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## Entangled Borderlands: Europeans and Timucuan in Sixteenth-Century Florida

by Jonathan DeCoster

In February 1566, grisly news reached the Norman port cities of Dieppe and Le Havre. The French Huguenot colonists, who had left those ports for Florida less than two years previously, had been cruelly slaughtered by Spaniards. An open letter to France's king, purportedly written by the widows and orphans of the victims, was quickly published in an attempt to prod the crown into action. "The blood of your poor subjects, thus treacherously spilt, cries out before God for vengeance," it exclaimed.<sup>1</sup> When the crown seemed deaf to the public outcry, a private citizen, Dominique de Gourgues, felt driven to personally avenge his countrymen. An anonymous contemporary text titled *The Recovery of Florida* tells the

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1. "Requete au Roy Faite par les Femmes Vefves Enfans Orphelins, Parens et Amis de ses Suiets ont Esté Cruellement Massacrez par les Hespagnols en la France Antartique, Nommée la Floride" (1566), pages unnumbered. A copy is reproduced in photostat as *Requete Au Roy, Faits En Forme De Complaintes Par Les Femmes Refues, & Enfans Orphelins, Parens & Amis De Ses Subjects: Qui Ont Esté Cruellement Massacres Par Les Espagnols, En La France Antarti Que Nommee La Florida*, Photostat Americana 231 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929). The letter was also included in various editions of Nicolas le Challeux, *Discours De L'histoire De La Floride* (1566).

story of how in 1568 Gourgues convinced a small force of French soldiers and sailors to recapture Florida for France.<sup>2</sup>

*The Recovery of Florida* praises the zeal and fearlessness of Gourgues, but it also recognizes the extent to which his success depended on the participation of indigenous allies. According to the narrative, Gourgues knew that the French colonists had befriended some of the natives several years earlier, and he expected them to willingly augment his slim numbers against the Spaniards. As anticipated, when Gourgues encountered Saturiwa, the leader of an alliance of Timucua Indians, Saturiwa professed that he and his allies “had never ceased to love the French because of the good treatment they had received,” and offered to provide the forces necessary to help the French rout the Spaniards.<sup>3</sup> The text celebrates how, after the French victory, Gourgues was greeted as a liberator by the Timucuans. One old woman even proclaimed that “she did not mind dying now that she had once more seen the French in Florida.”<sup>4</sup>

In most contemporary and modern accounts of this event, the Timucuan allies of Saturiwa are seen to have eagerly joined Gourgues because of their longstanding friendship with the French and the maltreatment they had received from the Spanish.<sup>5</sup> Implicit to such an interpretation is the assumption that

2. The Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BNF) contains at least 7 manuscript copies of *La Reprise* [or *Reprins*] *de la Floride par le Capitaine Gourgue*. A variant printed in 1568 residing at the Bibliothèque Mazarine was reproduced in facsimile in 1928 by the Massachusetts Historical Society as *Histoire Memorable De La Reprins De L'isle De La Floride*, Photostat Americana 220 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1928). Another variant was included in publications of René Goulaine de Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable De La Floride* (Paris, 1586). The quotes used in this article are taken from the manuscript Fonds Français 6124, BNF.

3. *La Reprise de la Floride*, Fonds Français 6124, f. 12 recto, BNF.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 27 recto.

5. Eugene Lyon, one of the most important historians of the Spaniards during this period in Florida, typifies the way in which scholars have accepted this premise. He writes, “The enemies of the French had, perforce, become friends of the Spanish, and Indians who had allied with [the French] were now firmly united against the Spaniards,” in *The Enterprise of Florida: Pedro Menéndez De Avilés and the Spanish Conquest of 1565-1568* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976), 198. While contemporary historians (including Lyon) might be sympathetic to the possibility that native leaders such as Saturiwa exerted some degree of agency in their negotiations with Europeans, most have agreed with him in identifying European rivalry as the primary force behind such colonial interactions. For example, see Paul E. Hoffman, *A New Andalusia and a Way to the Orient: The*



the conflict in Florida was simply a peripheral outgrowth of the rivalry between France and Spain originating in Europe. While the events of the massacre and the reprisal undoubtedly serve as excellent illustrations of how European conflicts were played out on a smaller scale at the periphery of empires, a strict focus on the Franco-Spanish dimension fails to take account of the indigenous people who participated in the conflict. The Timucuans were not simply co-opted by the European rivalry, but instead willingly chose to take part in the Franco-Spanish dispute because of its utility for their indigenous political interests.

Emphasizing this native-oriented dimension allows us to see how the European experience in Florida was shaped not only by intra-European conflicts, but also by intra-Timucuan conflicts, played out in part through European auxiliaries. Such an inversion requires recasting the concept of a "borderland" as not just a peripheral zone separating European empires but also indigenous polities.<sup>6</sup> In the sixteenth century, most of Florida, and indeed the North American continent, remained under undisputed native hegemony. In those places, as Juliana Barr has put it, "the primary power relations were not European versus Indian, but relations among native peoples."<sup>7</sup> Would-be colonists arrived on the continent to find themselves amid preexisting rivalries and alliances that conditioned whether natives would choose not only to adapt or resist, but also to assist colonial incursions. Native leaders' choices had significant effects on European colonies, and we cannot understand them apart from their native political context. As representative examples of the relationships commonly formed at the leading edge of colonial empires, the ever-shifting alliances between Europeans and Timucuans in the sixteenth century help illustrate how these complex and entangled interactions characterized imperial and native borderlands.

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*American Southeast During the Sixteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 218-230; and John T. McGrath, *The French in Early Florida: In the Eye of the Hurricane* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 102-155. A notable exception is John H. Hann, *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 38-66.

6. For the native construction of borderlands, see Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 11; Pekka Hämäläinen developed the idea of indigenous empires in *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
7. Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 6.

The relationship between Saturiwa and Gourgues emerged from a deeper and more ambivalent history between the French and their native neighbors. A year before the massacre in 1564, the French had established their colony in an area inhabited by dense populations of natives labeled by scholars as Timucuan. Anthropological linguists define Timucuan as a distinct language family spoken across a broad swath of northern Florida and southeastern Georgia. It had about a dozen closely-related dialects. Perhaps as many as 20,000 Timucua-speakers lived in this area in 1564. Their societies were stratified into a hereditary nobility and a class of commoners, although commoners of exceptional ability could rise into the elite class. Europeans recorded the use of the terms *holata*, *utina*, and *paracoussi* to designate Timucuan chiefs, yet it is not clear whether these terms indicated hierarchical levels, local variation, or some other distinction for the Timucuan such as a "peace" or "war" leader. These chiefs and important counselors inherited their offices matrilineally, and while chiefs did not possess absolute authority, they were treated deferentially and enjoyed privileges such as the right to collect tribute and the right to exemption from certain kinds of labor. Men usually filled these roles, though not exclusively. These characteristics have led anthropologists to characterize the Timucuan polities as simple chiefdoms, political entities with one level of hierarchical social institutions above the local community.<sup>8</sup>

