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Uncomfortable Partners: The Franciscans of Córdoba, 1767-1829

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Uncomfortable Partners: The Franciscans of Córdoba, 1767-1829

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James t. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History

2014

Uncomfortable Partners: The Franciscans of Córdoba, 1767-1829

By

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This dissertation examines the universe of religion, politics and society in the era of the Latin American revolutions through the window of the Franciscans of Córdoba. While the historiography has traditionally argued that the regular clergy were largely unable to come up with an answer to the threats posed during this transitional period, my work offers an alternative, new perspective. The regular orders have been studied as homogeneous institutions of the *Ancien* Regime. However, the transformation of colonial society at the end of the eighteenth century had reached into the convents and monasteries; the Franciscans, then, acted as members of a changing order, but also as individuals with ambitions and interests of their own, in keeping with social and political change in the Atlantic world. There was a new universe of choices available to the Franciscans. Over the six decades encompassed by this work, the Franciscans negotiated and established alliances with civil authorities. Both the Spanish Crown and the revolutionary governments needed the Franciscans. Better than anybody else in the region, these priests could communicate effectively in churches and from pulpits. During the late colonial period, Franciscans preached sermons to locals to strengthen loyalty to the Crown. In the 1810s, the Franciscan sermons were filled with patriotism. Thus, the revolution gained legitimacy and reached consensus. Franciscans were among those few intellectuals who had the ability to conceive a coherent discourse in the transition from colonial to republican period. In the 1820s, the Franciscans sealed an alliance with a State that needed them as officials in rural areas. This enabled the Cordoban government to have loyal officials in border areas, while the Franciscans found a space to carry out their mission work. Franciscans knew well how to exert their influence both on popular sectors and the elites. While some historians have found the regular orders all but irrelevant to revolutionary change, the Franciscans were in fact crucial to the building of the new nations as vital, if uncomfortable, partners.

Uncomfortable Partners: The Franciscans of Córdoba, 1767-1829

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Acknowledgments

Twenty years ago, I first entered the *Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires* with Carlos Mayo. Once there, he gave me a short document that took me almost two months to read. That meeting in the Archive was the first step of my academic career. More importantly, it was the beginning of my friendship with Carlos. He remains my best role model for a teacher.

Ten years after, I traveled for the first time from La Plata to Atlanta. One hour after landing at the airport, I found myself driving a car that belonged to a person I had just met in the plane. That person was Susan Socolow. She warmly welcomed me by generously opened her house. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Susan for her patience, insightful comments and immense knowledge.

The document Carlos gave me that day in the Archive became the first source of this dissertation. In all these years, I met people who shaped both my professional career and my life as a whole. One of these persons is David Sheinin. I am thankful to him in many levels. He is a bright professor and wonderful person who helped me at every stage of my life. No matter how physically far he could be from me, I know he is always by my side. I am happy that David is *mi amigo*.

While in the United States I have learned the experience of being an immigrant and to my surprise that learning continued back in Argentina. I am extremely grateful for living this itinerant life and become a citizen of the world. It has been a fascinating trip from Atlanta to Seville, from Seville to Córdoba, from Córdoba to La Plata.

My research would not have been as complete and comprehensive without the generous support of the Institute for Comparative and International Studies Graduate Fellowship Award, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship, the Lilly Library Mendell Fellowship, and the Vatican Film Library Mellon Fellowship. I would not have been able to embark on my graduate studies without the support of the Emory University Graduate Fellowship which guided me throughout graduate school. I express my deepest gratitude to these institutions.

I would like to thank my fellow doctoral students for their support, feedback, and friendship. Joe Renouard provided me warm companionship at the beginning and the end of my graduate life in Atlanta. Nathan Vigil and his family were extremely generous to help me overcome the cultural shock during the first semester.

To Professors Jim Roark and Kristin Mann, my special thanks. They were crucial to make me compare Latin American with American and African history. Professor Jefrey Lesser helped me to find the broader theme of my work always hidden in any dissertation.

Professors Bianca Premo and Lyman Johnson generously commented on my early work. I also thank Jorge Cañizares-Ezguerra for providing insightful comments of different parts of this manuscript.

My sincere thanks goes to Bermard Bailyn for offering me the vibrant space of Harvard to discuss with colleagues from all the world about my project. I am also grateful to Jaime Rodriguez for enlightening me during a stimulating discussion that summer.

I also thanks people who were not part of the academic world but helped me out. Without knowing me in person, Katie Wilson has been nice and helpful during the final process of my dissertation.

