alliance; choosing a French shield might be meant to signify the involvement of the French in the ritual, or perhaps serve as an appropriation of the French symbol to reinforce Timucian power. The choice might also be linked to the god or force that with which the shaman communicated. If the sun god was the deity who communicated with the shaman, the round shields might be a physical representation of the sun in the ritual. In this case, the shiny metal French shield would be a far better analog for a burning sun.

Milanich notes that Timucian shamans were able to take a certain herb allowing them to enter a trance-like state of possession. He further speculates that it was this ritual witnessed by Laudonnière and his troops during a joint expedition.<sup>44</sup> Although LeMoyne does not mention that the shaman took an herb before predicting the time and

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<sup>41</sup> Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description Generale*; Laudonnière, *L’Histoire notable*, 5; and Lorant, *New World*, 55, 67.

<sup>42</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 132. The confessional asks, “*Has mirado por arte del Demonio si viene guerra?*”

<sup>43</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 59.

<sup>44</sup> Milanich, *The Timucua*, 179.



Figure 5.1 Shamanic War Divination

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 59.

place of war, the twisting of the body and the “animated conversation” could reasonably be described as a state of possession or of an altered state of consciousness.

Sources including the confessional indicate that possession was possible within the Timucuan belief structure; the confessional asks, “Have you believed what some possessed person says?”<sup>45</sup> This question is directed to “commanding and lesser chiefs;” this question may refer to the shamanic ritual described above. Warriors prepared for war by bathing in the juice of an unknown herb. Pareja’s advice to the warriors in the confessional infers that the warriors believed that the herb would protect them from harm; the friar writes that “no matter how much you bathe or rub yourself with this herb, it will not prevent the arrow from harming you unless God guards you.”<sup>46</sup> Charlevoix mentions a similar practice, noting that the Timucuan

often bruised the leaves of a plant which the Spaniards called “beads of St. Helen” in order to extract a juice from them. They then “rub[bed] the whole body after bathing on the conviction that it strengthens the skin and gives a pleasant odor.”<sup>47</sup> Perhaps this and the herb used in preparation for warfare was one and the same plant. The belief that use of certain herbs could give a man enhanced physical prowess seems to have been common among the Timucua; Pareja also mentions that herbalists could make people run faster in games and races by giving them certain herbs. Other herbs could make the players faint.<sup>48</sup> The players themselves had access to these or other herbs that had similar effects.<sup>49</sup>

Although the confessional does not mention any other kind of magical events concerning war, LeMoyné describes several others. In one of the ceremonies performed before the outbreak of war, a certain cacique Satouira held a wooden bowl full of water up to the sun, praying for victory and that the blood of the enemy might pour like the water from the bowl. He then flung the water in to the air and said, “As I have done with this water, so I pray that you may do with the blood of your enemies.” Satouira then poured water from another wooden bowl over the fire and said, “So may you be able to extinguish your enemies and bring back their scalps.”<sup>50</sup> The cacique took a leading role in war magic, here leading a magical prayer. As a living representative of and relation to the sun god, the cacique had the power to attract the attention of the god and to secure his blessing for victory.

After the conclusion of the battle and the defeat of the enemy, the Timucuan assembled in a designated place. War trophies such as legs, arms, and scalps were carried by the old women (possibly the matriarchs of the clans) to the ceremonial area, who sang praises to the sun for the victory in battle. The war trophies were then attached

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<sup>45</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 207.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 132.

<sup>47</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 47-48.

<sup>48</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 148, 149.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 177.

<sup>50</sup> Lorant, New World, 55.

to the ends of tall poles and raised into the air as offerings to the sun. The men and women of the tribe assembled and sat in a circle in front of the poles. In the middle of the circle, a shaman holding a small image (possibly of a Timucuan god) cursed the enemy, "uttering a thousand imprecations in a low voice." Other men kept time with the shaman's curses with chanting and music.<sup>51</sup>

It is notable that all of the Timucuan ceremonies and rituals of warfare featured natural elements. Omens of war involved fire and lightning (air/sky and fire); warriors bathed with a herb (earth); Outina's prayer used metaphor involving both fire and water; the shaman inscribed symbols into the earth before entering a state of possession; and the war trophies were elevated to the sky on poles in worship of the sun god. Warfare was an extremely serious undertaking, and would require use of the most potent types of magic. Apparently, the Timucua, like many other indigenous groups of the Americas, thought that the most potent magic on Earth came from the basic elements: fire, water, air, and earth. Specifically, elements of worship involving fire and air might have been tied to the sun god, who was praised and worshipped in conjunction with warfare before and after battle. Moreover, the employment of all four of the elements symbolically invoked all three of the realms of the Timucuan cosmology: fire and sky (Upper World), earth (This World) and water (Under World). Thus, both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted were called upon to provide guidance and victory in warfare; both the realm of death and the realm of the sun god presided over war activities. Shamans, as the primary intercessors between the sacred and mankind, performed the bulk of the rituals and magical activities, including divination. Warriors participated in the ceremonies, but in a very limited and observatory role.

## Omens

Other methods of divination were much more inclusive of the Timucuan population as a whole. Omens were communicated to the Timucuan population via two main categories: "tremblings" of different parts of the body and the action of various animals. While it proves impossible to ascertain where the omens originated, it can be fairly certain that some aspect of the sacred had a hand in omens, whether the ultimate source be a god (as in the case of the sun god and war divination), the ancestors, or an unknown force that operated in the Timucuan cosmos. Unlike the active divination of shamans, omens were passively received. For this reason, any member of Timucuan society could receive omens. In some cases, omens seem to have applied to only a certain

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<sup>51</sup> Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description Generale*, 42-43; Lorant, *New World*, 67. Although there has been an ongoing debate about the veracity of European reports on acts of indigenous brutality (in particular, accusations of cannibalism), there is a long and well-documented history of taking war trophies among Southeastern peoples. Much of the brutality debate began in response to William Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). For examples of the debate over brutality and cannibalism in recent years, see H.E. Martel, "Hans Staden's Captive Soul: Identity, Imperialism, and Rumors of Cannibalism in Sixteenth-Century Brazil," *Journal of World History* 17, no. 1 (March 2006): 51-70; Donald W. Forsyth, "Three Cheers for Hans Staden: The Case for Brazilian Cannibalism," *Ethnohistory* 32, no. 1 (1985): 17-36; and Patricia Seed, *American Pentimento: The Invention of Indians and the Pursuit of Riches* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 112.

group of people. For example, certain omens applied only to hunters or to those engaged in agricultural activities.<sup>52</sup>

The two types of omens- those related to trembling of the body and those indicated by animal activity- are distinctly different in the sort of messages that they convey. In the main, an omen referring to the trembling of the body indicated an action that was specifically linked to the part of the body affected by the quivering. For example, trembling of the eyes indicated that a situation that causes crying would soon happen. Trembling of the mouth could indicate several things, including people gossiping, a future abundance of food, or an imminent bad event.<sup>53</sup> Actions could also work in conjunction, one affecting the other to create a hybrid omen that reflected actions associated with each specific portent. In one case, trembling while a blue jay sang signaled that people were coming or that something important was about to happen.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps the combination of omens signified a particularly portentous event.

Omens involving the actions of animals were by far the most common predictor future events. All types of animals were objects of these Timucuan beliefs; wild and domestic, beast and fowl, and precolonial and colonial animals are all mentioned in the confessional as being involved in some sort of prediction of the future or portent. For the most part, all of the omens involving animals are negative in tone and predict future evil or unpleasant physiologic happenings, such as nosebleeds.

Of all animals represented in the corpus of fauna who signal omens, owls are the most numerous and important. This is unsurprising as owls were an important symbol within the Timucuan culture. Indeed, one entire group of the Timucua may have referred to themselves as Hororo or Jororo, “people of the owl.” This is made more certain by the large owl totem that was recovered from the St. Johns River in Jororo territory.<sup>55</sup> The Timucuan had at least two different words for owls. The first, *hitiquiry*, comes from the root *hiti-*, which means demon or evil spirit.<sup>56</sup> Linguist Julian Granberry gives the full etymology of the word: *hiti*, demon or evil spirit, and *qi*, meaning wish.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the owl is a demon spirit that wishes evil upon others. Another Timucuan word for owl, *hororo*, has already been mentioned in conjunction with the Hororo people. The root of the word, *horo-*, does not seem to have the same connotations of evil as *hitiquiry*. Instead, the root means together, joined, or without.<sup>58</sup> The differentiation between the two terms may indicate that the Timucua saw owls as a powerful force for both good and evil. This ambivalence is reflected in the different kinds of omens associated with owls. This

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<sup>52</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 129, 130.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 125.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 124.

<sup>55</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 118-119.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>57</sup> Julian Granberry, A Grammar and Dictionary of the Timucuan Language (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 136.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

reverence for owls is echoed in other Southeastern cultures. Creek shamans carried owl skins as a symbol of their vocation.<sup>59</sup> Owls were associated with omens for the Texas Alabama as well. The hoot owl informed shamans of impending death or evil acts.<sup>60</sup>

Given their dual nature of good and bad among the Timucuan omens and their general importance within the culture, owls appear in confessional questions more than any other animal.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, several different types of owls are distinguished. This is very different from all other omens in the confessional, as Pareja does not distinguish separate species of any other animal. It is possible that the Timucuan distinguished between different kinds of owls, and believed that some kinds of owls were benevolent, while others brought harm. This differentiation would not have been unique to the Timucua; in modern Guatemala *tecolotes* (tree owls) are considered benign while *lechuzas* (ground owls) are seen as evil portents.<sup>62</sup> Since Spaniards make no such differentiation the practice likely had precolonial roots. Pareja may have recognized the importance of the owl as a symbol to the Timucuan and thus paid special attention to omens associated with them in the confessional.

Hearing the song of an owl or barn owl (el *buho* o *lechuza*) was said to be “a prognostication and omen of evil” for anyone who heard it.<sup>63</sup> If a person scared an owl or a little owl (buho o mochuelo)<sup>64</sup> while it was hooting, “something terrible” would happen to him.<sup>65</sup> In these two instances, owls follow the general pattern of Timucuan animal omens, predicting evil and inauspicious events. The third omen associated with owls provided the only example in the confessional of a good omen. Pareja asks, “When the owl hoots, do you believe that it will have pity on you?”<sup>66</sup> Perhaps “have pity on you” meant that an owl would not inflict harm on the listener. In some cases, the owl might even protect the listener from evil in general or help the listener in other, more personally significant ways. Interestingly, this last question is directed only to “those who dig and sow.”<sup>67</sup> The owl likely had some special significance especially to the agriculturalists of Timucuan society. It is almost certain that all Timucuan engaged in some agricultural activities during different cycles of the season (males clearing the land, females planting and tending to the crops); thus, it seems possible that hearing the owl hoot would be an omen of evil for all, unless a person was engaged in some sort of agricultural activity at

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<sup>59</sup> Swanton, Early History of the Creek, 252.

<sup>60</sup> Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 496.

<sup>61</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 125, 129.

<sup>62</sup> Personal communication, Robinson Herrera, June 2002.

<sup>63</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 125.

<sup>64</sup> Milanich and Sturtevant, Pareja's Confessional, 26. Moran translates mochuelo as “red owl.”

<sup>65</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 129.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 129.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 129.



the time that the owl hooted. This idea, that owls did not portend evil to those working the land hints at the protective powers of the earth for those directly involved in agriculture.

Although owls are the most numerous single animal mentioned in association with omens, birds in general dominate faunal omens as symbols or messengers. Specifically, owls, blue jays, woodpeckers, and “other birds” are mentioned in as animals significant to omens.<sup>68</sup> Why would birds be so significant among Timucuan omens? Perhaps birds, as animals of the Upper World, were in closer proximity to the gods, ancestors, or sacred/pure. This coupled with their ability to travel quickly could make them favored messengers of the gods. Throughout the Southeast, birds including owls and woodpeckers are often associated with omens and divination for these very reasons, and are commonly represented omens of unfortunate events, including death.<sup>69</sup> James Adair, for instance, describes Southeastern Indians as “intimidated at the voice of a small uncommon bird, when it perched and chirped on a tree over their war camp.”<sup>70</sup> Moreover, in some cultures, owls are associated with witchcraft; witches could take the form of owls and fly around at night.<sup>71</sup>

Inevitably, as a result of interaction, European ideas seem to have influenced Timucuan conceptions of certain animals. Goats, a European introduction to the Americas, were included in the Timucuan lexicon of omens. When a hunter heard a little kid (*cabritillo*) baa, he immediately had to take a magical herb in his nostrils lest they crack (start a nosebleed). After taking the herb, the hunter had to return to his house to bathe and purify himself with the same herb. If he did not do this immediately, he would die.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, scaring a calling woodpecker while farming would cause a nosebleed.<sup>73</sup> In both cases, the omen seems to be reliant on certain kinds of actions; that is, scaring a singing woodpecker would not cause a nosebleed while undertaking fishing instead of farming.