The Timucuan chiefdoms emerged in the context of regional social change generated by the rise of Mississippian chiefdoms in the interior southeast around A.D. 1000. Mississippian societies developed new

8. Kathleen A. Deagan, "Cultures in Transition: Fusion and Assimilation among the Eastern Timucua," in *Tacachale: Essays on the Indians of Florida and Southeastern Georgia During the Historic Period*, ed. Jerald T. Milanich and Samuel Proctor (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1978), 107; Ives Goddard, "The Indigenous Languages of the Southeast," *Anthropological Linguistics* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 3-4, 10-11; Julian Granberry, "A Grammatical Sketch of Timucua," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 56, no. 1 (1990): 60-61; Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 1-26; Jerald T. Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 45-50; Jerald T. Milanich, *The Timucua* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 38-66; John E. Worth, *The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida* 2 vols. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 1:4-18. The term "chiefdom" is widely used but also problematic. I use it in a broad sense to mean simply a multi-community political unit based on hierarchical social institutions rather than kin-based egalitarianism. I use simple chiefdom to mean one layer of control above the local community, and complex chiefdom to mean more than one. See David G. Anderson, *The Savannah River Chiefdoms: Political Change in the Late Prehistoric Southeast* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 5-8. In line with Timothy R. Pauketat's critique, I eschew any implication of social evolution and use the terms descriptively. See Pauketat, *Chiefdoms and Other Archaeological Delusions* (New York: AltaMira Press, 2007).



levels of social stratification and political consolidation that supported the creation of monumental earthworks, the expansion of agriculture, and several other traits that scholars identify as markers of Mississippian culture. They also began to maintain long-distance exchange networks; Mississippian culture traveled along those exchange networks from the core Mississippian area in the Mid-South to the Atlantic coast. There, at the eastern terminus of such exchange, the Timucuans could be said to inhabit the periphery of the Mississippian world.<sup>9</sup> Although smaller-scaled and less complex than their Mississippian counterparts, Timucuan chiefdoms came to encompass between two and ten villages organized into ranked hierarchies, and temporary alliances could bring together as many as forty chiefs under a single dominant leader. Anthropologists and archaeologists estimate that twenty-five or thirty of these chiefdoms may have existed when Europeans arrived in Florida.<sup>10</sup> But as with other Mississippian and Mississippian-like cultures, the growth of chiefdoms displaced populations and increased competition for resources, leading in turn to a rise in intersocietal conflict. In fact, the name "Timucua" itself evolved from usage by Spanish colonists in the sixteenth century, and seems to have been a pejorative meaning "enemy." Rather than a self-designation, the term "Timucua" gestures towards the diversity and competition among Timucuan-speaking polities. These longstanding rivalries led the Timucuans to recruit the French newcomers as allies in their intra-native conflicts at nearly every opportunity.<sup>11</sup>

9. Keith H. Ashley, "On the Periphery of the Early Mississippian World: Looking Within and Beyond Northeastern Florida," *Southeastern Archaeology* 21, no. 2 (Winter 2002): 162-177; Charles R. Cobb, "Mississippian Chiefdoms: How Complex?" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32 (2003): 63-84.

10. Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 15-17; Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord*, 45; Worth, *The Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 1:6-18.

11. The ethnohistorical evidence employed throughout this discussion unequivocally points to intra-Timucuan conflict predating the arrival of Europeans. The archaeological evidence, however, is more ambiguous. For instance, the artwork of one of the French colonists, Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues, depicts a palisaded village, a depiction reinforced by numerous colonial documents. Evidence of palisades is usually interpreted by archaeologists and anthropologists as a sign of longstanding conflict. See, for example, George R. Milner, "Warfare in Prehistoric and Early Historic Eastern North America," *Journal of Archaeological Research* 7, no. 2 (June 1999): 123-124. However, archaeologists have not located any evidence of palisades in their limited excavations of eastern Timucuan sites. See Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 88-89; Milner, 122-125; Rebecca Saunders, "Forced Relocation, Power Relations, and Culture Contact in the Missions of La Florida," in *Studies in Culture Contact: Interaction, Culture Change, and Archaeology*, ed. James G. Cusick (Carbondale, IL: Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University, 1998), 407, 412; Milanich, *The Timucua*, 132, 164-166.

The French colonists encountered four major, mutually hostile Timucuan polities during the fourteen months they spent in northern Florida. The French fort was near the mouth of the St. Johns River, where the colonists interacted most intensively with the *paracoussi*<sup>12</sup> Satoriwa and his affiliates. The French were told that he ruled over thirty subordinate chiefs, which would have corresponded to a capacity to field several thousand men if necessary. Further up the St. Johns, the *olata* Outina led a confederacy of some forty village chiefs deeply antagonistic to Satoriwa's alliance. Less is known about the inland Potano chiefdom, but in the 1560s it was considered nearly as powerful as Satoriwa and Outina. When the French arrived in 1564, Outina was already actively at war with both Satoriwa and Potano. Finally, a pair of related chiefs, Houstaqua and Onatheaqua, resided further to the west, beyond the normal range of interaction with Satoriwa but regularly at odds with Outina. Houstaqua and Onatheaqua may have been siblings, and each allegedly possessed a population as great as or greater than Satoriwa's or Outina's polities.<sup>13</sup>

René Goulaine de Laudonnière, the captain of the French settlement, recognized that military assistance was perhaps the most valuable asset he could offer the Timucuan. He believed that he could exploit their animosity to draw them into alliances, yet avoid alienating himself from their enemies by failing to actually commit to violence. By maintaining favorable relationships with mutually hostile Timucuan rivals, he hoped to retain the ability to trade for food, gather information, and pass across Timucuan borders to sources of gold and silver rumored to lie inland.

His meetings with Timucuan often focused on their rivalries, giving him frequent opportunities to pledge French soldiers to serve native leaders. He concluded his first such alliance with Satoriwa around June 28, 1564, when Satoriwa revealed that he considered Outina "his oldest and truest enemy."<sup>14</sup> Quickly making the connection between his desires and Satoriwa's needs, Laudonnière explained that "I understood what he wanted to say.

12. Regardless of the locally used term, the French usually used the term *roi* and the Spanish *cacique* to describe native leaders. On the few occasions that an indigenous title was used by the French, it was *paracoussi* Satoriwa and *olata* Outina. It is not clear what the distinction meant to the Timucuan.

13. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, passim; Worth, *The Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 1:19-34.

14. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 42 recto.





to sustain, however. Satoriwa ostensibly agreed to the proposal of reconciliation with Outina, but even Laudonnière could read the growing resentment behind the friendly facade.<sup>20</sup>

In September, Laudonnière dispatched his lieutenants Michel le Vasseur and Thiébaud d'Arlac with ten soldiers to Outina's village to make peace between the rivals. The Timucuan *olata* seems to have welcomed the arrival of French soldiers, and he requested they join him in an attack against his rival Potano. Outina may have recognized the difficulty in turning the French against Satoriwa, or he may have been more interested in exerting his power into the interior than downriver into Satoriwa's coastal plain. For the French soldiers, residence at Fort Caroline had seemed an unjust imprisonment, calculated to rob them of the conquests for which they had come to Florida. Outina had sent enough gifts to the fort to convince the soldiers that he could provide them with better access to the riches they sought than Satoriwa, and they grew restive under Laudonnière's restraint.<sup>21</sup> Like Laudonnière, they too expected to manipulate native rivalries, but they favored a more active role. "The Spaniards," they argued, "when they made their gains, always allied with some king to ruin the other."<sup>22</sup> For both Laudonnière and his men, the exploitation of native conflict was a key strategy. They simply differed on their opinion of how much to commit themselves to a single Timucuan leader.

Although Laudonnière had thus far avoided actual fighting on behalf of any Timucuan, in his absence his lieutenant, D'Arlac, agreed to Outina's request to provide six French arquebusiers for the attack on Potano. With the French firearms positioned at the front of Outina's 200 warriors, the combined force easily took the town, with only one Frenchman killed during the fighting. The French captain had intended to avoid entanglement in the Timucuan rivalries, but now the French were finally engaged on behalf of Outina, a commitment that increased the complexity of their relationships with the other Timucuan.<sup>23</sup>

20. Ibid., f. 53 verso-56 recto.

21. Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues, "Narrative of Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues," in *The Work of Jacques Le Moyne De Morgues: A Huguenot Artist in France, Florida, and England*, ed. P. H. Hulton, trans. Neil M. Cheshire, 2 vols. (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Publications, 1977), 1:122-124.

22. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 77 verso.

23. Ibid., f. 59 recto-60 recto.

Over the winter of 1564-1565, Outina requested another strike against Potano. Entangled in an increasingly complicated web, Laudonnière hesitated. But fearing the unrest and dissension that already racked Fort Caroline, he submitted to the will of the soldiers. Thirty Frenchmen joined 300 of Outina's men for a second joint victory against Potano.<sup>24</sup> At first this seemed to bode well for the ability of the French to replicate the kind of intercultural cooperation that had led directly to spectacular Spanish successes in other parts of the New World, but in fact the Timucuan rivalries proved difficult to manage. In the aftermath of the victory, Outina dispatched a squadron of messengers to loudly proclaim the victory among the Timucuans. This not only served to spread the word of Outina's increased military might, but it also alienated the French from any Timucuans who considered themselves Outina's rivals. Saturiwa had already expressed a growing resentment of Laudonnière's inconstancy, and as word of the Franco-Outina victory over Potano reached other adversaries of Outina, many sent emissaries to Fort Caroline hoping to turn Laudonnière against his new ally. But with these two strikes, Outina had successfully supplanted his rivals. He had become the only military ally of the French, and the permanent presence of French soldiers now preemptively guarded his village from other Timucuans who would be reluctant to alienate the French colony.

Saturiwa and his cohort now refused to trade with the French. This left Outina as practically their only trading partner, a development that introduced a dangerous sort of dependency for the French colony. Laudonnière had prudently traded for food throughout the fall and stored it for the difficult winter, anticipating the arrival of French supply ships in late spring, but when the ships failed to appear by May, Saturiwa's rejection left Outina as virtually their only source of food. Laudonnière had previously hoped to avoid this vulnerability by withholding his commitment to any single one of the Timucuans, but now the French were compelled to protect Outina's village and its stored corn from retaliation by Potano. Their interests had become increasingly entangled, to Laudonnière's chagrin.<sup>25</sup>

The French soldiers had hoped that their support for Outina against Potano would stand them in good stead, but Outina's

24. *Ibid.*, f. 74 recto.

25. *Ibid.*, f. 79 recto-79 verso.





Theodor de Bry, "How the King Outina Defeated His Enemy Patanou with the Help of the French," *Grands Voyages, America*, Part 2 (1591), State Archives of Florida, *Florida Memory*, <http://floridamemor.com/items/show/254323?id=13>.

Timucuans now began to exploit the French in their trading, demanding exorbitant rates on the rare occasions they agreed to trade at all. As Laudonnière himself grimly mused, "thus one commonly sees that necessity changes men's affections."<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, in the vulnerability of the French, Outina saw an opportunity to further antagonize his Timucuan enemies. He communicated to Laudonnière that he wished to take prisoner a disobedient subordinate named Astina, and he once again requested military assistance. The French would find food at Astina's village, he implied, which they could loot after the completion of their task. Laudonnière agreed to provide the soldiers, but Outina deployed them instead against other enemies. Laudonnière's account leaves unclear the means of Outina's deception or the true target of the French soldiers, but there can be no doubt as to the rage and indignation felt by the French soldiers who had been deceived. Yet still, Laudonnière feared to retaliate.<sup>27</sup> As the colonists

26. Ibid., f. 82 verso.

27. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 82 recto-83 verso; Le Moyne, "Narrative," 1:125.



neared starvation, the French captain found himself on the wrong end of his own manipulations. Outina had used his influence over the food supply to dominate the French trading negotiations and strong-arm them into fighting against their will. He had benefitted immensely by welcoming European colonists into his territory and he clearly remained focused on turning French guns against his native rivals. However, French acquiescence was about to end.

Reluctantly, Laudonnière allowed the soldiers in Fort Caroline to persuade him to capture Outina and ransom him for food. The French captain feared inciting the Timucuans further, but he feared his rebellious soldiers more. A French force successfully abducted Outina in late April or early May 1565, but the action failed to generate the hoped-for delivery of food. Instead, Laudonnière recorded the development of a power struggle within Outina's alliance that diminished French hopes of any ransom. Two factions now competed to name his replacement, and they appeared to show little concern for their former leader (although there is the possibility that this was a strategy in which Outina was complicit). The French believed that the ransom negotiations served only to buy time until an opportunity should arise to capture Laudonnière or attack the French colony, and indeed, on July 27, Outina's Timucuans ambushed a French party, initiating a period of open warfare.<sup>28</sup>

The break with Outina failed to accomplish its intended aim of securing food for the colonists, but it did open the door for a rapprochement with Sauriwa and his allies. Soon after Outina's capture, Sauriwa's messengers began arriving at Fort Caroline asking that the rival *olata* be executed or released to them. In exchange, they offered as much food as the French might need. Laudonnière refused to surrender Outina, but he and the other French colonists nonetheless took advantage of the opportunity to obtain food from several villages associated with Sauriwa. After the outbreak of full-blown fighting with Outina in late July, the reunion with Sauriwa seemed complete, and the newly reconciled allies filled the French boats with corn.<sup>29</sup>

28. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 83 recto-90 verso. Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 45, suggests that the factions were composed of Outina's son, his patrilineal heir, competing against his eldest sister's oldest son, his matrilineal heir.

29. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 85 recto, 93 recto.