I wish to thank the members of my dissertation committee for their support. Professor James Melton was instrumental in helping me through the last phase and I will forever be grateful to him. I am also deeply thankful to Professor Hernán Feldman. He did not hesitate to help me when I needed him. I would like to thank them for their extreme patience in the face of numerous obstacles.

Back in Argentina, Horacio Cafasso must be credited for showing me the great newspapers´ collection of the *Universidad Nacional de La Plata*. In Córdoba, I would like to thank María Celina Audisio from the *Archivo del Arzobispado* for her patience, willingness to secure documents, and helpful insight about my project.

In La Plata, I am thankful to Aníbal Viguera, Andrea Zingarelli and Osvaldo Barreneche for their confidence in my abilities. I would also want to thank Juan Carlos Giorgieri to open the doors of his wonderful school. I am also very grateful to Samuel Amaral for his encouragement and support during our talks at café *La Paris*. I also want to thank Sebastian Veron to show me how wonderful could be to come back to the little town you love.

Intellectual discussions with historians like Valentina Ayrolo have challenged me to think about the broader implications of this study. I also enjoyed her friendship. I am thankful with Mañe Barral for sharing with me her work.

I thank Alex Borucki for being my permanent interlocutor in this process. He helped me many times to find the appropriate solutions.

Life was happening while I was busy researching. So many people helped me in this last ten years that I would need a section of the same length that this dissertation to include them all.

Eleonora Lozano and Sonia del Amo showed me that if you are convince of your own principles you can challenge existing ideas and institutions.

My friends and family played a crucial role in helping me complete this dissertation. Gustavo Carri, Martín Montenovo, Marcelo Tomás, Gonzalo Villena and Adrian Zelayeta have been crucial for their permanent encouragement. I thank technology for making them closer to me.

Gustavo Paz provided me his friendship in Buenos Aires, Atlanta and La Plata. He is perhaps one of the most solid academics I have ever met. I am happy that our sons are close friends.

I have had great fun in sharing different experiences with Emir Reitano, and more broadly, life. I have enjoyed his company during this trip.

I especially thank my mom, and my sister, Martita. I thank them for their support. I always had them to count on when times were rough.

I am grateful to my niece Victoria and my nephew Santino for running to me every time I met them. Their hugs have been always a light in times of uncertainty

My father has taught me the power of learning. This is a tribute to him since he always reminded me to keep moving forward, as I had already come so far. I still miss him.

My son Juan's sense of humor and personality make him become the person I most admire. I used to take his hand when he was crossing the street. Now I realized it has been him the one that has taken mine.

None of this could have been possible without the love of my partner, Sabrina. She supported me from day one. Her encouragement and positive attitude kept me afloat during difficult moments. I would not have made it this far without her. Sa is the reason

why I finished this dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

> *"The question of liberty of conscience is in South America a question of political economy, for it implies European emigration and population. In the provinces, however, this was a question of religion, of salvation, and of eternal damnation. Imagine how it would be considered in Cordova!*
> Domingo Faustino Sarmiento

"Religion or death!" With this rhetoric, the infamous caudillo Facundo Quiroga encouraged the people of the Argentine interior to fight their opponents in the mid-1820s.[1] What made them die espousing a religious cause as the rest of the continent sacrificed itself in the name of nation? Was it religious conviction? Did their leader manipulate them? Was it both at the same time? Whatever the cause of their passion, there is a general agreement among scholars that such heroic Catholic fervor was part of the colonial inheritance.[2]

This Catholic fervor, however, was not evident when the Spanish Crown expelled the Jesuit Order from its dominions in 1767. The colonial society of the Río de la Plata did not protest against their expulsion even in places traditionally as ardently Catholic as Córdoba—a city located near the geographical center of modern day Argentina and the hub of Jesuit activities in the region.[3] The evidence also suggests that Córdoba's society

[1] That was the motto of the Catholic revolt against the laws allowing liberty of conscience in the Argentine interior in 1825. "In Cordova, an inquisition was established. (In San Juan…) they found one day that Facundo was at the gates of the city with a black flag, bearing a red cross, and the device "Religion or Death!" See Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo, or, Civilization and Barbarism*. New York: Penguin Books, 1998, 145.
[2] Sarmiento was the main sponsor of this notion but most of historians followed his idea.
[3] See Pablo Hernández, *El extrañamiento de los jesuitas del Río de la Plata y de las misiones del Paraguay por decreto de Carlos III*. Madrid: Victoriano Suárez, 1908.

was not eager to financially support the Franciscans, the most significant Catholic presence in the continent after the expulsion of the Jesuits.

In this work, I will analyze the universe of religion, politics and society through the window of the Franciscan Order in Córdoba, to see how an institution founded on traditional values faced the changes which occurred between the end of the colonial period and the beginning of the independent era. The Franciscans reacted to those changes in much more complex ways than expected a priori.