It is interesting to note that goats were integrated into the Timucuan belief system in such a way that they caused the same types of problems as precontact animals. Goats as an evil omen provide a clear example of how the Timucuan were able to incorporate a European belief along with the European animal into a Timucuan context.<sup>74</sup> The goat

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<sup>68</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 124, 125, 129.

<sup>69</sup> James Adair, The History of the American Indians; particularly those adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia: containing an account of their origin, language, manners...With a new map of the country referred to in the history (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1775), 131, 173, 194; Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 496.

<sup>70</sup> Adair, History of the American Indians, 26.

<sup>71</sup> Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 632.

<sup>72</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 130. Unfortunately the name of the herb remains unknown.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 129.

<sup>74</sup> This incorporation of European ideas about witchcraft into the indigenous beliefs system was a common and widespread phenomenon. For a discussion of the “Christianization” of Native shamanism and witchcraft and an excellent case study of evolving indigenous witchcraft in Mexico, see William and

was known in Europe (and especially in the Iberian world) as an animal that had strong connections to witchcraft, Satanism, and the Devil himself. Goats also figured prominently in artists' illustrations of satanic rituals and witch's Sabbaths. In some cases, the Devil himself appears as a goat. In other cases, a witch is portrayed riding a flying goat to the Sabbath festivities.<sup>75</sup> Goat's blood was also known to be powerfully magical, and was often used by Spanish *brujas* and *hechiceras*.<sup>76</sup> The Timucuan goat omen is especially significant because it seems to be particularly potent. Most omens mentioned in the confessional seem to predict a general notion of impending evil events or bad luck; minor bodily injury (such as the aforementioned nosebleed) was also very common. Notably, the goat omen is the only one in the confessional that augured death. Accordingly, it was the only omen that required a ritual of purification (bathing with an herb) to be carried out as a protective measure for the affected individual. Like other situations requiring purifying actions, this omen seems to indicate that for some reason, the hunter has been placed in some sort of state that presents a danger to both body and soul, requiring an act of purification to release the individual from the state. Perhaps the emphasis given to the goat omen is a result its relatively recent incorporation into the Timucuan lexicon of omens and predictions. As well, the fact that Spaniards held goats in such a negative light likely impacted the perception of the Timucuan.

Christian notions influenced even one of the most sweeping Timucuan omens, the concept of snakes as harbingers of evil. The Timucua came to see the presence of any snake in a road, field, or house as sign of impending doom.<sup>77</sup> Snakes, of course, have been long associated with the Devil in the Judeo-Christian context. The indigenous peoples of the Americas also often viewed snakes as formidable animals and symbols. For example, the snake functions as a key symbol in the Mexica origin myth. Later, this pre-existing Mexica interest with snakes as a symbol combined with Christian ideas about snakes, enhancing the symbolic power of serpents. As a result, the use of snakes as a symbol in Nahuatl language, art, and drama took on additional meaning, becoming a deeper and more complex image.<sup>78</sup> This could also be the case for the Timucua. Snakes, a common and sometimes dangerous animal in Florida, had a place in precolonial Timucuan belief structures. In his epic poem "La Florida," Fray Alonso Gregorio Escobedo describes snake worship at Nombre de Dios, Florida's oldest mission, saying that the snake was the goddess that the people adored. Although Escobedo describes the snake as a goddess, he infers that snakes were nevertheless as much feared as

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Claudia Madsen, "Mexico: Tecospa and Tepepan," in Witchcraft and Sorcery of the American Native Peoples, ed. Deward E. Walker, Jr. (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1989).

<sup>75</sup> Gustav Henningsen, The Witches' Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1980), 77, 91.

<sup>76</sup> Rafael Gracia Boix, Brujas y Hechiceras de Andalucía (Cordoba: Real Academia de Ciencias, Bellas Letras y Nobles Artes de Cordoba, 1991), 347.

<sup>77</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 125.

<sup>78</sup> Louise Burkhart, The Slippery Earth: Nahuatl-Christian Moral Dialogue in Sixteenth-Century Mexico (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), 43, 63, 172.

reverenced.<sup>79</sup> It is likely that this goddess was associated with the sacred/polluted and the Under World, as her symbol (the snake) was.

Among the Creek and other Muskogee speakers, snakes were considered to be especially powerful animals that had to be treated with care. There was a taboo against killing snakes, lest the snake take revenge against a family member. This careful treatment of snakes even extended to avoiding telling stories about snakes in order not to speak about them.<sup>80</sup> With the advent of missionization, the snake as a symbol took on additional meaning and complexity. If snakes were already considered to be dangerous or ominous beasts, Christian snake imagery would have certainly enhanced the snake's fearful reputation among the Timucua. The snake as a precolonial representation of evil also fits well into the generally negative tone of Timucuan omens. This omen may have further Christian overtones, however. The image of the snake represented evil when placed in the context of the human world (and of the mission): the road, the field, and the house. This image of the snake in proximity to humans as opposed to the wild is very reminiscent of the serpent in the Garden of Eden; it suggests an active seeking out or interaction with humans on the part of the snake as the serpent sought out Eve.

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Magical acts among the Timucua fell under four main types of categories: bewitchment of individuals, love charms, war magic, and observations of omens. Although the general population had access to magic of some types, such as omens and love charms, either directly or by proxy through a shaman, accessibility to magic was governed by an individual's relationship to the sacred, and by his/her ability to interact with the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted, and thus the Upper and Under Worlds. Shamans, unsurprisingly, dominated all magical activities because of this. Moreover, shamans may have received their powers from the sun god.

Bewitchment seems to have been a relatively common event among the Timucua, and may have had several levels of severity. Shamans could perform several different types of bewitchment, and could also empower others to bewitch. Although it is not certain what kinds of effects the average bewitchment spell was supposed to produce, one type of spell was undertaken to bring about the death of another individual. This kind of bewitchment showed strong ties to the sacred/polluted, and may have functioned as a type of assault sorcery or "dark" magic.

Women and shamans were able to perform love charms to entice individuals whom they desired. It seems that whereas women were limited in who they were able to charm, the shamans were able to charm any woman. Love charms seem to have been very common among the Timucua, and may have been a popular means of attracting a mate for women. Timucuan women seem to have been unique among Southeastern cultures in their power to enact love charms. Perhaps this power can be traced to their

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<sup>79</sup> Escobedo, "La Florida," 311.

<sup>80</sup> Swanton, Creek Religion and Medicine, 490.

close connection to the sacred/polluted through their fertility or to the sacred/pure through their bloodline and lineage.

Warfare ranked as a key concern of the Timucua. The confessional indicates that there were many rituals and ceremonies involving predicting war and preparing for its outbreak which persisted through at least the first twenty years of missionization. Shamans and chiefs played key roles in these ceremonies and rituals that prominently featured the Earth elements, fire, air, earth, and water. By extension, then, war magic utilized symbols of both the Upper and Under Worlds. In particular, war magic was closely connected to the cult of sun worship through the veneration of fire and sky.

Omens played an important role in the Timucuan world as portents of either good or bad future events. Since questions regarding omens are directed to the entire Timucuan mission society, it may be presumed that omens were observed and applied universally and not just to shamans or other important individuals. Yet despite the universal applicability of omens, certain signs applied only to agriculturalists and hunters, or to individuals engaged in these tasks. Timucuan omens were influenced by Christianity and missionization, and in some cases show hybrid traits. Omens can be divided into two basic groups: those that are foretold by some twitching of the body and those that are foretold through the actions of an animal. In particular, birds were important harbingers of the future, possibly because of their relationship to the Upper World and the sacred. This suggests that omens might have found their origin in the activities of the gods or the ancestors.

Overall, Timucuan magical rites show strong ties to the sun cult. Shamans may have received their power from connections with the sun god; war magic venerated the sun; many harbingers of omens, including fire, lightning, and birds were linked to the sun and the sky world over which he had domain. This trend reinforces what other scholars have concluded about Timucuan religious beliefs: that the sun god was the primary deity worshipped by the Timucuan. Conversely, some types of magic (particularly bewitchment and the seduction of women through love charms) were more closely tied to the sacred/polluted, suggesting that they fell under the domain of the Under World, the realm of both death and fertility.

In comparison to other confessionals from throughout the Spanish colonies, it appears that Pareja's confessional gives greater weight to matters of magic. Both the de Alva's confessional of Mexico and the Señan confessional of California make no mention of any kind of spells, charms, or omens. Furthermore, unlike the Pareja confessional, there are no special sets of questions meant for shamans in those texts. This may indicate that shamans held a position of greater authority and prominence in the Timucuan society than comparable figures in other cultures represented by the confessionals.

Perhaps shamans were given so much attention in the Pareja text because the confessional was written during the early days of missionization in Florida. In 1613, at the time the confessional was published, the Franciscans had only been active in the Timucuan province since the late 1580s. Thus, the friars would have had relatively little time to attempt to undermine the influence of the shamans in Timucuan society. This would also explain why shamans warranted such little attention in the other documents, for they were written at a period in time in which the missions were much more firmly established in their respective areas.

It seems exceedingly likely that as the friars of the missions became more and more knowledgeable about the cultures in which they worked, they began to refine their questions. It is possible that the deeper knowledge of native rituals and beliefs possessed by the later friars resulted in more sophisticated questions centered on belief structures, rather than instances of “witchcraft.” For example, the de Alva confessional for Mexico devotes much of the questions in the First Commandment to the role of the “turquoise children,” small idols representing the ancestors that were thought to bring prosperity and wealth to the household.<sup>81</sup> De Alva begins this series of questions by asking, “Have you thought and believed to be very true some superstition or sect of those that your elders the ancients said?”<sup>82</sup> This rather offhand remark about precolonial beliefs may in fact be a reference to many of the things that Pareja thought he must categorize and spell out in detail for the friars of the Timucuan province, especially since they would have lacked experience in recognizing how native Timucuan belief structures functioned.

As skillful and trained manipulators of both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted, shamans were high status individuals in Timucuan society. Two Spirits, or third gender individuals, held an important place in the culture for similar reasons. The next chapter examines gender constructs among the Timucua, including the role of the Two Spirits, men and women.

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<sup>81</sup> Bartolomé de Alva, A Guide to Confession Large and Small in the Mexican Language, 1634 ed. Barry D. Sell and John Frederick Schwaller with Lu Ann Hozma (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 74.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-79.

## CHAPTER 6

### GENDER ROLES AND ASSOCIATIONS

In a 1630 memorial to the Crown, Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesus wrote that the Timucuan “...are all of an excellent state of health and corpulent, the men commonly bigger than the women, and of great strength...As the land is cold, they are born white. But as they go about naked, although with their private parts covered, [and are] tanned with the sun, wind and cold, they lose their white color and become swarthy.”<sup>1</sup> Like many contact-era descriptions of Natives, the early French and Spanish sources describe the appearance of the Timucuan in some detail, stressing their handsomeness, robust physicality, and health.<sup>2</sup> Timucuan men, the Florida sources record, wore deerskin breechclouts and were often elaborately tattooed on their bodies, arms and thighs.<sup>3</sup> Women wore their hair free and long, and clothed themselves in skirts of Spanish moss.<sup>4</sup> In a 1542 *visita*,<sup>5</sup> Bishop of Cuba Juan de las Cabezas Altimirano noted the briefness of their clothing, saying that the women wore “only a little grass for honesty.”<sup>6</sup>

These sources fed the appetite of the European readers, hungry for details about what the Natives of the Americas looked like, what they wore and ate, and how they behaved. The sources included descriptions of the kinds of labor performed by men and women, their everyday activities, and their role in religious ritual. Although the sources lack a Timucuan voice on the roles of men and women within society, analysis of the gendered actions of Timucuan men and women in labor and ritual allow for a relational, gendered study of the “social quality of distinctions based on sex” in Timucuan society.<sup>7</sup> European descriptions of labor and religious ritual provide little information about how Timucuan men and women viewed and acted towards one another, but furnish much information on the how men and women are expected to interact with both the world around them and the sacred.

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<sup>1</sup> Jesus, “1630 Memorial,” 93.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Pagden, The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 2-6.

<sup>3</sup> Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Charles E. Bennett, Laudonnière & Fort Caroline: History and Documents (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), 67.

<sup>5</sup> In this case, a *visita* refers to a formal inspection of the province.

<sup>6</sup> Fray Juan de las Cabezas Altimirano to the King, 1606, Florida History Miscellaneous Manuscript collection, Box 86, Folio 1, PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

<sup>7</sup> Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” The American Historical Review 91, no. 5 (December 1986): 1054.

However, gender analysis must go beyond a study that is “based on sex,” especially in a Native American context. As Judith Butler contends, gender is not an essential category, but rather is “incoherent,” an “identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts,” a performative category simultaneously deprived of and given agency. Under this performative system people are raised to function within the actions/symbols of their respective genders; simultaneously, the individual must consent to do so, and has the choice or compulsion to enact another gender category altogether.<sup>8</sup> Timucuan men and women performed acts that defined their role within their cosmological system; moreover, these actions were crucial in keeping Timucuan society’s place within the world safe and secure. The genders in effect constituted cosmological categories of persons. Beyond this, however, Timucuan society recognized another category of gender: a third gender or Two Spirit people, who had their own set of performative acts and symbols that defined their role in Timucuan society and cosmology.