It appeared then that Sauriwa had finally triumphed over Outina. He had regained his position as the primary French ally and trading partner, and French soldiers were now finally willing to fight against his rivals. As helpful as the reconciliation with Sauriwa was for the French, though, they had learned that they could not safely depend on the *paracoussi* and his food to preserve the settlement, and they would still need reinforcements and supplies from France if they hoped to survive in the long term. With the French ships four months overdue, the colonists lost hope in such deliverance, and they readied their own makeshift boats for the retreat home.<sup>30</sup>

As Laudonnière prepared to depart, he regretted the rift with Outina but he argued that his reconciliation with Sauriwa ameliorated, perhaps even compensated, for the failure. With little else to show for his fourteen months in Florida, he held up the alliance with Sauriwa as a triumph, and indeed the primary objective of his enterprise, stating, "Yet, I lost not the alliance of eight neighboring kings and lords, who always succored me with everything that was possible. Indeed, this was the main point of all my designs, to win and hold them, knowing how much their friendship was important for our enterprise."<sup>31</sup> In point of fact, they had not always kept him supplied with all that he needed; that was merely the tentative state of affairs as he planned his departure. Even then, Laudonnière promised that the French would help Sauriwa defeat his rival Timucuan, as he had vowed so many times before, writing "I gave them to understand that within ten moons (as they call their months), I would see them again with such force that I would render them victorious over all their enemies."<sup>32</sup> For Sauriwa, this promise was encouraging, but he pressed for still more. Until their return, he requested that Laudonnière hand over one of the small boats and leave Fort Caroline intact for protection against Outina and other rivals. To this Laudonnière reluctantly agreed, hoping to remain on friendly terms until his departure. Both Laudonnière and Sauriwa tacitly understood that any cooperation between the French and the Timucuan was dependent on its utility for Sauriwa's rivalries with other Timucuan, and should that utility diminish, the "friendship" would be withdrawn.

In a striking twist of fate, just as Laudonnière waited for favorable winds to carry the colonists back to France, on August 28, 1565 Jean Ribault's reinforcement fleet arrived. Ribault was

30. Ibid., f. 93 recto-93 verso.

31. Ibid., f. 94 recto.

32. Ibid., f. 98 verso.



followed promptly by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés on September 4. Menéndez was bent on destroying the colony whose inhabitants had so recently decided to abandon it. The violent encounter between French and Spanish colonists in Florida has been treated extensively elsewhere, but a cursory sketch will be helpful here.

Menéndez immediately challenged the French ships anchored outside the mouth of the River of May. Ribault opted to reload all of his best soldiers and fight Menéndez at sea, but a rising hurricane scattered the French fleet. Menéndez managed to disembark his soldiers some forty miles south of the fort (where he established the town of St. Augustine), and, with the assistance of unnamed native guides, took advantage of the hurricane to effect a surprise overland assault on the fort. The wounded soldiers and tradesmen, left behind at the fort because they had been deemed useless for Ribault's fleet, put up little resistance. The Spaniards easily took Fort Caroline. Within days, Indians reported to Menéndez the wreck of the French ships scattered by the storm. Menéndez sent soldiers to meet them, and the remaining French surrendered to the Spaniards in three groups, on September 29, October 11, and November 1. In the first two cases nearly all the prisoners were put to the knife, while in the third Menéndez took captive all who surrendered. The sources disagree about the precise numbers involved, but perhaps 200–300 French were executed, another 175 or so were captured, some fifty escaped to the small French ships in the harbor at Fort Caroline, and as many as 220 voluntarily fled to the Timucuans, preferring their chances with the Indians over the Spaniards.<sup>33</sup>

33. Lyon, *Enterprise of Florida*, covers the Spanish perspective comprehensively, as does McGrath the French in *Eye of the Hurricane*. The most important primary sources are Nicolas Le Challeux, *Discours De L'histoire De La Floride, Contenant La Trahison Des Espagnols, Contre Les Subiets Du Roy, En L'an Mil Cinq Cens Soixante Cinq* (Dieppe, 1566), 22–54; Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 99 recto–114 recto; Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales, "Memoria del buen suceso y buen Viaje que dios nuestro señor fue servido de dar a la armada que salio de la ciudad de caliz para la prouincia y costa de la florida..." 1565, Patronato 19, R.17, Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI); Le Moyne, "Narrative," 1:131–134; Pedro Menéndez de Avilés to King Philip II, October 15, 1565, transcribed in *Colección de Documentos Inéditos Para La Historia De España*, ed. Martín Navarrete, Miguel Salvá, and Pedro Sáinz de Baranada 112 vols. (Madrid: Impr. de la Viuda de Calero, 1842–95), 14: f. 288 verso–300 recto; "Memorial que hizo el Dr. Gonzalo Solís de Merás, de todas las jornadas y sucesos del Adelantado Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, su cuñado, y de la conquista de la Florida, y justicia que hizo en Juan Ribao y otros franceses," printed in Eugenio Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida: Su Conquista y Colonización Por Pedro Menéndez De Avilés* 2 vols. (Madrid: Imp. de los hijos de J. A. García, 1893), 1:169–226.



The French and Spanish accounts of their clash accord little role to the Timucuan, but in fact, the Indians played key roles in shaping the encounter, and even their absences reveal conscious decisions about their participation in the European rivalry. Befitting the supposed alliance between the French and Saturiwa, the *paracoussi*'s subordinate ally Emoloa kept Laudonnière informed on Spanish movements. He reported that the Spaniards had seized the houses of the Timucuan at the village of Selay, about forty miles south of Fort Caroline, a description that implies at least some degree of resistance to the newcomers.<sup>34</sup> In contrast, Spanish accounts record the gracious welcome they received at Selay and the deep hostility to the French among the natives in its vicinity.<sup>35</sup> It is unclear whether Selay was considered part of Saturiwa's alliance, so the meaning of this discrepancy is ambiguous. If Selay was ostensibly allied to Saturiwa and thus the French, the difference between the representations may indicate an effort by Saturiwa to court both the French and the Spanish, receiving the Spaniards kindly but giving the French the impression that they had been resisted. Indeed, the Spanish found two brothers at Selay who were very familiar with Fort Caroline, having visited only six days prior, implying the presence at Selay of at least some Timucuan friendly to the French and Saturiwa.<sup>36</sup>

The Selay natives apprised Menéndez of the potential size of the French forces and their relationships with various Timucuan leaders, and the two brothers familiar with Fort Caroline volunteered to lead the Spanish expedition as guides. It was also likely Selay Indians who communicated the location of the French castaways to Menéndez after his capture of the French fort. Unfortunately the Spanish records provide little clarity on the Selay natives' motivations, as the Spaniards had not yet learned to distinguish any of the native polities, referring to them generically as "indios" and individual leaders as "caciques" without specific appellation. For the Selay Indians, alliance with the Spaniards against Saturiwa may have represented an opportunity to strike at an enemy or a tyrannical overlord. If they resented the treatment of the French specifically, they took a risk helping the Spanish, an unknown

34. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 106 recto.