This dissertation is focused on the study of the Franciscans because they belonged to the largest male Catholic regular order and thus were members of the most visible institution to bridge the colonial and national periods in the region. Moreover, between 1767 and 1829, the Franciscan Order of Córdoba went from expansion to contraction. If in the late 1760s, the Franciscans seemed to be the heirs of the prestige of the Jesuits, in the 1820s they were struggling to survive. In the 1760s, the colonial state appeared to be handing them all the tools necessary to become one of the main instruments of colonial domination. Fifty years later, the Franciscans were no longer colonizers but instead mere political subjects. Why did the Franciscans of Córdoba experience such dramatic change between 1767 and 1829? By answering this question, we can understand the changing relationship between religious devotion, politics and society. Thus, the Franciscans of Córdoba's tale tells the story of the connections between a small group of local people to wider global transformations.

Historiography has traditionally argued that the Spanish Crown was the principal architect of change in the late colonial period.[4] During the course of the second half of the

[4] The bulk of the historiography was mostly concerned about New Spain. See Nancy Farriss, *Crown and Clergy in Colonial México, 1759-1821. The Crisis of Ecclesiastical Privilege.* Oxford: The Athlone Press,

eighteenth century, the Bourbon monarchs attempted to invigorate the Spanish and the Spanish American economies and more efficiently organize both mother country and colonies. They also enacted several reforms, some of them pertaining to the Church. As early as in 1772—for instance--, the Crown issued a *Real Cédula* affecting the internal organization of all the regular orders suffering internal disorder.[5] The result of the new Bourbon policies was to adversely affect the Catholic orders.

Recent scholarship, however, has changed the focus from the Crown to the Church itself. The authors challenge the idea that these reforms were the result of a defensive position, arguing instead that there was a real renovation movement driven by modern thinkers inside the Church.[6] My study looks at the transformation of the religious sphere, untangling the relationships between colonial and republican societies and the churchmen. Examples of this transformation can be found in the 1790s in Córdoba: the elite stopped financially supporting Franciscan activities at the same time as the city was enjoying economic and demographic growth;[7] slaves were fighting the regular orders in

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1968; David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico: The Diocese of Michoacan 1749-1810*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 and William B. Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred: Priests and Parishioners in Eighteenth-Century Mexic*o. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

[5] Real Cedula "con el saludable fin de restablecer y promover en tan dilatadas provincias la disciplina regular y monastica en su observancia." Latin American Mss., Lilly Library, Indiana University (hereafter LAMLL) Ecuador. "Para que los Arzobispos y Obispos de las Indias auxilien a los Visitadores y Secretarios Reformadores de los Regulares de aquellos Dominios." San Idelfonso, 26 August, 1772. There was another Cédula in 1781 targeting the Mercedarians. LAMLL Ecuador. "A los Virreyes, Audiencias, Prelados Diocesanos, y Provinciales de la Orden de la Merced en Indias, sobre si convendra quitar los Capitulos Provinciales de esta Religion en aquellos Dominios" Pardo, 12 February, 1781.

[6] See Pamela Voekel, *Alone before God: The Religious Origins of Modernity in Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002, and Margaret Chowning. "Convent Reform, Catholic Reform, and Bourbon Reform in Eighteenth-Century New Spain: The View from the Nunnery," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 85:1 (2005), 1-38. The same argument can be made about different eighteenth-century reforms in Europe. The religious reforms of Joseph II in Austria were long identified with a secularizing state imposing its will on the Church. Historians have since shown there were reform elements within the Church itself - a sort of Catholic Enlightenment - that spearheaded or at least supported the reforms. I am grateful to James Melton to refer me this information.

[7] For Córdoba's economic growth, see Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba Borbónica. Persistencias coloniales en tiempos de reformas (1750-1800)*. Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1997.

the courts,[8] and local authorities denied the Church customary exemptions to taxes.[9] I argue that ordinary people also participated in the gradual transition and were already distancing themselves from the religious orders earlier than previously thought. In contrast to most interpretations, this study contends that popular classes, as well as elites, played a pivotal role in the transformation of Catholicism in Latin America.

The regular orders problems were amplified with independence. In 1810, the Spanish viceroy was removed and replaced by a provisional Junta in Buenos Aires, where the Creoles (Spaniards born in the colonies) held the power. The move toward Independence failed in some regions and war broke out in a large portion of what was formerly the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata. After some hesitation, Córdoba and other provinces finally joined Buenos Aires, but a united nation did not emerge with Independence and regional conflicts lasted for decades, particularly between Buenos Aires and the rest of the territory.