Timucuan men, as socio-political actors in society, engaged in actions that regulated Timucuan relationships within This World and the profane. In fulfilling these duties, men interacted with allies, enemies, and the animal world in activities associated with politics, warfare, and hunting. Women, on the other hand, had a socio-religious function, and formed a link to the ancestors and the sacred/pure, and thus interacted with the Upper World. Women enacted this role in sacrifice, mourning, and feeding activities. Two Spirits, as half-man/half-woman (or not man/not woman) embodied the categories of both men and women while simultaneously creating a new cosmological category. Moreover, Two Spirits interacted with both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted in their gendered labor, and functioned as intercessors to both the Upper and Under Worlds. Two Spirits were active in activities associated with bearing of sacred/pure loads (including the First Fruits and black drink), healing, and death rites.

### **Timucuan Men and This World**

Given their premodern context, hunting, warfare, and political activities dominated the labor duties of Timucuan men. Each of these duties focused on the connection between the Timucua and This World. Timucuan men regulated the relationships between their society and allies, enemies, and animals.

The focus of male life in Timucuan society revolved around the council house, the primary signifier of the masculine realm of This World. All men were welcome in the village council house, although their status dictated the extent of their involvement in political affairs, and thus their status as a member of society. The cacique functioned as head of the political order. Like the cacique, his advisors, called *principales* by the

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<sup>8</sup> Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” in *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, ed. Sue-Ellen Case (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 270-272. For more information on performative gender, see also Butler’s *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), esp. 171-190.

Spanish, also inherited their chiefly offices from their lineage or clan.<sup>9</sup> The cacique/principales structure, derived from Spanish experiences in the Caribbean and Mexico, informed the Spaniards' understanding of Timucuan political activity.<sup>10</sup> Decisions of state were made within the confines of the council house, and assemblies were also held there.<sup>11</sup> LeMoyné writes that on "certain days of the year," a formal council meeting was held. The cacique and other elite men met early in the morning to discuss the concerns and affairs of the village, including issues related to alliances within the chiefdom. At the start of the meeting, the principales, led by the oldest member and proceeding in order of age, approached and saluted the cacique. After the formal salute, the cacique heard the advice of the shamans and of the principales. Casina (black drink) was served on these occasions.<sup>12</sup> These meetings formed the basis of Timucuan political life. Actions carried out within the council house structured how Timucuan men related to one another through the enactment a political hierarchy.

Although the business of governing the village did not occur on a daily basis, the men of the village spent much of their time in the council house. Men performed everyday tasks such as the making of bows and arrows and dressing deerskins within the council house, and took their one meal a day there in the company of other men.<sup>13</sup> Men carried out these activities within set spaces in the council house that reflected their relative status within society. The cacique sat above all on a raised platform in the center of the council house. Principales also held preferred seats close to the cacique. Men of other clans spent their time in niches that ringed the outside of the circular structure, described as "painted cabins or compartments."<sup>14</sup> By carrying out commonplace activities associated with masculinity in the council house, not only did men enact their status as a function of political life, they lived it on an everyday basis within the council house.

Women were not allowed into the council house, with few exceptions. On certain occasions, women entered the council house to dance for a ritual or assembly. In other cases, women entered the council house to prepare the casina tea. Black drink was only prepared within the confines of the council house.<sup>15</sup> The casina was distributed to the

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<sup>9</sup> John Hann, "Leadership Nomenclature Among Spanish Florida Natives and its Linguistic and Associational Implications," in Perspectives on the Southeast: Linguistics, Archaeology, and Ethnohistory, ed. Patricia B. Kwachka, Southern Anthropological Society Proceedings 27 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994); 101.

<sup>10</sup> James Lockhart and Stuart Schwartz, Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 39-40, 51-52.

<sup>11</sup> Gonzalo Méndez de Canzo to the King, September 22, 1602, Jeanette Thurber Connor Collection, reel 2, Library of Congress (hereafter JTCC).

<sup>12</sup> Charlevoix, Histoire et Description Generale, 42; Lorant, New World, 93.

<sup>13</sup> Jesus, "1630 Memorial," 94-95.

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Dickinson, Jonathan Dickinson's Journal, or God's Protecting Providence: Being the Narrative of a Journey from Port Royal in Jamaica to Philadelphia between August 23, 1696 to April 1, 1697, ed. Evangeline Walker Andrews and Charles McLean Andrews (Stuart, FL: Florida Classics Library, 1981), 65-67.

<sup>15</sup> Méndez de Canzo to the King, September 22, 1602, JTCC; Jesus, "1630 Memorial," 95.



men and to the households by the beneficence of the cacique.<sup>16</sup> In both of these cases, women entered the council house (the domain of men) only in order to perform essentially female actions: dancing and preparing food. Moreover, women entered the political domain of the council house to perform religious functions: to dance during religious festivals and to prepare the black drink, associated with the sacred/pure and thus a socio-religious substance. An exception to the limitation of women performing a religious function within the domain of men was made when a woman served as head of government (*cacica*), and this happened when there was no suitable male heir from the White Deer clan. In this case, the *cacica* sat in the seat of honor, and her women remained separate from the men. One of the most notable cases was Doña Maria of Mission Nombre de Dios, located just outside of St. Augustine, who enjoyed a close relationship with the Spanish and was commended to the Crown by the Franciscans.<sup>17</sup>

The council house served as a kind of “men’s house,” the center of the masculine world. From this area, men regulated the affairs of state and forged and maintained the alliances of the chiefdom. Visitors to the village were housed in the council house, putting them under the domain of the men of the village as a part of their control of the affairs of This World, the primary purpose of males in the Timucuan society.<sup>18</sup> Making war on enemies also fell within the masculine regulation of earthly relationships.

Warfare functioned as an extension of the political realm of men. Regulation of the relationships between the Timucuans and allies took place in the council house and assemblies; the relationship between Timucuans and their enemies were resolved on the battlefield. Warfare kept the members of society physically safe and maintained order in This World. Moreover, the regulation of both allies and enemies interacted on the battlefield, as when cacique Saturiba assembled his allies, including the French, to go to war against his enemy Potanu.<sup>19</sup>

Men regulated the relationships with other human groups; they were also responsible for maintaining the relationship between humans and animals. As the hunters of the society, they interacted with the animal kingdom, a complex task requiring many rituals and observation of omens and signs. Hunting, setting new fish traps, and the processing of the animals taken all required ritual preparations.

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<sup>16</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 90.

<sup>17</sup> Manuel Serrano y Sanz, Historical Documents of Florida and Louisiana: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries (Madrid: General Library of Victoriano Suárez, 1913), 181; Altimirano, Letter to the King, 1606; Cartas y Expedientes de Gobernadores de Florida Vistos en el Consejo desde año 1568 a 1611, WLC, Container 6, Library of Congress; Governor Mendez de Canzo to the King, February 23, 1598, San Agustin, WLC, Container 5, Library of Congress.

<sup>18</sup> Andrés García, “Autos from the Chamber of Justice made Official by the Adjutant Andrés García, Lieutenant of the Province of Timucua against Santiago, Native of the Village of San Pedro, Year of 1695, Santa Elena de Machava and Elsewhere in Timucua Province, February 19 to September 23, 1695,” SC, PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida. Also found as “Visitations and Revolts in Florida, 1656-1695,” trans. John H. Hann, Florida Archaeology 7 (1993); 276-296.

<sup>19</sup> Laudonnière, L’Historie notable, 5; Lorant The New World, 59,61, 63.

The 1613 confessional lists thirteen different instances of special rituals and omens related to hunting. Many of these were rituals enacted to ensure a successful future hunt. For instance, after a new fish trap was set, prayers were said over it so that many fish would enter it. The first fish to swim into the trap was set free in order to attract other, better fish. The first catch from the new trap could not be cooked in hot water, else no more fish would be caught. Instead, the catch was prayed over and then barbecued.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, the liver and lung of deer were to be cooked in boiling water so that the hunter would be able to shoot other deer in the future. Once cooked, hunters had to be careful not to spill the broth of deer or of “wild chicken” spilling the broth would cause the hunter’s snare or arrow to miss other animals.<sup>21</sup>

The confessional also refers to one other ritual involving the proper treatment and processing of kills: Pareja asks the hunters, “Have you said not to throw out the bones of what was hunted, otherwise more will not enter the trap; [instead], hang them by the ankles or put them in the thatching of the house?”<sup>22</sup> Although Pareja notes this practice associating houses and animal remains, no instance of large animal bones within Timucuan houses remains in the archaeological record. Instead, animal bones are routinely found in middens, or trash pits.<sup>23</sup> However, many sites do show patterning of animal remains, including the distribution of deer meat among households, apportioning the better portions of meat (especially deer) to high status houses, and the processing of fish in certain areas of the site.<sup>24</sup> The disposal of large amounts of animal remains in middens could indicate that at periodic times, houses were “cleaned out” and the remains of a season thrown out; alternatively, perhaps these rituals were only observed during the time of the First Fruits, which would be spiritually charged, rendering the treatment of animals even more important than at other times of the year.<sup>25</sup> Another possibility is that the remains were not kept in individual houses at all, but in the council house. Given that the men’s activities in the council house included the dressing of deerskin, it would make sense that the ritual processing and preserving of kills would be observed in this masculine environment.

Each of these rituals associated with hunting and processing the kills focuses around the proper veneration and treatment of the animal; showing it the proper respect so that the hunter (and Timucuan society) would maintain a successful relationship with other animals of its kind. Through the proper maintenance of the relationship between

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<sup>20</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 125, 129.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., fol. 130. “Wild chicken” (*gallina del campo*) probably refers to pheasant or quail.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., fol. 130.

<sup>23</sup> Lewis H. Larson, Aboriginal Subsistence Technology on the Southeastern Coastal Plain during the Late Prehistoric Period (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1980), 224-226; Loucks, “Political and Economic Interactions,” 324; and James Donald Merritt, “Excavations of a Coastal Eastern Timucua Village in Northeast Florida” (MA thesis, Florida State University, 1977), 101-105.

<sup>24</sup> Larson, Aboriginal Subsistence, 224; Loucks, “Political and Economic Interactions,” 324; Merritt, “Excavations of a Coastal Eastern Timucua Village,” 101-105.

<sup>25</sup> For more information on the Timucuan celebrations of the First Fruits, see chapter 1.

humans and animals, men ensured the future health and well-being of Timucuan society within This World.

### **Timucuan Women and the Upper and Under Worlds**

Men provided the means and possessed the power of regulating the affairs of This World; conversely, women acted as intercessors to the sacred/pure and the Upper World, maintaining the relationship between the lineages and the ancestors, mankind and the gods. Women were connected to the sacred/pure through ritual foods and feeding activities, mourning, and sacrifice. Women, as signifiers of fertility, also were associated with the sacred/polluted and the Under World.

Timucuan women were strongly associated with fruits and with gathering activities in everyday life and also in the ritual gathering and offering of sacred foods. Women were responsible for the collection of the gathered First Fruits; it was also women who gave the fruits to the Two Spirits for transport to the storehouse.<sup>26</sup> During the marriage ceremonies of a cacique, women carried baskets of fruits in the procession that brought the new wife to the marriage ceremony.<sup>27</sup> In both of these instances, Timucuan women symbolically “fed” the population as an extension of their quotidian gendered labor. In these cases, however, the fruits presented are important for their sacred/pure nature (in the case of the First Fruits) and for their symbolic association with fertility and prosperity and thus the Under World (in the case of the marriage ceremony). In each of these cases, the feeding activities of the women were intended to establish a connection to the sacred/pure. In the First Fruits ceremonies, the First Fruits are ultimately dedicated to the sun; in the case of the marriage ceremony, although the fruits represent fertility, which is associated with the sacred/polluted and the Under World, they functioned to gain the blessings of the gods. Perhaps the god(s) who regulated marriage was also associated with the Under World and fertility.

The most important feeding activity that linked women and the sacred was the veneration of the ancestors. After the death of a loved one, the body was ritually defleshed and purified, then placed in a small leather trunk in a little house away from the rest of the village. Every day, the bones would be visited and offered small bits of the food that the family was eating.<sup>28</sup> Although it remains unclear who fed the ancestors daily, it was almost certainly the women of the society who performed this ritual. After all, women prepared the food on a daily basis. Moreover, because Timucians traced their lineages through women, women were the living links to the ancestors. In particular the clan matriarchs, head of the lineage, were closest to the ancestors in terms of familial ties and also closest to the ancestors in terms of age and proximity to death themselves. In

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<sup>26</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 81.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 109. Little is known about the marriage ceremonies of Timucians other than caciques; it is possible that the bearing of fruits, a symbol of fertility and prosperity, to the marriage ceremony was practiced in all marriage celebrations.