35. Mendoza Grajales, "Memoria del buen suceso," 6 verso–7 recto.

36. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, f. 106 recto; Mendoza Grajales, "Memoria del buen suceso," f. 6 verso–7 recto; Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:80, 95.

entity, supplant the French, who had recently been brought under control by Satoriwa.<sup>37</sup>

Without the guidance of Timucuans living south of Fort Caroline, the Spanish fleet could not have located the French settlement before Ribault unloaded his reinforcements and supplies, nor could Menéndez have orchestrated his surprise overland raid. But perhaps more significant is the complete absence of Satoriwa and his allies from the conflict. The Timucuans in the area clearly understood that the Spaniards planned to attack the fort, and Satoriwa's ally Emoloa obviously had access to news coming from Seloy, yet Satoriwa made no effort to assist the French against the Spaniards. Furthermore, the Seloy guides' familiarity with Fort Caroline, located in the heart of Satoriwa's territory, might imply that they acted with his consent or under his direction. In either case, if Satoriwa did not encourage the Spanish capture of the fort, he did not try to prevent it either. His alliance with the French apparently did not extend to protecting them from their European rivals, at least not until it became clear who was likely to prevail.

The abrupt termination of the French colony has led to an oversimplification of its relationship with Satoriwa. Satoriwa, the French, and the Spaniards all perpetuated the fiction that Satoriwa and his allies "had never ceased to love the French" because it fit well into the narratives they each created to explain subsequent events.<sup>38</sup> Modern historians have generally accepted this static interpretation, but the evidence indicates otherwise.<sup>39</sup> The relationship had evolved over its first fourteen months from a promising alliance, through a period of tense hostility, and finally into a tepid agreement for Satoriwa to provide food for the French to maintain their war against Outina. Had the French remained, it doubtless would have continued to change. But because the relationship was cut off, the impression given in the autumn of 1565 became essentialized as an enduring friendship. Furthermore, the Spanish fear of retaliation bred a persistent belief in such an alliance, even in the face of contradictory evidence.

37. Mendoza Grajales, "Memoria del buen suceso," f. 6 verso–7 recto; Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, September 11, 1565, in Navarrete, *Colección*, 14:f. 285 recto; Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, October 15, 1565, in *ibid.*, f. 289 recto, 290 recto; Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, December 5, 1565, in *ibid.*, f. 300 verso.

38. *La Reprise de la Floride*, f. 12 recto.

39. See note 5 above.



Menéndez estimated that 150 French colonists had escaped him and found refuge with the Timucuan, and he believed that the ongoing potential of a combined Franco-Saturiwa retaliation posed a grave threat. Because of this, he immediately began negotiating with Timucuan leaders to have the French captives turned over to him, and he fretted constantly about the supposedly friendly relations between the French and the natives. This concern, however, was temporarily eclipsed by the need for provisions for his newfound colony. Menéndez believed that the danger of the French alliances with Florida's natives would only be magnified if French reinforcements arrived, but he also recognized that starvation would compel his own soldiers to alienate the Timucuan. Of all the hazards for a new settlement, he considered a shortage of food the most pressing, and he left in November to procure supplies in Havana.<sup>40</sup>

As he prepared to depart, Menéndez still held out hope that Saturiwa could be peeled away from the French. "On this river there are large settlements of Indians, and they all are great friends of the French that were there ... [but] all the Indians do not have such perfect peace with them that they cannot have a firmer one with us, because I will not allow a grain of maize to be taken from them," he reported to Philip II.<sup>41</sup> Menéndez's reports to the crown missed few opportunities to laud his own singular abilities, and the ease with which he expected to win native allies reveals some of the credulity to which he was sometimes given, particularly when Indians told him what he wanted to hear. But he had real reason to feel encouraged by what he had seen in his short encounter with the Timucuan. From September to November of 1565, the relationship between the Spaniards and Saturiwa's Timucuan was apparently intimate enough to encourage many of the Indians to relocate their dwellings closer to the former French fort now renamed San Mateo, presumably for better access to European trade goods. Also, around September 20, Saturiwa turned over to Menéndez several of the Frenchmen who had sought refuge with him. All signs indicated that the Timucuan *paracoussi's* dedication to his French friends was less than absolute, despite Menéndez's

40. Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, October 15, 1565, in Navarrete, *Colección*, 14:f. 289 verso, 291 verso, 293 recto–293 verso, 298 verso, 299 verso; Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, December 5, 1565, in *ibid.*, f. 301 recto, 303 recto.

41. Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, October 15, 1565, in *ibid.*, f. 293 recto–293 verso.



persistently voiced fear of their close friendship and potential for combined retaliation.<sup>42</sup>

While Menéndez wintered in Spain, however, the soldiers in Florida appear to have undermined whatever goodwill had been earned. They repeatedly antagonized Saturiwa and his people, eventually killing three of his high-ranked allies. Relations had so deteriorated that when some of Saturiwa's Timucuans captured the Spaniard Rodrigo Troche in March 1566, the *paracoussi* ordered his heart torn out of his living chest. By May, Saturiwa had killed over 100 Spaniards and burned the fort at St. Augustine. The constant attacks forced the Spaniards to relocate St. Augustine to a more removed location at the entrance to the bar, a stark contrast with the Timucuans' own desire to live closer to the Spaniards at San Mateo only half a year before.<sup>43</sup>

Menéndez, the frustrated commander, attributed the conflict largely to the unruliness of the common soldiers who seem to have lived in a near-constant state of rebellion. The chronic food shortages that plagued French and Spanish Florida in these years also suggest that demands for food likely played a central role in the soldiers' depredations. However, it may be significant that while Saturiwa made multiple overtures for an alliance during the autumn, Menéndez neglected to follow up on the opportunity. Preoccupied with exploring the rest of his newly-won territory, he failed to make any contact with Saturiwa until late August 1566, a year after his arrival in Florida. At that point he was rudely rebuffed by Saturiwa's subordinates without even meeting the *paracoussi*, who may have resented the failure of the Spanish governor to respond to his friendly gestures. Rejected by Saturiwa, within days Menéndez found Outina cautiously willing to accept an alliance with the Spaniards. Thus, by the time Menéndez finally met Saturiwa in person for the first time in March 1567, he had neglected the *paracoussi* for a full year-and-a-half after settling in the heart of his territory. Saturiwa surely had noticed that by then Menéndez had already been allied with Outina for six months.<sup>44</sup>

42. Lyon, *Enterprise of Florida*, 123; Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:181.

43. Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:181, 217–221.

44. Menéndez de Avilés to Philip II, October 20, 1566, in John H. Hann, *Missions to the Calusa* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 358; Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:248–251, 256–257.