As an aftermath of the revolution, and because of the close connection between Spain and the Vatican, Rome broke formal relationship with all the new independent governments in Spanish America. Severing the relationship with Rome, the revolution brought issues of the legitimacy and authority of the clergy to the forefront.

In addition, the revolution caused a collision between the internal politics of the convents and wider politics.[10] For example, the Revolutionary government made it

[8] Archivo del Arzobispado de Córdoba (hereafter AAC), Legajo 3, "Bernardino Guevara sobre la libertad de su esposa Pabla de Asís".
[9] AAC, Legajo 3, "Gregorio Funes embarga interés del convento franciscano".
[10] The regular orders were the fields –in the sense given by Pierre Bourdieu—where the Franciscans –or agents—competed to be promoted. In this competion, the Franciscans shared a common habitus –the internal dispositions from the environment where they socialized—that external events, like the Revolution, rapidly transformed. See Pierre Bourdieu, *El sentido práctico.* Madrid: Taurus, 1991. The internal crisis of the regular clergy was present in Mexico at the same time as in Argentina. Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order in a Period of Transition, 1749-1859," *The Americas* 54:3 (1998): 323-

mandatory that priests read revolutionary propaganda during mass.[11] Both the war for independence and the increasing involvement of churchmen in politics resulted in a decline in religious participation. In addition, in the 1820s the government of the province of Buenos Aires issued a religious reform that especially affected the regular clergy, placing its members under government protection.

By the end of the 1820s, various provincial governments attempted to transform the Church into a branch of the state, either via reform—as in the case of Buenos Aires—or by sending the clergy into rural areas—as was the case with Córdoba.[12] For the provincial governments of the region, the dwindling numbers of clergy after the revolution was critical for public rituals, order and social support. The state structure was not yet developed enough to totally replace the regulars with professional bureaucrats.

It has been suggested that, in the face of all these threats, the Franciscans, as well as the rest of the regular clergy, gradually lost the important space they had occupied (and resigned themselves to this loss).[13] In this work I hope to offer a new perspective on these answers.

So far, research has focused on institutional perspectives. The regular orders have been studied as compact, homogeneous *Ancien* Regime institutions. I argue that the transformation of colonial society at the end of the eighteenth century also reached the

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356.

[11] I am grateful to Gabriel Di Meglio to refer me this information. On the other hand, during colonial times, the churchmen were used to make political references during mass. See LAMLL Ecuador. "Para que en los Reynos de las Indias se cumpla, y observe el contenido de la Real Cedula inserta, en quanto que los Eclesiasticos Seculares, y Regulares se abstengan de declamaciones, y murmuraciones contra el Govierno, con lo demas, que se expresa." Pardo, 17 March, 1768.

[12] See María Elena Barral, "Parroquias rurales, clero y población en Buenos Aires durante la primera mitad del siglo XIX," *Anuario IEHS*, 20 (2005): 359-388, for Buenos Aires; and AAC, Legajo 3, "Franqueo del religioso Fray Gregorio Abrego", 1828 for Córdoba.

[13] For a solid explanation of this argument, see Roberto Di Stefano and Ignacio Martínez, "Frailes de gorro frigio. La experiencia de la Comisaría General de Regulares en el Río de la Plata (1813-1816)", in Eugenio Torres Torres (ed.), *Los dominicos insurgentes y realistas, de México al Río de la Plata*, 147-181. Querétaro: Instituto Dominicano de Investigaciones Históricas Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2011.

convents, and that the Franciscans increasingly acted both as members of an order, and as individuals with ambitions and interests of their own.

Far from appearing to be a compact body, the Franciscan Order behaved rather as a group of individuals who shared a set of values and multiple interests. Over the sixty two years encompassed by this work, the Franciscans negotiated and made alliances with the civil power on three occasions. The first was with the Spanish authorities after the expulsion of the Jesuits. The outcome of this agreement made it possible for the Crown officials to avoid handing the university over to the local elite and, for the Franciscans, to obtain the administration of the University.

A second alliance was forged between the Franciscans and the first revolutionary governments. In this way, while the Franciscans preached sermons filled with patriotism to the Rio de la Plata locals, the revolution gained legitimacy and reached consensus. In exchange, the Franciscans obtained positions within the government which were critical to the functioning of the Order.

For example, Friars such as Josef Sulivan or Pantaleón García, acting independently, ensured that the Franciscans controlled the University when all other universities in the Spanish territories were either handed over to the secular clergy or disappeared. Moreover, revolutionary governments accepted the Franciscan stewardship although they had fervently defended the Spanish Crown, allowing a Franciscan, Casimiro Ibarrola, to become the first official in charge of all regular orders in the Rio de la Plata region.