<sup>28</sup> Jesus, “1630 Memorial,” 99.

other words, as succeeding generations aged and subsequently died, the female elders of the lineage would take over the feeding of the ancestors, the most recent of whom they knew in life. Through the daily feeding of the ancestors, women maintained one aspect of the relationship between the sacred/pure Upper World and Timucuan society.

Timucuan women were closely connected to death in other ways as well. Women were the chief mourners; they publicly and vocally mourned the deceased as a daily reminder of the passing of one of the society from profane human of This World to sacred/pure ancestor of the Upper World. In the case of the passing of a cacique, a group of women publicly wailed three times a day: at morning, noon and night for a period of six months.<sup>29</sup> Upon the death of relations, both sexes mourned; however, women again mourned publicly, this time for a period of thirty days. Men mourned silently for an unspecified period of time.<sup>30</sup> In each of these cases, women acted as the voice of the community and commemorated the passing of a member of the society from life to death, profane to sacred. The mourning activity of the women represents part of the transition for the deceased; it is in part through the mourning of the women that the deceased passed to sacred/pure ancestor.

Timucuan women took a leading role in sacrificial offerings. After warfare, it was the old women, probably the clan matriarchs, who took the war trophies and scalps from the warriors and led the procession to the ceremonial grounds, singing praises to the sun.<sup>31</sup> Although men took the scalps in warfare, the matriarchs were the ones who offered them in sacrifice on behalf of their lineage, acting as intercessors between the gods and the people, and in particular the ancestors from their own families.

Women also participated in blood sacrifice in crucial ways that linked the living to the sacred/pure and sacred/polluted. The most dramatic of these instances occurred in the form of child sacrifice. In a ritual that LeMoyne refers to as the sacrifice of firstborn children, a Timucuan woman offers the life of her firstborn son to the cacique. While she squats with face covered in a posture of sorrow, a female friend or relation sings the praises of the chief, surrounded by a circle of dancing women.<sup>32</sup> Most likely, this sacrifice was offered as much to the sun deity as to the cacique, who claimed ancestry from the sun.

In certain provinces, children were sacrificed at the death rites of a cacique so that they could be buried with him. Fray Francisco Alonso de Jesus wrote that after offering their child for sacrifice, the child's parents were "held and esteemed as leading people from then on [and] enjoy their privileges."<sup>33</sup> The friar notes that both of the parents receive the benefit of increased status, most likely adoption into the White Deer clan. This is troublesome, however, for if both parents were adopted into the clan, their

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<sup>29</sup> Laudonnière, *L'Historie notable*, 6-7; Lorant, *New World*, 115.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus, "1630 Memorial," 99.

<sup>31</sup> Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description Generale*, 42; Laudonnière, *L'Historie notable*, 5; Lorant, *New World*, 67.

<sup>32</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 103.

<sup>33</sup> Jesus, "1630 Memorial," 99.

marriage would be rendered incestuous. For a variety of reasons it seems more likely that the child's mother offered the child in sacrifice. First, there is no mention of the father's role in the sacrifice of the firstborn described by LeMoyne; why, then would the father participate in one ritual and not the other? In considering the reliability of the two sources, LeMoyne witnessed one of these ceremonies during his stay in Florida; Fray Jesus, on the other hand, wrote his account based on his knowledge of the region.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the child being offered in sacrifice comes from the clan of the mother, not of the father; the biological father of the child is in actuality of relatively little importance in the child's life. If two "parents" offered the child in sacrifice during a cacique's death rituals, it was much more likely to be the mother and her brother, the primary male figure in the child's life. However, in either instance, the mother would be the primary figure in the sacrifice, and the primary intercessor between Timucuan and the sacred/polluted (as an offering of blood and symbolic fertility in the persona of a child) and the sacred/pure (as the sacrifice venerates the cacique, descendant of the sun).

At the ceremony called Toya, women participated in the summoning of the deity Toya by shedding the blood of their daughters. While the men and the shamans stayed in the woods for two days awaiting the appearance of the god, the women remained in the town plaza, chanting. At certain times, women would rush at their daughters, cutting them with mussel shells and gathering blood in their hands. They then threw the blood into the air, calling "Hey, Toya!" During this time, the shamans in the woods were invoking the god as well, awaiting his or her apparition. It is the symbolic power of the blood of the female, and thus the blood of the lineage and the Timucuan as a whole, that was a key to summoning the attention of the god. It is interesting to note the differences in the nature of the sacrifice; male children were apparently favored for sacrifice to the living cacique, yet it is specifically the blood of female children that is sacrificed in calling the deity Toya. Perhaps the gender of the child reflected the gender of the sacred being honored; although we do not know the genders of the deities involved (Toya and the sun), male children were sacrificed to caciques, who were almost always male.

Overall, it makes sense that women acted as the intercessors between the ancestors and gods (the Upper World) and the living (This World). It was through their bloodline that the two worlds were linked. Women thus served as the spiritual bond that held the two worlds together. This is not to say, however, that Timucuan women were more spiritually powerful than men; instead, their interaction between the profane and sacred was just one of the performative aspects of Timucuan womanhood to act as the vessels of linkage between the worlds, just as masculinity was defined by the performance of maintaining the relationships of This World through hunting, warfare, and making allies.

Indeed, it was the shamans who possessed the real spiritual power to interact directly with the sacred. In all these instances of women acting as intercessors between the living and dead, the residents of This World and the gods, they played a limited, although crucial role. It was the symbolic power of their blood and bloodline that was needed, not the power of the women themselves. Although women offered their children in sacrifice to the cacique, it was "a magnificently decorated man," most likely the shaman, who actually killed the child.<sup>35</sup> Whereas women offered their blood to Toya, it

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<sup>34</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 103.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

was the shaman who interacted directly with the apparition. Moreover, the women were not even present for this part of the ritual; the shamans were in the woods, the women in the town plaza. Finally, although the clan matriarchs presented the scalps taken in war to the sun, it was the shaman who offered the prayers and chants, and who held the small idol (presumably representing the sun). In essence, it was the shaman who was the focus of the ceremony proper. In each of these instances, women established a connection between This World and the Upper World, their bloodlines and the ancestors or the gods, yet it was the shaman who controlled the action and what passed between the profane and sacred/pure. This is true for men and many of the means by which they regulated the relationships of This World as well. Men declared war and took the trophies and the scalps; shamans performed the divinations and assisted the caciques in prayers that marked the declaration of war as well.<sup>36</sup> During the rituals of hunting, shamans offered many of the prayers over the weapons and first kills.<sup>37</sup> As a result, shamans were offered the first deer killed as payment.<sup>38</sup>

## Two Spirits

The roles that Timucuan men and women played in the regulation of relationships with This World and the Upper World was crucial in assuring the safety and well-being of the Timucuan society. Although men and women's roles complemented one another in the balance of interaction with the profane and sacred/pure, both men and women carefully avoided too close contact with powerful, endangering forces such as death and illness. The gap left by the inability of male and female genders to negotiate and regulate interaction with forces such as these created the need for another category of individual: a third gender. The third gender, or Two Spirit, existed in Timucuan society as a unifier of the genders, an embodiment of the characteristics and the powers of both men and women: a bridge between the cosmological categories of man and woman.

During the 1564 French expedition to Florida, René Laudonnière observed, "In this country, there are a large number of hermaphrodites...[who] paint their faces and fluff out their hair to make themselves as repulsive as possible."<sup>39</sup> His choice of the word "hermaphrodite" to describe a man who, to Laudonnière, appeared as a woman fits well with European sixteenth century sexual norms. These norms are still reflected in many historical studies, which embrace the Western, Judeo-Christian bias that prejudices the "norm" of the dual system of man/woman.<sup>40</sup> The recent rise of the study of sexuality and

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 57, 59.

<sup>37</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 128, 129.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., fol. 128.

<sup>39</sup> Laudonnière, *L'Historie notable*, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Although many historians such as Sueann Caulfield have called to expand to study of gender beyond the dichotomy of male/female, most studies remain firmly in the realm of Western thinking. See Sueann

the development of Queer Theory, based in part of the work of Judith Butler, however, has begun to change the field.<sup>41</sup> Yet for the Timucua and many other Native groups, Two Spirits were an important part of the cultural system that functioned as a gender category that simultaneously defined and united the cosmological categories of male and female, pure and polluted.

Within Native North American societies, the space that exists between the genders of male and female is often defined as belonging to the *berdache* or Two Spirit.<sup>42</sup> Early Europeans perceived Two Spirits as males who dressed, behaved, and worked in a woman's place in society. Because Western culture viewed gender in terms of a sexual dichotomy of male/female, Europeans throughout the colonial era portrayed Two Spirits almost universally in one of two ways: first, as hermaphrodites, a perversion of nature which appeared to be all too common among the Native American population (and also, to a European mindset, a sure sign of their inferiority); and second, as licentious sodomites who tempted "normal" male Indians with their wanton ways.

In actuality, these Two Spirit people were not filling a woman's place in society at all, but instead occupied a unique space in Native American cultures: a third gender, distinct from both men and women. Like the gendered spheres of male and female, Two

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Caulfield, "The History of Gender in the Historiography of Latin America," Hispanic American Historical Review 81, no. 3-4 (2001): 449-490. For examples of studies in the Western tradition, see Mary Hawkesworth, "Confounding Gender," Signs 22, no. 3 (1997): 649-685; and K. Lynn Stoner, "Directions in Latin American Women's History, 1977-1985," Latin American Research Review 22 (1987): 103. Problematically, many studies that seek to break out of the rigidity of a male/female gender system often conflate sexual orientation with gender. Such as example is Randolph Trumbach's, Sex and the Gender Revolution, Volume One: Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), which equates a "third gender" with sodomites.

<sup>41</sup> The study of sexuality, however, lacks much of this rigid classification: instead, those who study sexuality often stress the incredible variety found in the sexual world. For examples, see Ramon A. Gutierrez's When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991); Gilbert Herdt, Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History (New York: Zone Books, 1994); Don Kulick, Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Asuncion Lavrin, ed., Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Sigal, From Moon Goddesses to Virgins; and Pete Sigal, ed., Infamous Desire: Male Homosexuality in Colonial Latin America (Chicago: London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

<sup>42</sup> The use of the term "berdache" has come under fire from many Native Americans, anthropologists, and historians because of its pejorative roots. Other terms, such as alternate or third gender, Two Spirit, and gay, have also been proposed and found lacking in one way or another. Both the indigenous community and the scholarly community have yet to settle on a term that all parties find acceptable. For this reason, this work will use "Two Spirit," the preferred term for many Native Americans, in the absence of an acceptable alternative. For more information on the problems of and debate over terminology, see Carolyn Epple, "Coming to Terms with Navajo Nadleehi: A Critique of Berdache, 'Gay,' 'Alternate gender,' and 'Two-Spirit,'" American Ethnologist 25, no. 2 (1988): 267-290; Stephen O. Murray, "On Subordinating Native American Cosmologies to the Empire of Gender," Current Anthropology 35, no.1 (1994): 59-61; Wesley Thomas and Sue-Ellen Jacobs, "—And We Are Still Here: From Berdache to Two-Spirit People," American Indian Culture and Research Journal 23, no. 2 (1999): 91-107; and Evan B. Towle and Lynn M. Morgan, "Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept," GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 8, no. 1 (2002): 469-497.

Spirit people had everyday roles and tasks, often including but not limited to women's work. Like men and women, Two Spirits also performed specific ceremonial roles, designated on the basis of gender. The realm of the Two Spirits is especially spiritually charged, more so than that of the categories of man and woman.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, many of the social roles of the Two Spirits lie within the realm of the sacred/pure and the sacred/profane. For the Timucua, the power of the Two Spirits lies in the violation of categories as well as in the bridging and uniting of categories. Two Spirits performed both of these functions by simultaneously uniting and defining two of the culture's most basic categorical systems: male/female and pure/polluted.<sup>44</sup>

### **Two Spirits and the Category of Man/Woman**

One of the most obvious characteristics of Two Spirits that set them apart from men and women is their dress and clothing. Most Two Spirits are biological males who appear to wear the clothing of a woman of their culture. Cultural outsiders often perceive them as transvestites. The clothing and dress habits of Two Spirit people, however, are different than transvestism. Transvestites wear clothing that is actually the vestment of the opposite gender. Two Spirits often dress in a way similar to, but not exactly like, that of the opposite sex. Two Spirit clothing is distinct, connoting their distinct status in society. Their specific dress also probably is associated with their distinct powers.<sup>45</sup>

Timucuan Two Spirits dressed very similarly to the women of the culture. (see figure 6.1) LeMoyne's images display them with a bare upper torso, and clad in a short, low-slung skirt with an uneven hem. Timucuan women dressed similarly in a skirt of woven Spanish moss, and distinctly from men, who wore breechclouts made of woven palms or of dressed deerskin (*gamuza*). Two Spirits likely dressed in a distinct manner that would have immediately identified them to a Native observer, while giving the Europeans the impression that their clothing was identical to that of Timucuan women. French cartographer Jacques LeMoyne's images portray their dress as identical. It is also possible that the Two Spirits dressed differently depending on the activity they were engaged in, a pattern common to Two Spirits of many modern peoples.<sup>46</sup> LeMoyne's images might reflect Two Spirits only when dressed femininely; it is probable that the

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<sup>43</sup> Will Roscoe, Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 14-16, 88-89, 140-141; Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, "From Foetus to Shaman: the Construction of an Inuit Third Sex," in American Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief Among North American Indians and Inuit, ed. Antonia Mills and Richard Slobodin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 82-106.