Regardless of whether Sauriwa's hostility stemmed from such a perceived insult, his first meeting with Menéndez quickly soured. According to Gonzalo Solís de Merás, Menéndez' brother-in-law, Sauriwa angrily revealed "that though he had many times said to the captains of [Menéndez] that he was his friend, he had not said this with a pure heart, because he held all the Christians for enemies, and that [Menéndez] and his soldiers were hens and cowards."<sup>45</sup> If true, this obviously had not prevented Sauriwa from seeking advantageous relationships with either the French or the Spaniards, but it helps explain his willingness to quickly abandon any inter-cultural alliance when it threatened to outlive its usefulness, and it undermines the characterization of the Franco-Timucuan alliance as an enduring friendship forged in united opposition to Spanish cruelty. Of course, it simplified matters for the Spaniards to characterize Sauriwa as duplicitous and inexorably antagonistic to Europeans, and we have only their account of this "confession." But the fact remained that Sauriwa had not defended the French from the initial Spanish attack, and had instead sought an alliance with Menéndez. Far from being subsumed by the European conflict, Sauriwa dissimulated and chose opportune moments when participation on either side might serve his own ends.

Menéndez left for Spain on May 18, 1567, not long after his ill-fated attempt to reconcile with Sauriwa.<sup>46</sup> In a meeting with Philip II on July 20, he tried to marginalize his native problems, claiming that he had befriended all of the leaders within 300 leagues of St. Augustine with the sole exception of the *paracoussi* Sauriwa.<sup>47</sup> But contrary to his depiction, it appears that it was in fact Outina who was isolated from the other Timucuan, not Sauriwa. At nearly the same time that Menéndez met with Philip, the Spanish chaplain Mendoza Grajales wrote a letter to the absent Menéndez explaining that the Spanish garrisons had been forced to send eighty soldiers to protect Outina from the united attacks of Sauriwa, Nacoroco, Potano, and others. Although brief, Mendoza Grajales' reference implies a unification of Timucuan who had not

45. Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:300-301.

46. Bartolomé de Barrientos, *Vida y Hechos de Pero Menendez de Aviles*, printed in *Dos antiguas relaciones de la Florida*, ed. Genaro García (México: J. Aguilar Vera y Comp., 1902), 144.

47. Barrientos in García, *Dos Antiguas Relaciones*, 145; Solís de Merás in Ruidíaz y Caravia, *La Florida*, 1:317.



previously cooperated with one another and had in fact functioned as rivals. His vagueness only hints at the true extent of cooperation against the new Spanish-Outina alliance, but clearly some kind of new opposition had coalesced.<sup>48</sup>

Without question the Spanish colony provoked this disruption of the pre-existing Timucuan political economy, and the Spanish forts served as the targets of much of the aggression of Saturiwa and his new allies. But in the incident mentioned by Mendoza Grajales, many of the Timucuans targeted Outina, not the Spaniards. Potano, who had been repeatedly attacked by the combined Outina-French forces in 1564 and 1565, had little to gain from making enemies of the Spanish but much to gain from the defeat of Outina. "As he saw himself harassed he sent for help and as a friend we sent it to him," wrote the chaplain, demonstrating how the Spaniards, under constant assault from Saturiwa, nonetheless felt compelled to dispatch a large force of soldiers to defend Outina from Potano.<sup>49</sup> Unwittingly echoing Laudonnière, Menéndez had written of the Indians that "I have not wanted to befriend any [leader] in order to make war with his enemy, even though he might also be my enemy," but this proved impossible in the Timucuan borderlands.<sup>50</sup> Europeans invariably found themselves tangled in the web of political relationships tying the Timucuans together.

While the Spaniards tried to navigate these political relationships, outrage steadily built in France over Menéndez's actions in 1564. One of the survivors, the carpenter Nicolas le Challeux, published a lurid description that proved particularly effective in galvanizing the public. His narrative held a special resonance for Dominique de Gourgues, a minor gentleman who had served the French crown for twenty years in Scotland, Piedmont, and the Levant. He had once been captured by the Spaniards and imprisoned as a galley slave, and this doubtless added to his spirited

48. Mendoza Grajales to Menéndez de Avilés, August 6, 1567, translated in "Letters of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and Other Documents Relative to His Career, 1555-1574," trans. Edward W. Lawson (St. Augustine, 1955, unpublished manuscript at the St. Augustine Historical Society), 328-332 (hereafter, Lawson, "Letters"); also mentioned in Juan Ripalta, "Indios de la costa de Florida," January 18, 1573, Patronato 257, N.1, G.3, R.20, AGI.

49. Mendoza Grajales to Menéndez de Avilés, August 6, 1567, in Lawson, "Letters," 330.

50. Pedro Menéndez de Avilés to Diego Avellaneda, October 15, 1566, printed in *Monumenta Antiquae Floridae (1566-1572)*, ed. Félix Zubillaga (Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1946), 93.



response to the news. He had previously made several voyages to Africa and South America, so he would not have attracted especial notice when he left Bordeaux on August 2, 1567 to “make war on the negroes” in Benin.<sup>51</sup> From Africa he made his way to Cuba, where he surprised his soldiers and crew by revealing his ultimate aim: to take revenge on the Spaniards in Florida. He needed to convince his men to take on the challenge, but he carried one of the former colonists with him as a guide and interpreter, proof that he had planned the scheme in advance. He reached Florida in mid-April 1568, just after Menéndez departed Spain with a small relief fleet for the colony.<sup>52</sup>

*The Recovery of Florida*, the anonymous French text sometimes attributed to Gourgues himself, emphasizes his cleverness in taking advantage of native allies to effect his revenge. “When he [Gourgues] arrived in Florida,” it reads, “he shrewdly associated with the savages and well understood how to make use of them and thus to make up for the scarcity of men he brought.”<sup>53</sup> The French commander fortuitously landed at the village of Tacatacuru, an ally of Saturiwa.<sup>54</sup> Tacatacuru enjoyed a particularly odious reputation among the Spaniards for allegedly slaying the Jesuit priest Pedro Martínez, and he stood accused of several other Spanish deaths. Before leaving for Spain, Menéndez had left specific instructions that Tacatacuru be hunted down and killed.<sup>55</sup> As a specially-targeted enemy of the Spaniards, then, Tacatacuru presented Gourgues with an ideal accomplice for his avowed strategy of using the Indians to defeat the Spaniards.

Gourgues fit equally well into the plans of Tacatacuru and his Timucuan allies. The text records that Gourgues was greeted warmly as a liberator, first by Tacatacuru, then by a hastily-called assembly of Saturiwa and his allies. According to the French text, Saturiwa complained to Gourgues of the ills they had suffered “because of the friendship they had contracted with the French,” yet he assured Gourgues that “they had never ceased to love the French because of the good treatment they had received from them when

51. *La Reprinsse de la Floride*, f. 4 verso.

52. Charles La Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française* (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit, 1899), 64; *La Reprinsse de la Floride*, f. 3 verso–9 verso.

53. *La Reprinsse de la Floride*, f. 30 recto.

54. *Ibid.*, f. 10 recto.

55. Barrientos in García, *Dos Antiguas Relaciones*, 141.

they commanded there.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the fear of a Franco-Timucuan alliance had kept the Spaniards on edge, but the actual interactions between the Spaniards and the Timucuans were more ambivalent than the Spaniards generally represented. Sauriwa and Menéndez had both demonstrated interest in an alliance that had failed to coalesce primarily because of Menéndez’s extended absences, not because the Franco-Sauriwa alliance proved an inviolable bond. But the anonymous narrative, like the writings of the Spaniards, perpetuates the myth of an ongoing Franco-Sauriwa relationship.