Finally, after the liberal wave in the 1820s, the Franciscans sealed an alliance with a State that needed them as officials in rural areas. This enabled the Cordoban government to have loyal officials in border areas, while the Franciscans found a space to

carry out their mission work.

This dissertation is an account of a group of Franciscans facing internal and external problems as well as increasing waves of politics traveling to and from the convents. It is also a story of the transformation of Córdoba from an economic, cultural, religious and intellectual center into a periphery of the city of Buenos Aires. It is mostly the narrative of several dozens of individuals, their conflicts and personal ambitions intersected with the larger themes of reform, revolution, independence, and national building. In this open debate about the place of the Catholic Church in the society, I analyze the attitude of the Franciscans of Córdoba towards a world that was changing rapidly.

During a period in which regular orders were considered almost irrelevant to be studied, I find that the Franciscans were crucial to the consolidation of the civil power, which would have never been able to settle without these uncomfortable partners. The Franciscans played a crucial role in building the Argentine nation.

Region

The region of Córdoba is ideal for understanding change between 1767 and 1829 on a local scale. Compared to other regions in Argentina, the Church had a powerful presence in the city. A prosperous landlocked town in the middle of the route connecting the Río de la Plata to the silver mines of Potosí, Córdoba boasted many monasteries and convents. Indeed, from the end of sixteenth century, Córdoba was one of two Apostolic

Sees of the Spanish southern Cone.[14]

Córdoba experienced an economic and demographic revival from the second half of the eighteenth century but its economic situation combined with the powerful institutional presence of the Catholic Church did not provide as many social and racial opportunities as the economic and social environment of Buenos Aires.[15] Consequently, the city of Córdoba has always been labeled as a "traditional city", in contrast to the "modern" Buenos Aires.[16]

The competition between Buenos Aires and Córdoba was exacerbated during the last years of colonial rule and the first years of independence. In 1809, the Spanish Crown instituted new trade policies that increased trade revenues in Buenos Aires. The result was greater competition in the interior regions of the viceroyalty.[17] Thus, the economic boom driven primarily by increases in trade and services had a detrimental effect on artisan and industrial production at the local level. Finally, during the 1810s, because Potosí fell in Spanish hands during the war between the revolutionary and the *realista* armies, Córdoba stopped sending mules to the silver mines, thus loosing one of the most important

[14] To assess the significance of ecclesiastical presence in Córdoba, see Valentina Ayrolo, (Ph.D. diss.). In 1697, for instance, when the relocation of the Apostolic See was discussed, one of the main witnesses argued that Córdoba had to be the new one "because of the number of inhabitants, the University, the two female convents, the four male monasteries and the only College of lay people where the youth from the town as well as from other places of the province is being educated." Estela Astrada and Julieta Consigli, *Actas Consistoriales y otros documentos de la diócesis del Tucumán (s. XVI al XIX.)* Córdoba: Proposopis, 1998, 168.

[15] See Susan Socolow, "Acceptable Partners: Marriage Choice in Colonial Argentina, 1778-1810," in Asunción Lavrin (ed.), *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989, 209-246.

[16] Ironically, Córdoba has a rich history of contrasting attitudes between traditional and modern values in the twentieth century. It was there where the University reform – a student's demand of democratization of the academic system that soon spread to other important universities in Latin America--started in 1918. It was also in Córdoba, where the Catholic offensive against Perón started. The most important Argentine popular uprising of the 1960s happened in Córdoba, too. And, finally, Che Guevara grew up there. See James Ivereigh, *Catholicism and Politics in Argentina 1810-1960* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995), 171-172 for Perón and Córdoba.

[17] See Mark Szuchman, *Mobility and Integration in Urban Argentina: Córdoba in the liberal era*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980, 8.

economic engines of the region. The result of all these developments was an invigoration of coastal economy to the detriment of the interior.

Differences between Buenos Aires and Córdoba deepened one decade later. The traditionalism of Córdoba, although it had clear roots in the past, was newly reemphasized during the 1820s, when Governor Juan Bautista Bustos and members of the Córdoba's elite merged their shared ambitions to transform Córdoba into the regional leader of the new nation they wanted to build. Bustos' plan was backed by the most conservative churchmen of Córdoba, determined to reject any change in the relationship between Church and State. While Buenos Aires experienced a reform of the regular orders, that did not take place in Córdoba. Some scholars maintain that the Church remained untouched because it was unnecessary, considering the calamitous state of the regular clergy in Córdoba.[18] On the contrary, I assert that it was a calculated strategy on the part of Córdoba's political elite who wanted to differentiate themselves politically from the rising mercantile elite of Buenos Aires. For Córdoba, a religious identity provided a powerful alternative to the centralizing pull coming from the old viceregal capital.[19]