<sup>44</sup> Sabine Lang, Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 241, 286, 288, 351; Roscoe, Changing Ones, 8. The identification of the male/female dichotomy as one of the "basic categorical systems" for the Southeast is made in Charles Hudson's Southeastern Indians. See page 319.

<sup>45</sup> Lang, Men as Women, 49, 53.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, Spirit and the Flesh, 73-74.



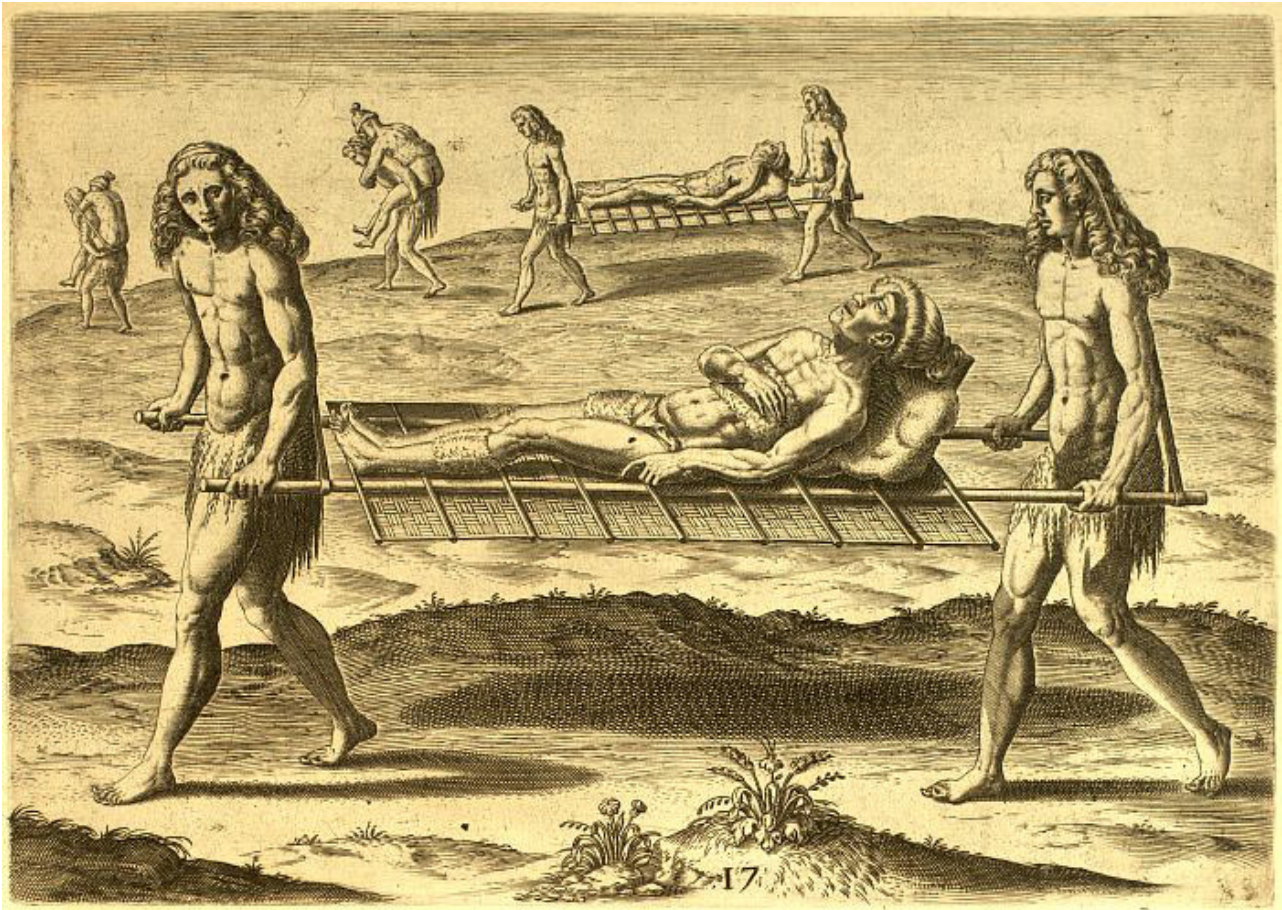


Figure 6.1 Two Spirits Carrying the Wounded and Dead

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 69.

Frenchmen might not have been able to distinguish them from other men when they dressed in a more masculine fashion. LeMoyne portrays Timucuan Two Spirits with long, carefully arranged curly hair. It is worn swept back slightly from the forehead and has no visible part. It appears that their hair is unbound and worn completely free-flowing. LeMoyne describes them as “the curly-haired hermaphrodites.”<sup>47</sup> French colonizer René Laudonnière identified Two Spirits as having painted faces and hair adorned with feathers in an attempt to make themselves repulsive.<sup>48</sup> Although Laudonnière claims that Two Spirits want to appear grotesque, this statement was probably more a product of his ruffled European sensibilities of gender-appropriate dress than Two Spirits’ actual desire to look “repulsive.” In addition to their distinct dress, Two Spirits could be distinguished by the color of the feathers they wore in their hair.<sup>49</sup> Yet their hairstyle also possessed elements in common with both male and female style of dress. Like Timucuan women, the Two Spirits wore their hair long and loose. Using feathers as hair adornments provides a link to a more masculine way of dressing the hair; Timucuan men took great pains with their hair and appearance, and adorned their upswept hair with feathers, pigments, arrows, and other ornaments.<sup>50</sup> The physical appearance of the Timucuan Two Spirit walked the line between masculine and feminine, uniting the categories while defining their differences at the same time.

Sexually, Two Spirits also bridge the gap between male and female. Modern Two Spirits sometimes self-identify as gay, and identify with Western gay culture.<sup>51</sup> Historically, Two Spirits seem to have mostly engaged in sexual acts with men, and were often taken as wives by elite males. However, this pattern is not an absolute. Two spirits also engaged in sex with women, and sometimes took wives themselves. For the most part, however, Two Spirits avoid marriage altogether.<sup>52</sup>

None of the European sources for Florida make any overt mention of the sexuality of the Timucuan Two Spirits. Instead, Laudonnière and LeMoyne both call them “hermaphrodites.”<sup>53</sup> Ethnographer Walter Williams explains that this term often was used erroneously as a result of a cultural misunderstanding. When Europeans questioned Native informants about Two Spirits, Natives explained that they were half man and half

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<sup>47</sup> Lorant, New World, 81.

<sup>48</sup> Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 5.

<sup>49</sup> Coreal, Relacion des Voyages, 29.

<sup>50</sup> Milanich, The Timucua, 56-57.

<sup>51</sup>For more information on the gay Indian community and the distinction between those who self-identify as Two Spirit and gay, and those who self-identify as gay, see Roscoe, Changing Ones, 99-116; and Sabine Lang, “Various Kinds of Two Spirit People: Gender Variance and Homosexuality in Native American Communities,” in Two Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality, ed. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

<sup>52</sup>Lang, Men as Women, 186-187, 198-203, 273, 275-277; Roscoe, Changing Ones, 73-74, 82, 93-95.

<sup>53</sup> Laudonnière, L’Histoire notable, 5 ; Lorant, New World, 69, 81, 93.

woman or not man and not women, meaning that they did not belong to either gender, but encompassed them both spiritually. Europeans, who had no correlation of this within their own culture, perceived this to be representative of physically being both genders-hermaphroditism. In other instances, the Europeans, perceiving Two Spirits as effeminate men, correlated this with their own stereotypes about effeminate men, and thus assumed that the Two Spirits were sodomites.<sup>54</sup>

There is in fact no direct association of Timucuan Two Spirits with what Europeans construed as sodomy. Laudonnière refers to the practice of sodomy being present among the Timucua, but fails to single out Two Spirits as being associated with this practice. Many other accounts of sodomy among the Timucua exist. The Franciscan confessional includes questions about sodomy and pederasty, as well as a question about same sex desire between women.<sup>55</sup> Conversely, linguist Julian Granberry includes no word for Two Spirit in his Dictionary of the Timucuan Language, nor is there one in Fray Pareja's Arte y Pronunciacion en Lengua Timuquana, y Castellana.<sup>56</sup>

Sodomy was a part of Timucuan sexual practices, and was not conceived of as unclean or a perversion, a much different perception than that held by Europeans.<sup>57</sup> The sexuality of Two Spirits among the Timucua, however, remains uncertain. Given the strong association of the Two Spirit tradition with homosexuality (both historically and today), Timucuan Two Spirit people probably engaged in what the Europeans defined as sodomy.<sup>58</sup> Yet their behavior was not unique or singled out as different, but instead formed a part of accepted sexual behavior among the Timucua. In this instance, Two Spirits serve as a sexual unifying agent between the categories of men and women. Most often, they possess a male's body but are penetrated like a woman. Additionally, Two Spirits can penetrate and be penetrated, be a wife or take a wife themselves. Sexually, they fit the categories of both sexes while creating a new category encompassing both sexes.

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<sup>54</sup> Williams, Spirit and the Flesh, 21-22.

<sup>55</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 215.

<sup>56</sup> Granberry, Grammar and Dictionary of the Timucua Language; Francisco Pareja, Arte y Pronunciacion en Lengua Timuquana, y Castellana. Compuesto y de Nuevo sacado a luz, por el Padre Fray Francisco Pareja, Diffinidor y Padre perpetuo de la Proincia de Santa Elena de la Florida, Religiose de la Orden de Nuestro Seraphico Padre San Francisco: y natural de la Villa de Aunon, del Arcobipado de Toledo. (Mexico: Juan Ruyz, 1614), Manuscript 2401A, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C. Granberry does note the words for sodomy: yuba and sodomite: poranacu. It seems strange that the words for sodomy (the action) and sodomite (the noun) are derived from two different roots; they appear, to the casual observer, to be totally unrelated. It seems possible that poranacu could have other meanings than sodomite. If poranacu does not refer to a sodomite, per se, but to a "homosexual" individual, it is possible that the word could mean Two Spirit.

<sup>57</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 211, 212, 213, 214, 215.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Callender and Lee Kochems, "Men and Not-Men: Male Gender-Mixing Statuses and Homosexuality," in Anthropology and Homosexuality, ed. Evelyn Blackwood (New York: The Harwood Press, 1986), 165-178; Lang, Men as Women, 185-215; Roscoe, Changing Ones, 8-12; and Williams, Spirit and the Flesh, 93-120, 121-126.

In terms of their bodily shape, the Two Spirits seem to have almost hyper-masculine features. Sources describe the Timucuan Two Spirit as being physically big and strong, and LeMoyne depicts them at least as well muscled as “normal” Timucuan men.<sup>59</sup> This is a typical pattern in the perceptions of Two Spirits; modern ethnographers have found that most groups single out the Two Spirit people of their group as being physically robust, and historians have almost uniformly found it noted in documents.<sup>60</sup> This alleged strength of Two Spirits becomes even more evident in the consideration of the work and duties undertaken by Timucuan Two Spirits.

In labor, Timucuan Two Spirits simultaneously performed masculine and feminine tasks. Much of the work of the Two Spirits capitalized on their strength. Two Spirits were responsible for carrying and transporting food items and people to various locations. LeMoyne witnessed Two Spirit people carrying so many things that he labeled them “beasts of burden.”<sup>61</sup> Laudonnière also writes that Two Spirits “do all the heaviest labor.”<sup>62</sup> Two Spirits helped Timucuan women in their food gathering activities during the season of the First Fruits of the year by carrying foods back to the communal storehouse. They also helped the men in carrying the fruits of their first hunting expeditions of the season back to the storehouse, as LeMoyne describes (and depicts) baskets full of “wild animals, fish and even crocodiles.”<sup>63</sup> (see figure 6.2) In performing this labor, Timucuan Two Spirits participated in activities that quintessentially defined male and female: hunting/fishing and gathering. Moreover, they performed the same kind of task for each gender, bridging the gap between the labor of the sexes and emphasizing the importance of both kinds of labor to Timucuan society overall. Two Spirits served to unite the two kinds of food into one whole that feeds the community and venerates the gods.

Although everyone in the community participated in the ceremonies of the First Fruits in one way or another, it appears that a hierarchy of status governed the extent of one’s participation. Shamans and chiefs were at the top of this hierarchy. The role of Two Spirit as bearer of First Fruits implies that they were of a higher status than average Timucuan. Certainly the Two Spirits possessed the power to come into prolonged contact with the spiritually charged sacred/pure First Fruits, a power lacking in others. Two Spirits also carried the provisions when Timucuan men engaged in warfare. Most importantly, the Two Spirits prepared and carried the ritually purifying black drink into

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<sup>59</sup> Laudonnière, *L’Historie notable*, 5; Lorant, *New World*, 69, 81.