The register of the assembly taken by the French author conspicuously omits any mention of Potano or Nacoroco, Sauriwa’s allies as recorded by Mendoza Grajales, or any other Timucuans outside of the immediate vicinity of San Mateo. The broader coalition that had attacked Outina the previous summer may have been too distant to assemble on short notice or simply uninterested in joining an assault on the Spanish fort. The latter is the more likely explanation because, contrary to the French text, Spanish sources record that Sauriwa and Tacatacuru did not await the appearance of the French for deliverance, and had already assembled their forces before Gourgues’ arrival. The Spaniards had suffered sporadic attacks by Sauriwa and his allies for well over a year. According to one Spanish official, less than two weeks previously 400 Indians had made a concerted assault on San Mateo.<sup>57</sup> This ongoing conflict offers a more convincing explanation for their eagerness to attack the Spanish than any lingering loyalty to the French. “Have no fear,” said the gathered allies of Sauriwa to Gourgues, “we wish them more ill than you do.”<sup>58</sup>

The combined forces of 400 Timucuans and 100 Frenchmen attacked San Mateo and two small blockhouses, routing their inhabitants and killing every Spaniard they laid hands on. While Outina was not directly involved in the Franco-Sauriwa attack on San Mateo, there are hints that the Spaniards’ ongoing affiliation with Outina might have partly motivated Sauriwa and his allies to join with Gourgues and the French soldiers. Upon receiving word of the assault, Esteban de las Alas, an official at St. Augustine, pled for help from Outina, indicating that their alliance was still quite intact. Unaware that the fort had already been lost, Las Alas

56. *La Reprinse de la Floride*, f. 12 recto.

57. Esteban de las Alas to Philip II, May 5, 1568, Patronato 254, N.1, G.2, R.1, AGI.

58. *La Reprinse de la Floride*, f. 13 recto.



asked Outina to send six men to deliver messages to the besieged Spaniards under the cover of darkness. Yet before Las Alas had even dispatched his request to Outina, a small contingent of panicked Spanish soldiers had already gone to Outina's village seeking refuge.<sup>59</sup> Several years later, two Timucuan leaders tied to the Spaniards complained that their villages had been attacked by Satoriwa and his allies during the assault. This might imply that the assault on the fort offered an opportunity to settle intra-native conflicts not directly related to hostility against the Spaniards or friendship with the French.<sup>60</sup>

In the aftermath of the victory, Gourgues had no intention of replanting a French colony in Florida. He chose not to challenge the other Spanish settlements at St. Augustine and Santa Elena either. Instead, after briefly reveling in his triumph, he joined Satoriwa's Timucuan in razing the fort and then departed. Surprisingly, despite Satoriwa's central role in the destruction of San Mateo, in the ensuing months the Spaniards still entertained the prospect of reconciliation.<sup>61</sup> Satoriwa's close ally Emoloa made overtures to them just two months after Gourgues' visit, leading the Spaniards to believe that a turnabout for Satoriwa still might be possible.<sup>62</sup>

In fact, the Spaniards may have pursued peace because Satoriwa no longer figured as the leader of their opposition. Rumors reached St. Augustine that Gourgues had intended to build a permanent fort at the village of Tacatacuru, and by the end of 1568 that was where the Timucuan hostile to the Spanish presence gathered.<sup>63</sup> The island on which Tacatacuru lived may have offered a more strategic site from which to mount a defense, or Tacatacuru's polity may have begun to eclipse Satoriwa's as the dominant power and the leader of the opposition in the region.

59. Esteban de las Alas to Philip II, May 5, 1568, Patronato 254, N.1, G.2, R.1, AGI.

60. Cedulaio of Florida, 1573, Santo Domingo 2528, L.1, 69-71, AGI, cited in Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 138.

61. Juan Rogel to Francisco de Borgia, July 25, 1568, printed in Zubillaga, *Monumenta Antiquae Floridae*, 324.

62. Antonio Sedeño to Francisco de Borgia, November 17, 1568, printed in Zubillaga, *Monumenta Antiquae Floridae*, 352.

63. Antonio de Prado to Philip II, "Memorial de los fuertes y gente que a de aber a la florida," November 16, 1569, trans. Jeannette M. Thurber Connor, *Colonial Records of Spanish Florida Letters and Reports of Governors and Secular Persons*, Publications of the Florida State Historical Society 5, 2 vols (Deland: Florida State Historical Society, 1925), 1:269; Juan Rogel to Francisco de Borgia, February 5, 1569, printed in Zubillaga, *Monumenta Antiquae Floridae*, 379.

A Spanish source from 1602 documents the preeminence of Tacatacuru, and the transition may have occurred earlier.<sup>64</sup> When the Spaniards finally retaliated over the winter of 1568–1569, this was where they directed their efforts, implying that Sauriwa was no longer their primary concern.<sup>65</sup> Outina or his successor must have been pleased to see Sauriwa's power wane, even in the wake of the Franco-Sauriwa victory at San Mateo. In the long run, Outina had reaped a greater benefit than his rival from his relationships with the European colonists.

Gourgues vowed to Sauriwa that he would return within a year, but neither he nor any other French ships visited Florida for eight years.<sup>66</sup> Dozens of French sailors and soldiers shipwrecked in the aftermath of Fort Caroline's capture still lingered among the Indians, but few were with the Timucuans any longer, having dispersed further north among the Timucuans' northerly neighbors, the Guale and Orista.

Until 1578 it appeared that Spain's European rivals had abandoned their designs on Florida. In that year, a French ship foundered off the coast inhabited by the Guale and Orista. Around 100 French castaways were captured, and although the Native Americans enslaved them, the captives allegedly conspired with the Guale and Orista to contact the Timucuans and suggest a joint campaign against Spanish St. Augustine. The Guale and Orista had already destroyed the Spanish settlement nearest them, Santa Elena, and if the allegation of an impending alliance with the Timucuans was true, were willing to overcome their own differences with the Timucuans to expel the Spaniards from their last major stronghold in Florida. But the Timucuans rejected them. "The Indians here were not willing to consent to this, saying that they had peace and quietude with us and did not want any strife," wrote Pedro Menéndez Márquez, now the governor of Florida.<sup>67</sup> A similar event occurred in 1580, when two French ships tried to

64. Baltasar López, "Declaración sobre la conveniencia de trasladar el presidio de San Agustín y sobre la conversión de los Indios," September 15, 1602, printed in *Relación Histórica De La Florida, Escrita En El Siglo XVII*, ed. P. Atanasio López (Madrid: Impr. de Ramona Velasco, Viuda de P. Pérez, 1931), 28.