The tensions between Córdoba and Buenos Aires reflect the wider struggles between two Latin Americas: the "conservative" interior and the "modern" Atlantic. The victory of the second model in Río de la Plata during the nineteenth century is as

[18] Valentina Ayrolo, "Córdoba: une république catholique. Haut Clergé, gouvernement et politique dans la Province de Córdoba. De l'Independence à la Conféderation 1810-1852" (Ph.D. diss., Université Paris I, 2003), chapter 4. The same author, however, describes how Córdoba tried to consolidate itself as a political alternative to the centralization forces of Buenos Aires. See Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica en la Provincia autónoma de Córdoba: 1820-1852," *Quinto Sol*, 9-10 (2005): 13-46.

[19] This idea is based on the assumption that what would eventually become the provinces of Argentina had a general understanding of belonging to a same entity called nation. Some authors do not agree with this idea. See particularly José Carlos Chiaramonte, *Nación y estado en Iberoamérica: el lenguaje político en tiempos de las independencias.* Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2004.

overwhelming as anywhere in the continent. For the Argentine interior, traditional religiosity was the response to the subjugation implied in secular modernity. However, although seemingly defeated in the nineteenth century, traditional religiosity would remain a powerful force in the twentieth.

Period

My analysis is framed within the six decades between the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish Empire in 1767 and the coming to power of José María Paz in the province of Córdoba en 1829.[20] As a result of the implementation of the *Intendencia's* system after 1782, Córdoba became the capital city of a large province extending to a third of what is today Argentina.

The period 1767-1829 is a fascinating phase between *Ancien* and New Regime. Three major and simultaneous processes spanned the end of the colonial period and the beginning of the national: an institutional rearrangement within the Church, the gradual weakening of Córdoba in the face of the growing power of Buenos Aires and the integration of the region in a potential nation.

During the same period, liberal reforms transformed the traditionally strong ties between state, church and community in Spanish America. First the Spanish Crown and then its antagonists—the new independent governments—agreed to dramatically reform the Catholic Church, that traditionally powerful institutional ally of the colonial state in the region. Beginning with the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Catholic orders began

[20] Paz came to power in Córdoba at the same time Juan Manual de Rosas was becoming the Governor of the province of Buenos Aires. Rosas --one of the first caudillos of Latin America-- was the strongest political leader of the region during the first half of nineteenth century.

suffering a dramatic political and economic decline. In the decades following the expulsion, the relationship between the Catholic orders and colonial society was in a state of permanent negotiation.

The period between 1767 and 1829 reflects the changing patterns of religiosity during the end of the colonial regime, and the building of the nation-state. Revolution, war, and independence not only exacerbated existent tensions but also raised new problems. These problems, however, did not reach the surface until the 1820s, when several different provincial governments tried to reform the Catholic Church from within. Evidence from the abundant newspapers of the time reflects these tensions from different points of view, allowing an examination of the society's mixed reactions.

The rupture of the regional balance was synchronic with the loss of the Church privileges. These processes, however, were not contested until they became economically unbearable. As a result of the synchronicity between economic instability in the interior and the loss of the church privileges in Buenos Aires, regional claims to power acquired a consistently religious overtone.

In Buenos Aires, a political class emerged with the independence movement. [21] In Córdoba, there was no one to take part in politics except for the clergy, who –although suffering a crisis- still maintained their prestige particularly in a society organized around common religious values. In Córdoba's new House of Representatives, the clergy defended their interests, those of the elite, and mainly those of religion.[22] Moreover,

[21] Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Revolución y guerra; formación de una élite dirigente en la Argentina criolla.* Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno, 1972.
[22] During the 1820s there was at least one clergyman every year in Córdoba's House of Representatives. In 1820, there were six churchmen out of a total of eight representatives. Valentina Ayrolo, (Ph.D. diss.), chapter 4.

Córdoba's clergy was associated and linked with the local political leadership. That is one of the reasons why Córdoba –unlike Buenos Aires and several other provinces- rejected reform of the Church.

The 1820s have often been viewed as a period lacking government centralization and the building of the nation-state in Argentina. I argue that it was a period of crucial importance to the genesis of regional, religious and political identities. Press debates on religious tolerance, for instance, imply an understanding of a shared geography across the regions, despite the fact that Buenos Aires and Córdoba were totally separate political entities at this time.