<sup>60</sup> Lang, *Men as Women*, 241-242; Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*, 86, 118; and Williams, *Spirit and the Flesh*, 58.

<sup>61</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 69.

<sup>62</sup> Laudonnière, *L’Historie notable*, 5.

<sup>63</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 81.



Figure 6.2 Bearing the First Fruits

From Stefan Lorant, The New World: The First Pictures of America, Made by John White and Jacques LeMoyne and engraved by Theodore DeBry with Contemporary Narratives of the Huguenot Settlement in Florida 1562-1565 and the Virginia Colony 1585-1590 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 81.

battle. During councils, women prepared the casina.<sup>64</sup> Yet during times of war, Two Spirits prepared the tea.<sup>65</sup> The preparation of black drink functions as an example of Two Spirits performing women's work. But viewed in a different manner, the labor of the Two Spirits in warfare also heightens the distinction between male and female during this crucial time. Timucuan men, like warriors of other Southeastern groups, engaged in purification rituals before going to war which included abstaining from sex for a certain period before battle.<sup>66</sup> They may have even avoided women altogether. Hence, it was an important distinction to have the Two Spirits interact with the black drink, rather than women, in order to achieve a state of purity and readiness for battle. Here, the Two Spirits function within the masculine world, probably more as "man" than "woman" in the context of warfare.<sup>67</sup>

The preparation of the ceremonial black drink during wartime is another instance of Two Spirits being singled out for contact with the pure and spiritually charged. Although black drink was consumed on a daily basis, it was also consumed ritually as a purgative on ceremonial occasions. Warfare was one of these occasions on which the black drink was especially powerful and charged with spiritual significance. Women prepared black drink on a daily basis, but Two Spirits were singled out to prepare the black drink before battle not only for their ability to enter the masculine world, but also for their heightened spiritual power.

Countering the experience of the Two Spirits in the masculine realm of war is their presence in the experiences of pregnant women. Timucuans, like other Southeastern peoples, isolated the sick and infirm from the rest of the population in a special area. Menstruating and postpartum women were included in this isolation.<sup>68</sup> Timucuan Two Spirits cared for and fed the women during their time of labor and postpartum confinement, and appear to have been one of the only groups that could interact with these women during this time.<sup>69</sup> Again, it seems that Two Spirits operated more as "woman" than "man" in caring for women during and after the birth of her child. In both instances, Two Spirits were accepted and welcomed into highly gendered activities and

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<sup>64</sup> Charlevoix, Journal d'un Voyage, 221-222; Roberts, Account of the First Discovery, 6; and Hann, History of the Timucua Indians, 26.

<sup>65</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 112-114; Lorant, New World, 81.

<sup>66</sup> Perdue, Cherokee Women, 35.

<sup>67</sup> Ethnographic research has shown that the perceived gender affiliations of Two Spirits can vary over time [within a life-course analysis] and in different contexts. Thus, a Two Spirit may be more "male" than "female" while at war, but more "female" than "male" while engaging in making pottery or other women's work. For more information, see Claire R. Farrer's "A 'Berdache' by Any Other Name...Is a Brother, Friend, Lover, Spouse: Reflections on a Mescalero Apache Singer of Ceremonies" in Two Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality, ed. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 236-254.

<sup>68</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 117.

<sup>69</sup> Pareja, Confessionario, fol. 124, 127, 133, 148.

rituals. A special role for the Two Spirits in each case, however, denotes their liminality within these worlds.

Interestingly, many Native American cultures correlated the experiences of men and women during warfare and childbirth, and equated the experience of a warrior in battle with that of a woman in labor. The Mexica, for example, considered that women earned respect and honor through bearing children. Like warriors who died in battle, women who died in childbirth were accorded special treatment: the warriors joined the sun at dawn and followed it as it rose to its apex in the sky, and the women who died in childbirth joined the sun at its zenith and followed it to sunset.<sup>70</sup> The presence of the Two Spirits at these crucial times in the life cycle of both men and women indicates their power and influence: it also suggests that the Timucuan also viewed the roles of warriors and women in labor similarly. The Two Spirits' presence and participation in key elements of life-defining moments further bridges the gap between man and woman.

### **Two Spirits and the Sacred/Pure and the Sacred/Polluted**

If Timucuan Two Spirits provided a physical and ideological link between the sexes, they also functioned as a spiritual link uniting the categories of sacred/pure and sacred/polluted within Timucuan cosmology. The most important instances of Two Spirit contact with the sacred/pure have already been discussed: the bearing of the First Fruits to the storehouse and the preparation of black drink during wartime. But the duties of the Two Spirit also brought them into frequent contact with the sacred/polluted. Timucuan, like other Southeastern peoples, viewed sick persons as impure or polluted, a danger to the community, and isolated the sick and infirm from the rest of the population in a special area. Menstruating and postpartum women were included in this isolation.<sup>71</sup> Visitation to the sick was dangerous and limited to persons who were able to withstand the pollution. Included in this population were the Two Spirits.

Timucuan Two Spirits transported the sick and infirm to these special areas apart from the rest of the population. They cared for and prepared food for the ill until they were well again.<sup>72</sup> Although Two Spirits were associated with healing, there is no evidence that they performed any of the rituals and medicinal treatments involved in the healing process. Instead, it appears that they functioned in more of a nurse-like role, cooking, bathing, and performing basic tasks for the infirm.

This nurse-like role of the Two Spirits brought them into close contact with one of the most potent sacred/pure symbols, the lighting of a separate fire. Separate fires were lit in areas housing the ill as well as for menstruating and postpartum women. These fires functioned as powerful symbols, as it was considered dangerous for unprepared or outside persons to approach the fire.<sup>73</sup> As the caretakers of the quarantined populations,

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<sup>70</sup> Berdan, *The Aztecs of Central Mexico*, 81-82.

<sup>71</sup> Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 117.

<sup>72</sup> Lorant, *New World*, 69.

<sup>73</sup> Pareja, *Confessionario*, fol. 124, 127, 133, 148.

Two Spirits must have been among the select group that were able to successfully negotiate this spiritually dangerous atmosphere which combined the pollution of illness, the danger of the extreme fertility and heightened femininity of menstruating, laboring, and postpartum women, and the purifying agent of the fires, a situation that united the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted in one environment.

Demographer Henry Dobyns sees great import in the responsibility of caring for the ill and the absence of Two Spirits from LeMoyne's illustrations of Timucuan healing rituals. Dobyns argues that several things can be inferred from this unusual situation. First, he asserts that using Two Spirits as "nurses" suggests that the Timucua had learned to identify at least some European contagious diseases by 1564, when LeMoyne was in Florida. He also argues that Two Spirits were nurses to those sick with these European diseases because Two Spirits, as "semi-outcasts," were more expendable to the group.<sup>74</sup> Dobyns further argues that only those individuals ill with Old World diseases were kept separate from the population as a kind of quarantine.

The association of Two Spirit people with healing is not as unusual as Dobyns seems to think. Navajo *nadle* are noted for their chanting ability in healing ceremonies; Lakota *winktes* possess powerful love and childbirth medicine; and Cheyenne war parties always contained a Two Spirit healer. Finally, other groups, including the Mohave, the Klamath, the Yurok, and many different California Indians, believed that Two Spirit shamans were more powerful than any other.

Dobyns' argument seems to be based largely on the fact that the Timucuan segregated the sick and infirm. Yet he fails to take into consideration the association of Two Spirits with elements of the sacred/pure such as First Fruits, separate fires, and black drink. It is highly unlikely that "semi-outcasts" would have been empowered to interact with ritually pure items such as these, let alone for "semi-outcasts" to be the preferred individual to transport, oversee, and prepare the items. Instead, we must interpret the ability of Two Spirits to interact with elements of both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted as a demonstration of their power, status, and importance within the Timucuan culture.

Timucuan Two Spirits had another role associated with illness and infirmity; they removed the dead and injured from the field of battle during wartime, another example of their ability to negotiate the sacred/polluted. They also bore the community's dead to the burial ground and prepared the bodies for internment. LeMoyne illustrates this practice. (see figure 6.1) In the image two pairs of Two Spirit people are seen carrying dead warriors on a type of bier. In the background, two other Two Spirits carry injured men on their backs. Two Spirits of other cultures are also strongly associated with death and funeral rites. Among most of the California Indians, the Two Spirits were responsible for funeral rites. Yokuts Two Spirits were responsible for preparing the body for burial; they also conducted the singing and dancing at the funeral. Lakota *winktes* plan funerals and often cook at the wake.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Dobyns, *Their Number Became Thinned*, 251-254.

<sup>75</sup> Lang, *Men as Women*, 153, 166, 167, 252-253; Williams, *Spirit and the Flesh*, 35-36.



Rather than burying the dead, many precolonial Timucua maintained charnel houses, structures where bodies remained until the flesh separated from the bones. During this period, the dead bodies are powerfully connected to the sacred/polluted. After this occurred, bones were then purified in fire and placed in small leather trunks, signifying their transformation into a sacred/pure aspect.<sup>76</sup>

The maintenance of the dead in charnel houses, however, poses much more work than just monitoring decomposition and removal of bones. Because they were placed at the edge of the settlement, charnel houses were vulnerable to predators and scavengers, and thus necessitated a guard or post to keep bodies safe. Garcilaso de la Vega relates how Juan Ortiz, a Spaniard who was left behind by the failed Narvaéz expedition, was punished by a Timucuan cacique and ordered to guard the charnel house from lions (most likely panthers) at night, a dangerous duty.<sup>77</sup> Timucuan would have considered guard duty at the charnel house dangerous not only because of the panthers, but even more so for the impurity or pollution of the dead bodies. The average Timucuan would not have been spiritually potent enough to withstand this pollutant. Yet Two Spirits were able to withstand the pollution of the sick and close contact with the dead in the preparation and bearing of the bodies to the charnel house. Because the Two Spirits were responsible for the preparation and transport of the dead, it is extremely likely that their responsibilities would also include guarding the charnel house. While this duty would be a punishment and a dangerous act for a normal person like the Spaniard Juan Ortiz, this same task is a demonstration of the unique status and power of the Two Spirit.

Additionally, in light of their association with the dead and sacred/pure separate fires, it is possible that the Two Spirits were the individuals who purified the bones of the dead in fire in order to ready them for their interment in the aforementioned leather chests. It is only at this point in time that Timucuan families came into contact with their dead. Somewhere within this preparation of the dead, the profane, polluted body was purified and was transformed into one of the sacred ancestors. Since Two Spirits had handled the dead up until this point, it is possible that they were the individuals who accomplished the transformative process. Given not only their involvement with the preparation of the dead, but also their close connection with sacred fires, Two Spirits seemed to possess the power and capacity to accomplish the ritual. Moreover, the ability of Two Spirits to embody contradictory categories in their person: male/female, sacred/pure and sacred/polluted suggests that they were perceived to have some sort of transformative ability which enabled them to be all of these things simultaneously. In the end, there is no way of knowing with certainty the exact involvement of Two Spirits with the transformative rituals associated with death. It is also possible that Two Spirits acted as the caretakers of the dead from the death of the individual and the preparation of the body through the removal of flesh, only to have a shaman take over the death rituals at the crucial stage of the process. Even so, in their association with the important and dangerous death rituals, Two Spirits are shown to possess a power beyond that of men and women. Not only do Two Spirits link the realms of the pure and impure in this

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<sup>76</sup> Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 106.

<sup>77</sup> Garcilaso de la Vega, *The Florida of the Inca*, trans. and ed. John Grier Varner and Jeanette Johnson Varner (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), 65-68.

instance, they also mitigate the danger of the pollution of death in completing or assisting in transforming the bones into a state where everyday men and women can interact safely with the dead.

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Timucuan men and women performed acts that defined their role within their cosmological system; moreover, these actions were crucial in keeping Timucuan society's place within the world safe and secure. Timucuan men, as socio-political actors in society, engaged in actions that regulated Timucuan relationships within This World and the profane. Such actions included political activities, warfare, and the observation of hunting rituals. Men identified primarily with the main masculine signifier of the Timucuan culture: the council house. Actions carried out within the council house structured how Timucuan men related to one another through the enactment a political hierarchy. Men also spent much of their time outside of political activities in the council house; by carrying out commonplace activities associated with masculinity in the council house, through these actions men reaffirmed their societal status and their masculinity on an everyday basis within the council house. Men regulated the relationships with other human groups; they were also responsible for maintaining the relationship between humans and animals. Hunting, setting new fish traps, and the processing of the animals taken all required ritual preparations. Each of these rituals associated with hunting and processing the kills focused on the proper veneration and treatment of the animal; showing it the proper respect so that the hunter (and Timucuan society) would maintain a successful relationship with other animals of its kind. Through the proper maintenance of the relationship between humans and animals, enemies and allies, men ensured the future health and well-being of Timucuan society within This World.