65. Juan Rogel to Francisco de Borgia, February 5, 1569, printed in Zubillaga, *Monumenta Antiquae Floridae*, 379.

66. Esteban de las Alas to Philip II, May 5, 1568, Patronato 254, N.1.G.2.R.1, AGI; *La Reprinsse de la Floride*, f. 25 verso–27 verso.

67. Pedro Menéndez Márquez to Philip II, June 15, 1578, translated in Connor, *Colonial Records*, 2:81.



encourage another pan-Indian alliance centered in the territory of the Guale and extending into Timucuan lands.<sup>68</sup> Rivalries between the Guale and Timucuan worked against an alliance with the French, and some of the natives sided with the Spaniards in their successful repulsion of the French frigates.<sup>69</sup>

It is difficult to say precisely why the Timucuan, who formerly rallied around Sauriwa, now proved unwilling to join the French and Guale in destroying St. Augustine. As historian John Hann pointed out, violent Spanish retaliation for previous offenses, the removal of Sauriwa and Tacatacuru as leaders (Tacatacuru was executed in 1569 and Sauriwa fades from the historical record), and longstanding Timucuan-Guale hostilities probably all played a role.<sup>70</sup>

Yet Governor Menéndez Márquez' depiction of an entirely subjugated Timucuan population near St. Augustine failed to capture the reality. There were evidently divisions among the Timucuan, even in the near vicinity of St. Augustine. On June 6, 1586, Francis Drake arrived at St. Augustine after committing devastating raids at Santo Domingo and Cartagena. Confronted by forty-two ships and 2,500 Englishmen, Menéndez Márquez and his eighty soldiers gamely defended their fort for a few hours, but as he explained to Philip II, "as soon as the English came down upon the fort, the Indians began to burn the town."<sup>71</sup> Not all of the Indians welcomed the English attackers, though. Drake allegedly tried to solicit one village near the fort, but found the village

68. Historians disagree about whether the Gualequini, the primary partners targeted by the French in 1580, were Guale or Timucuan. See Hann, *History of the Timucua Indians*, 70; and Amy Turner Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, Archaeology of Mission Santa Catalina De Guale 3 (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1994), 63.

69. Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana*, 63; Officials of Florida to Philip II, October 12, 1580, Santo Domingo 229, f. 26 recto, AGI.

70. Hann, *History of the Timucua Indians*, 70; Paul E. Hoffman, *Florida's Frontiers: A History of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 57-59.

71. Gabriel de Luxan and Diego Fernández de Quiñones to Philip II, July 1, 1586, translated in Irene Aloha Wright, *Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583-1594: Documents from the Archives of the Indies at Seville Illustrating English Voyages to the Caribbean, the Spanish Main, Florida, and Virginia*, Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society, Series II, vol. XCIX (London: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1951), 184-185; other details from Pedro Menéndez Márquez to President of the House of Trade, June 17, 1586, translated in *ibid.*, 163-164.

abandoned, its residents having fled to the woods.<sup>72</sup> These “friendly Indians” were supposedly protecting 200 Spanish noncombatants, but Menéndez Marqués apparently placed little faith in their loyalty. “The friendly Indians came down upon a certain estate at a distance from the fort, where the women and children had taken refuge,” wrote a Spaniard, “in view of which, and finding himself surrounded by the enemy and Indians, Pedro Menéndez Marqués withdrew and abandoned the fort.”<sup>73</sup> Once again, the sources fail to specify exactly which Timucuans joined the English destruction of St. Augustine and which abstained, let alone why. But some Timucuans who had been unwilling to join the proposed alliance with the French six years previously eagerly joined Drake. Perhaps they were convinced by an overwhelmingly superior English force, or perhaps they preferred the absence of Guale auxiliaries.

Where collaboration was required in the borderlands, quick, decisive strikes like those of Gourgues and Drake proved far easier to accomplish than sustained partnerships. We know almost nothing about Drake’s interactions with the Timucuans, but Gourgues and Saturiwa had a relatively straightforward and manageable, if mistrustful, relationship. Both the Frenchman and the Timucuan opposed the Spanish-Outina alliance, so they found it relatively easy to work together for a brief period of time. Gourgues’ predecessor, Laudonnière, had found it far more difficult to turn the intra-Timucuan rivalries to his own ends over the long term. Similarly, Saturiwa had been unable to persuade Laudonnière to take action against his enemies, and may have had difficulty holding together a pan-Timucuan opposition to the Spanish-Outina alliance. Adding to this tension, frequent ruptures in borderland partnerships provided continual opportunities for new, short-term collaborations. When the falling out between Outina and Laudonnière forced the French into fighting against Saturiwa’s old rival, the *paracoussi* took full advantage of the rift for the short time the French remained in Florida. Similarly, the Spaniards found that the Saturiwa-Outina rivalry made it easier to cooperate with Outina when relations were at their worst with Saturiwa. This may also explain why the Spaniards felt they could turn to Outina when they faced the combined Franco-Saturiwa attack.

Evaluating the impact of these relationships from the Timucuan perspective presents numerous challenges. The

72. Juan de Posada to Philip II, September 2, 1586, translated in *ibid.*, 205-206.



hostility of the Spaniards' immediate neighbor, Saturiwa, probably limited the ability of the former to acquire information about interactions among the Timucuan. We therefore know less than we would like about how their participation in the Franco-Spanish conflict affected them. Additionally, Spanish interests spanned an enormous geography, and during this period they generally prioritized their interactions with the Guale and the Calusa rather than the Timucuan. When, at the end of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards began to establish missions among the Timucuan, thereby bringing them into greater familiarity, they found that the Outina, Potano, and Saturiwa polities, as well as their webs of alliances, had altered significantly. Saturiwa's heirs had lost their pre-eminence to Tacatacuru, Outina's subordinates had begun to peel away, and Potano's chiefdom had largely collapsed, its main village destroyed.<sup>74</sup>

The presence of European soldiers, missionaries, livestock, and microbes doubtless wreaked significant, often catastrophic changes, and the overall Timucuan population seems to have declined after the arrival of Europeans in the sixteenth century. But the temptation to attribute this change solely to European intervention should be avoided, as such an interpretation rests on an implicit premise of a static pre-contact equilibrium. Quite to the contrary, the Timucuan lived in an inherently dynamic and volatile political world, and European intervention had the potential to accelerate or retard pre-existing changes as much as initiate new ones. Furthermore, an overemphasis on the transformative role of the Franco-Spanish clash threatens to efface the reciprocity of relationships between Europeans and Timucuan. Saturiwa demanded that Laudonnière "show himself a friend of his friends and an enemy of his enemies," and indeed it was those intra-Indian political dynamics that drove Timucuan not merely to adapt or resist European incursions, but rather to actively pursue partnerships with would-be colonists.<sup>75</sup>

73. Alonso Suarez de Toledo to Philip II, July 3, 1586, translated in *ibid.*, 187.

74. Deagan, "Cultures in Transition," 91; Hann, *History of the Timucua*, 68–72; Worth, *The Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 1: 21–28.

75. Laudonnière, *L'histoire Notable*, 53 recto.