The above phenomenon redirects our understanding of the impact of the colonial legacy of religion. It is only during the 1820s that one begins to see a real distinction in the regional attitudes towards religion. Just as the port was opening itself to new commodities and ideas, most of the interior tried to stop their introduction. I argue that there was a great deal of continuity between the colonial and national periods in Río de la Plata as can be seen in the religious identity of the *Rioplatenses*. In the 1820s, however, Córdoba found it imperative to differentiate its identity from the *Porteño* project thorough religion. In many ways, the 1820s opened an era of political possibilities that was blocked by the coming of Rosas.

In addition, the 1820s highlight the intersection between two conflicts: one between Unitarian (*Unitarios*) and Federals (*Federales*), -regional-political factions that emerged in Argentina during the first half of the nineteenth century-; and the other about

Catholicism.[23] Developments in this decade also anticipate the conflict between Liberals and Nationalists in the second half of the nineteenth century.

One of the aims of this study is to illuminate the gradual and conflictive processes shaping Argentine regional identity during late colonial period and early republicanism. This dissertation could be best described as examining the long battle between Buenos Aires's increasing centralization of power and the periphery. In 1767, Córdoba's power was equal to that of Buenos Aires. This was no longer true by 1829. The 1820s were the last opportunity to think of a different national organization.

The Historiography

In his book *Facundo,* Domingo Sarmiento –the famous Argentine statesman and educator- described in his brilliant, partisan style the dichotomy between civilization and barbarism. These views exercised immense influence among Latin American intellectuals and politicians. In addition, Sarmiento used two other dichotomies to describe Argentina: one geographical–Atlantic vs. interior regions; the other, religious –old vs. new Catholicism. Finally, he intersected these three pairs of opposites to explain what Argentina was and what it needed to be.[24]

This dissertation intends to disentangle Sarmiento's juxtaposition providing the departure point for further inquiry into the nature of politics, region and religion. In spite of its central role in the religious history of Argentina, Córdoba has only very recently

[23] Ariel de la Fuente mentions this intersection in Ariel de la Fuente, *Children of Facundo: Caudillo and Gaucho Insurgency During the Argentine State-Formation Process (La Rioja, 1853-1870)*. Chapel Hil: Duke University Press, 2000, particularly chapter 3.
[24] See Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo*.

attracted historian's attention. A book edited in 2002 that contained eight articles on Córdoba from the seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century, is one of the first scholarly contributions to be published on the subject.[25] Up to 2002, religious history was only concerned with the relationship between the institutional Church and the State. Students of religion were typically either pro-Church activists or anti-clerical detractors. There was no room for impartial analysis.[26]

This dichotomy in Argentine historiography reflected larger divisions in the history of religion in Latin America, which on the one hand lamented an implacable progression of secularization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and on the other, painted the Catholic Church as an unmitigated oppressor. The unique corollary of these opposite theories was that religion did not deserve scholarly attention: either it was extinct or evil.[27]

As a result of these ideas, research on religion in Latin America was based on quasi-official internal histories of Catholicism, whose aim was to prove the Church's involvement in the formation of national states. These approaches turned their back on both the official history of each country, as well as on research undertaken in the academic world. For example, Catholic historiography emphasized that the ideological source of the independent movements was neither the American nor the French Revolution, but scholasticism and its doctrine of popular sovereignty brought by the Jesuits to the American Continent.[28]

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[25] See Gardenia Vidal and Pablo Vagliete, eds), *Por la señal de la cruz: Estudios sobre Iglesia Católica y sociedad en Córdoba, S. XVII-XX.* Córdoba: Ferreyra editor, 2002.
[26] See Roberto Di Stefano, *El púlpito y la plaza. Clero, sociedad y política de la monarquía católica a la república rosista.* Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2004, 15-22.
[27] See Martin Austin Nesvig, xvii-xxv.
[28] See Juan Guillermo Durán, "La Iglesia y el movimiento independentista rioplatense," *Teología,* 48:103 (December 2012): 31-60.

The Argentine scholar and priest Guillermo Furlong, was the first to establish this view of the independent process. In the mid-twentieth century, Furlong argued that the contract of the patriots referred to Suarez and not to Rousseau; that the support the Creole clergy gave to the revolution was based upon their scholastic tradition, and that the clergy had a decisive role in the formation and consolidation of the first Latin American political theory.[29]

Only recently have two different but complementary trends renovated studies of religion. The first trend was historical. From the 1980s, the rise of Protestantism in Latin America–which some authors maintain has reached as high as 20% of the population—led scholars to doubt the depth of conversion of peoples all over the continent. Thus, it was time to go back to the drawing board.[30]

Ironically, the second trend was historiographical despite the fact that historians did not generate the renovation. In the 1990s, historians started to employ a different approach already being applied in other fields –particularly anthropology. Scholars who subscribed to this "cultural history" movement began to discover that Catholicism was neither invincible nor uniform on the continent and, therefore, deserved more profound study.[31]

In Argentina in particular, the new trend in religious studies began with institutional but revisionist studies of the Church. First colonialists, and then twentieth-

[29] For a good explanation of these ideas, see Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista: Río de la Plata (1805-1825)", *Anuario de historia de la Iglesia*, 19 (2010): 201-220. Pamela Voekel finds similar conclusions for Mexico. See Pamela Voekel, *Alone before God*.