Women, on the other hand, had a socio-religious function. They acted as intercessors to the sacred/pure and the Upper World, maintaining the relationship between the lineages and the ancestors, mankind and the gods. Women were connected to the sacred/pure through ritual foods and feeding activities, mourning, and sacrifice. Women, as signifiers of fertility, also were associated with the sacred/polluted and the Under World. Performative actions for women included feeding activities, blood sacrifice, and mourning. Women acted as intercessors between the worlds because it was through their bloodline that the two worlds were linked. Women thus served as the spiritual bond that held the two worlds together. This is not to say, however, that Timucuan women were more spiritually powerful than men; instead, their interaction between the profane and sacred was just one of the performative aspects of Timucuan womanhood to act as the vessels of linkage between the worlds, just as masculinity was defined by the performance of maintaining the relationships of This World through hunting, warfare, and making allies.

Two Spirits interacted with both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted in their gendered labor, and functioned as intercessors to both the Upper and Under Worlds. In their everyday duties, Timucuan Two Spirits functioned as a unifier of men and women as well as the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted. The nature and practices of their labor

indicates that they were invested with some sort of power that enabled them to perform tasks that other members of the society were unable to. Many of their duties resemble that of shamans, the most spiritually powerful members of the community. Perhaps not surprisingly, many cultures consider Two Spirits to be the most powerful shamans.<sup>78</sup> It is interesting to notice that many of the duties and activities of Two Spirits among the Timucua seem to be associated with beginnings [First Fruits] and endings [illness and death]. This could suggest that they were involved in many other kinds of rituals, such as births, marriages, and funerary rites, tasks common to Two Spirits of other cultures.

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<sup>78</sup> Roscoe, Changing Ones, 88-89,140-141.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

Like other Southeastern peoples, the Timucua conceived of their world in fundamental categories of sacred and profane, pure and polluted. Their cosmos was structured into a threefold system composed of This World, the Upper World, and the Under World. However, the Timucuan cosmology was fundamentally different from the Southeastern system as outlined by Charles Hudson and as accepted and adopted by subsequent generations of historians and anthropologists alike. Instead of conceiving of purity and pollution as a system of binary opposition designed to keep the universe in a state of harmony and balance, Timucua conceived of pollution and purity as a system of complementarity. Purity and pollution were both aspects of the sacred, related to the main foci of both Timucuan and Southeastern religion: celebration of the sun and of fertility. (See figures 6.1 and 6.2 for a comparison of the structures of the two systems).

I argue that instead of conceiving of order as the ultimate goal of categorization, Timucua built categories to understand the world and the way it works, to inform rather than to impose order. Rather than a binary opposition, two contradictory categories of purity and pollution, Timucua conceived of their world as divided into three categories. The first is a state of purity, linked to the sacred and the Upper World. Symbols/objects of purity in Timucuan culture included fire, First Fruits, blood, corn, tobacco, and black drink. Timucua used these things to achieve a personal state of purity, to purify the environment, and to attract the attention of and interact with the Upper World, including the ancestors and the gods. This was especially true of the sun god, the chief deity in the Timucuan pantheon. Although it seems that all Timucua could achieve a temporary personal state of purity, it was not the normative state of being. Additionally, it was often dangerous for normal individuals to interact with these symbols of purity. Instead, trained intercessors including shamans and Two Spirits handled much of the contact with the symbols of purity. In some cases, women acted as intercessors between This World and the Upper World. However, it was the blood of the women and their children that was required to symbolize the sacred/pure, not the skills of the women themselves. In this way, women functioned as much as agent of sacred/pure as an intercessor between This World and the Upper World.

The second state present in the Timucuan cosmology was one of pollution. For the Timucua, pollution represented a state that endangered the average person because it was also linked to the sacred and thus the Under World. Symbols of pollution in Timucuan culture include menstrual and childbirth blood, dead bodies, and disease. Each of these ideas represents a point in which a member of society enters a state which brings them closer to the sacred, whether in the process of death and dying (and thus becoming a sacred ancestor) or through shedding the blood of the lineage, which links the earthly family to the sacred family. As with the state of purity, certain trained individuals within Timucuan society, including shamans, healers, and two spirits were able to interact with persons or objects in a state of pollution.

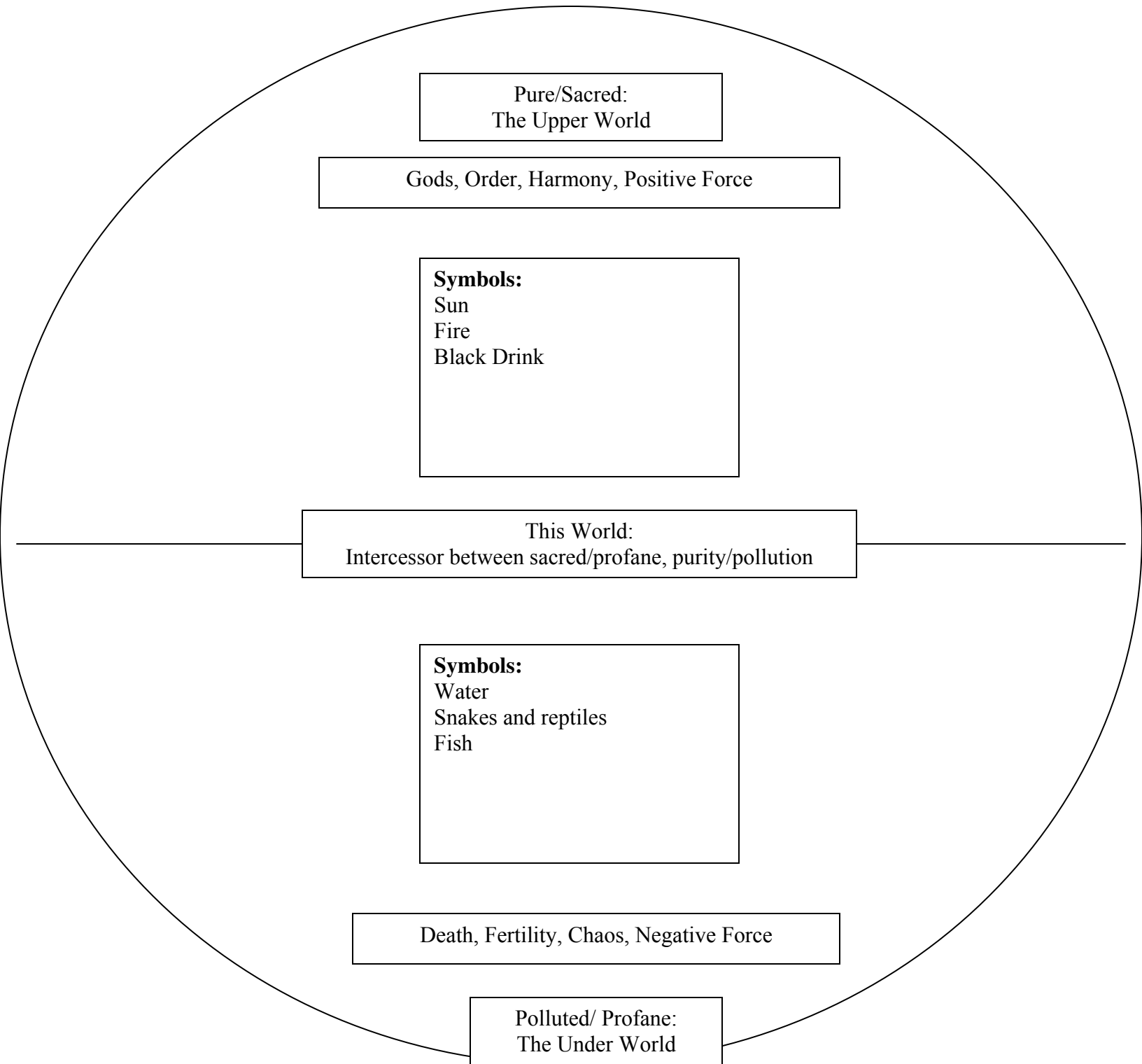


Figure 7.1 Southeastern Cosmology as conceived by Charles Hudson

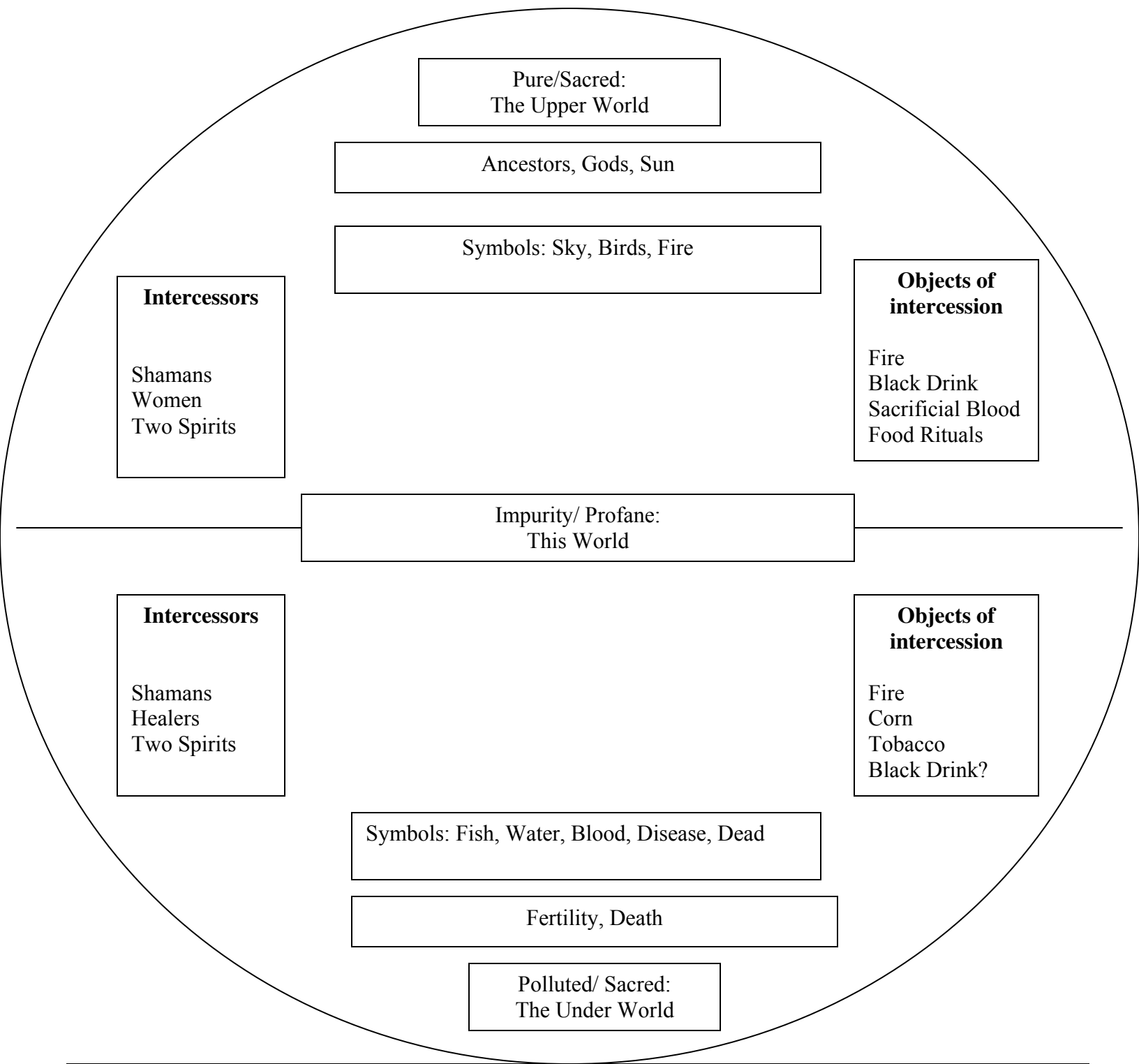


Figure 7.2 Timucuan conceptions of purity, impurity, and pollution

Finally, the third state for Timucuan cosmology was the impure. The Timucua associated impurity with everyday existence. Impurity simply referred to the profane, the normative state of This World. Timucuan interacted with both the pure and the polluted as a part of the veneration of the sacred. Like other Southeastern peoples, Timucuan conceptions of the sacred were linked to fertility, a so-called "Earth Cult." Both predominant associations with the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted were linked to the fertility of the earth and of the Timucuan culture: the ancestors, the sun, and the gods as givers of life to both earth and people, and blood, disease, and dead bodies as part of the cycle that both reproduces the lineages (through menstruation and childbirth blood) and connects the living lineages to the sacred ancestors (through disease/death/dead bodies). Both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted were necessary to the physical and spiritual well-being of the Timucuan culture.

Documents produced by the Timucuan themselves that describe the structures of their society, the cycle of their year and the patterns of their lives remain lost. But based on the prevalence and importance of food rituals in the extant records, however, it appears that one of the most sacred times of year was the period of spring, the time of the First Fruits. Timucuan interacted differently with food during this time, ascribing a sacred/pure aspect to hunted, gathered, and agriculturally raised foodstuffs. The rituals surrounding the collection of these First Fruits culminated in a festival dedicated to the sun. By dedicating a set period of time in every cycle to observation of the sacred/pure as manifested in food and dedicating the foodstuffs collected during this time to their principal deity, Timucuan renewed their relationship with the sacred/pure and the Upper World. Through synecdochal logic, this dedication of part of the food crop symbolizes the whole; thus, observation of the First Fruits rituals consecrates all food for the Timucuan. For this reason, the stag of the final ceremony to the sun was left standing for the entire year. After the time of the First Fruits was over, Timucuan were able to return to a profane/impure relationship with food, the normative state.

Although Timucuan religious observations stressed beginnings and renewals through observation of the First Fruits rituals, rituals that celebrated the Timucuan life cycle stressed endings and death. In this manner, the two corpuses of rituals worked together to highlight the cyclical nature of the universe and the connections between the sacred/pure and sacred/polluted, the Upper and Under Worlds. Timucuan death rituals, like the First Fruits rituals, venerated fertility, an essential part of Southeastern cosmology. The sacrifice of children, the spilling of blood, and the avoidance of corn and other food crops of the deceased marked death as a time associated with fertility. The old die so that the young may be born, renewing a cycle that ensures the well-being of the group.

Timucuan death rituals were a transformative process that took human beings through all three realms of the cosmos. One began as a member of the living, a resident of the profane existence in This World. After death, the body was associated with the sacred/polluted and the Under World. Symbols employed in rituals during the period immediately after death evoked the sacred/polluted and the Under World. After a set period of time, the corpse underwent ritual purification by fire, transforming the bodily remains from sacred/polluted to sacred/pure. It is at this time that the individual joined the ancestors in the Upper World. Kinship terms were changed to recognize the new status of the individual and to recognize the changes that death had wrought in the family.

The bones of the ancestor, now sacred/pure, became safe for the general population to interact with, and they came to symbolize the renewal that death implied. Birth, life and death all formed parts of a never ending cycle of rebirth.

For the Timucua, blood was perhaps the most important and significant part of the body, both in terms of its symbolic importance in cosmology and in healing rites. Blood sacrifice formed one of the central portions of sacrifice to the deceased. It was enacted in a variety of situations: in veneration of the sun; in sacrifice to the sun's living representative on earth, the cacique; to assist in summoning a deity; and in thanksgiving for victory in warfare. Specifically, the blood of children and the blood of enemies were especially powerful and desirable. Through these observations, blood sacrifice linked Timucians to both the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted.

Healing rituals also conflated the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted. Blood, fire, feathers (representing birds), tobacco, black drink, and corn were all employed in symbolic portions of curing rites. Herbal remedies made up the bulk of Timucian medical treatments, and seemed to be utilized in the physiological treatment of disease. Magical treatments, such as sucking diseases from the body and bloodletting, were practiced by the Timucua, and may have been restricted to the treatment of psychological or supernaturally caused diseases such as the "evil eye." Treatment through magical practices seems to have been limited to shamanic practitioners, whereas both shamans and herbalists administered herbal treatments.

Shamans also played the dominant role in Timucian magical practices due to their abilities to interact with and manipulate the sacred/pure and the sacred/polluted and thus the Upper and Under Worlds. Magical acts among the Timucua fell under four main types of categories: bewitchment of individuals, love charms, war magic, and observations of omens. Timucian magical rites show strong ties to the sun cult and thus the sacred/pure. Shamans may have received their power from connections with the sun god; war magic venerated the sun; many harbingers of omens, including fire, lightning, and birds were linked to the sun and the sky world over which he had domain. This trend reinforces what other scholars have concluded about Timucian religious beliefs: that the sun god was the primary deity worshipped by the Timucians.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, some types of magic (particularly bewitchment and the seduction of women through love charms) were more closely tied to the sacred/polluted, suggesting that they fell under the domain of the Under World, the realm of both death and fertility.

Throughout the dissertation, parallels have been drawn between the Southeast and the Timucua, based mainly on the similarity of their cosmological systems and prevailing symbology. In fact, based on this evidence, it seems that the Timucua have much more in common with the Southeastern groups than has been previously recognized. For decades, scholars have grouped the Timucua loosely with the Southeast, but have held that although the groups have much in common, the Timucua do not show the same level of association with the Mississippian complex as other Southeastern groups; in other words, whereas the rest of the Southeastern groups were relatively directly descended from the Mississippians, the Timucians were not.

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<sup>1</sup> Hann, History of the Timucua, 115; Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 125-127.



Based on the evidence presented in the dissertation, I postulate that the Timucua ascribed much importance to the same set of symbols that were associated with the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, the archaeological evidence of the Mississippian religious belief system. First, the Timucua incorporated ancestor worship as an important part of their belief system, much like the Mississippians. Their political structure elevated the White Deer clan over the others, and probably ascribed religious leadership to the primordial clan. Like other Mississippian descendants, the leading clan was linked to the sun and sun worship. Things associated with the Upper World dominate much of the culture's symbology. The sun and its linked earthly aspect, fire, were the most powerful symbols of the culture. Moreover, birds were the most important animals in terms of symbolism, as shown by Timucuan omens. Finally, corn was a powerful symbol for the Timucua as well, and was linked to healing, death, magic, and possibly the shamanic tradition, as suggested by Lana Jill Loucks at the Baptizing Springs Site.<sup>2</sup> This last finding is somewhat surprising given the limited importance of agriculture to the precolonial Timucua. Each of these symbols (sun, fire, birds, and corn) is clearly and repeatedly manifested in the artifacts of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex.<sup>3</sup>

Although the historical evidence suggests that Timucua were more strongly tied to the Mississippian roots of the Southeast than previously thought, conversely, recent archaeological evidence has shown large numbers of people from the North Florida area (of the latter-day Timucuan province) migrated from the north in the period around 900 CE.<sup>4</sup> This, coupled with other linguistic evidence could support the hypothesis that the Timucua migrated from South America to Florida. First proposed by linguists such as Albert Gatschet and Julian Granberry, the theory was initially ridiculed by archaeologists and historians alike. But within the last five years, the South American migration model has gained credibility and supporters as more archaeological evidence is unearthed. The combined historical, archaeological, and linguistic evidence, however, suggests that scholars should not be so quick to categorize Timucuan origins in terms of absolutes, either Southeast or South America, black or white. Instead, Timucuan culture probably represents a mixture of the two origins. Future historical research into the ethnogenesis of the Timucua is needed in order to complement and reinforce the emerging archaeological evidence.

From a Spanish point of view, the Franciscans had an exceedingly ambiguous relationship with the Timucua. Ideally, the friars came to the Indies not only to Christianize, but to Hispanicize, as better seen in other parts of the Americas such as Mexico. In Florida, however, friars had to adapt to the realities of the borderlands existence of the colonies as exemplified by Franciscan attitudes towards healing. Florida reflects to a magnified degree the problem faced by the Church throughout the Americas: The Church was forced to let the curanderos, herbolarios, hechizeros, and parteras continue to practice, as there were far too few Spaniards to work with so many

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<sup>2</sup> Loucks, "Political and Economic Interactions," 325.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the symbolism of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, see Patuketat, "Serpents, Female Deities and Fertility," 511-522.

<sup>4</sup> Keith Ashley, "Interaction, Population Movement, and Political Economy: The Changing Social Landscape of Northeastern Florida (AD 900-1500)" (PhD Dissertation, University of Florida 2003).

indigenous peoples. Florida's lack of physicians trained in European medicine left the missionaries no choice but to permit the native healers to continue in their trade in order to ensure a healthy congregation. Yet the friars did seek to control the practices of the indigenous healers and mold them into a more acceptable, European, model that fit better into their understanding of medical practices.

Franciscan observations of Timucuan food rituals demonstrate another anomaly in the relationship that the Florida friars had with their penitents. The 1613 confessional for the Timucua of Florida is unique in its concern for food and particularly in its concern for the First Fruits of the year and the rituals associated with them. It is probable that the friars were preoccupied with food rituals for many reasons, including religious, economic, political, and personal ones. Religiously, the First Fruits rituals were a violation of the First Commandment and a continuation of the old "pagan" rites that the Franciscans sought to eradicate. Politically, concern for the First Fruits may have grown out of tensions on the mission settlement. First Fruits rituals may have been a possible source of tension between friars and shamans, friars and those who had to farm the friars' sabana, and tensions between the friars and head and lesser caciques, who held the most important role in the First Fruits rituals. Economically, the First Fruit rituals and other food taboos would have been a source of concern for the friars, as they probably represented a "waste" of corn from the friars' perspective. This corn could have been traded to the presidio for money, church vestments, or other items necessary for the missions. Finally, the First Fruits probably concerned the friars personally, as they may have had a direct impact on their diets. If the caciques, shamans, and other high-status individuals on the mission received their meat as payment for First Fruits rituals, how were the friars to be supplied with meat?

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Over the course of the early to mid-eighteenth century, the province of Timucua began to rapidly disintegrate and fall apart under increasing British political pressure and British and Indian raids on the missions. By 1722, some of the Franciscans had concluded that the future of the province was uncertain, and that the province had been virtually "destroyed."<sup>5</sup> As more and more missions fell prey to the raids, censuses show that Timucuan were dying at a rapid rate from the attacks, malnutrition, overwork, and disease.<sup>6</sup> The missions began to collapse, numbering fewer and fewer until in 1752, only six settlements remained. A census of four of the villages includes the Timucuan mission

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<sup>5</sup> Fray Blas Pulido to the King, December 28, 1722, San Agustín, SC, PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

<sup>6</sup> Governor Benavides to the King, December 19, 1726, San Agustín, SC, PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

of Palicia, and lists only 39 individuals: twelve men, seven women, and ten children.<sup>7</sup> By 1759, the six settlements were collapsed into only two, listing seven remaining Timucuan.<sup>8</sup> The final dénouement came in 1763, when eighty-nine Florida Indians boarded a ship for Havana. Among them were the last of the Timucua. In Cuba, they were integrated into a community called Guanabacoa, a district on the outskirts of Havana that had been home to a population of Cuban Natives since the mid-sixteenth century. Within the next fifty years, the last of the Timucuan died. Their descendants were integrated into the island's larger Indian community.<sup>9</sup> What had once been a relatively large, thriving population with a rich culture and history had literally vanished as a result of colonial rule. The extinction of the Timucua as a viable culture has silenced their voice in a more profound manner than that of other indigenous groups.

The relationship between Florida Franciscans and Timucuan represents one of the earliest mission environments of the borderlands areas. The Florida missions were founded at about the same time as the New Mexico missions and predate the California and Texas missions by more than 100 years. Yet to date, the field of borderlands history has been dominated by studies of the Southwest and California. By and large, Spanish Florida has been ignored not only by colonial Latin Americanists, but also by specialists in Borderlands history. Future borderlands studies throughout the Southeast and Southwest alike must incorporate Florida to a greater degree than previous works. This study, as a partial reconstruction of the Timucuan culture in the early days of contact and missionization, represents a beginning step in the process of the incorporation of the Florida indigenous peoples into the greater worlds of the Southeast, the Borderlands, and Latin America. Despite what may have been good intentions, missionization and colonization eradicated the Timucua, ending a forgotten but crucial episode in the history of colonial encounters. By leaving the Timucua out of the historical narrative, modern scholars unwittingly contribute to the silencing of Native voices so desperately desired by the colonial powers.

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<sup>7</sup> “Yndios Naturales Residentes de este Pueblo de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Tolomato, 1752,” “Yndios Yamases que Residen en el Pueblo de Pocotalaca, 1752,” “Yndios que residen en el Pueblo de Palicia, 1752,” “Yndios Vezinos del Pueblo de la Punta, 1752,” Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Audiencia de Santo Domingo 2604. Photocopy courtesy of Jane Landers.

<sup>8</sup> “Protocolo de Cabildo años de 1754 á 64. Relación de los Indios procedentes de la Florida” St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library, Florida Miscellaneous Manuscripts, File Geography: Cuba; “Padrón del Pueblo de Yndios de Nuestra Señora de la Leche de la Jurisdicción de este Provincia de la Florida para esta año de 1759, hecho por Fray Alonso Ruis” Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Audiencia de Santo Domingo 2604. Photocopy courtesy of Jane Landers.

<sup>9</sup> Jane Landers, “An Eighteenth-Century Community in Exile: The Floridanos in Cuba” Unpublished paper presented at the American Historical Association’s Conference on Latin American History, Washington, D.C., December 27-30, 1992. PK Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Tamara Spike first became interested in the topic of Spanish Florida while enrolled in archaeological field school at the San Pedro y San Pablo de Patale site (8LE152) in 1992 under the direction of Rochelle Marrinan. After graduating from Florida State University with a dual BA in Anthropology and Classics, she worked at a number of sites and projects around the state of Florida as an Archaeological Field Technician for Piper Archaeology/Janus Research. After defending her dissertation and graduating from Florida State University in Spring 2006, Tamara will be joining the faculty at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega, Georgia.