[30] See Daniel Miller, ed., *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America.* Washington: University Press of America, 1994.

[31] One successful example of the application of the "cultural history" to religion is Susan M. Deeds, *Defiance and Deference in Mexico's Colonial North: Indians under Spanish Rule in Nueva Vizcaya.* Austin: University of Texas Press. 2003. Deeds's book –comprised in the "new mission history—rescues indigenous voices traditionally hidden under Jesuit perspectives.

century researchers, began to admit the urgent need of a critical, rational and impartial analysis of the Church. Today, nobody questions the relevance of studies on the Catholic Church, for they provide an instrument to better understand a research field of great complexity and richness.

The work of Carlos Mayo on the Bethlemite convent in Buenos Aires during the transition from the colonial to the independent period, constituted the first important breakthrough on the topic. [32] Mayo addresses the issue of the colonial Church, though this was not his main topic. For Mayo, Church history was only a window to study his real interest: the structure of Colonial society.

Mayo suggested that the focus should be on the actors, the individuals. He was interested in the interaction between religious norms and economic interests. He also analyzed the priests' profiles in detail. He offered a detailed study of the tension that the Bethlemites experienced from a Weberian perspective: whether to be a mendicant order or a banking institution. Carlos Mayo's work questions the role of the orders in the socioeconomic structure and the evolution of their assets. This study is in many ways a continuation of his work.

Unlike Mayo, authors like Jaime Peire and Roberto Di Stéfano explain the various conflicts and patterns among the clergymen during the late colonial times from a church perspective. Di Stéfano understands colonial Catholicism as undisputed –"every single one was Catholic"—and sees the colonial Church as an institution undifferentiated from the rest of society.[33]

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[32] See Carlos Mayo, *Los Betlemitas en Buenos Aires: Convento, Economía y Sociedad.* Sevilla: Diputación de Sevilla, 1991.

[33] See Roberto Di Stefano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina. Desde la Conquista hasta fines del siglo XX*. Buenos Aires: Grijalbo, 2000. Zanatta focuses on a later period.

Di Stéfano states that "the Church" did not exist in the Río de la Plata before the revolution. He asserts that, during the colonial period, the Church was so imbricated in everyday's life and so tied to the concrete interests of different social groups that it is difficult to understand its existence as unique. As a result, he affirms that the Church was part of the local community and not an agency of a large institution in Rome.[34] His works are probably the most successful analysis of the clergy within the Buenos Aires diocese, in the transitional period between 1750 and 1850. His books have been essential to the writing of this study, where multiple references to his writings can be found.

Jaime Peire analyzed the crisis of the Church in the late colonial period focusing on the regular clergy. Peire states that in spite of the crisis, religion was kept alive during and after the revolution. However, while religious feeling was strong, the social position *vis à vis* imaginary about the Church was changing, including the relationship between it and the economy.[35]

In addition, as in most of the historiography, Di Stefano's and Peire's works focus on Buenos Aires. It is not a question of two separate Argentine historiographies—one for Buenos Aires and another for the rest of the country. Instead the problem is that each historiography has totally ignored the other. Rather than searching for the origin of the Argentine nation, I hope to offer a dialogue between the two, which will provoke debates about the realms of religion and regional identity. In addition, I will discuss the role of the Church in late colonial Córdoba, something that the historiography usually presents as crucial without examining the evidence.[36] Moreover, I will focus on the Franciscan friars,

[34] See particularly Roberto Di Stefano, *El púlpito y la plaza*, 19.
[35] Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos. Iglesia e imaginario, 1767-1815*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 2000.
[36] See Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba borbónica*, 115 and Valentina Ayrolo, (Ph.D. diss.).

their networks, strategies and negotiations. My interest lies in the pores, the blemishes, rather than in the pristine ideas.

Both Di Stefano's and Peire's works enrich the slim collection of studies examining religion and society in late colonial and early modern Argentina. However, these scholars mostly deal with an institutional and intellectual history of the clergy, that is, the realm of the high culture.

Based on multiple sources, María Elena Barral shows us the complexity of the rural social fabric in Buenos Aires, and the crucial role played by the clergy, as mediators between this world and the sacred world. Barral immersed herself in the religious world of rural areas to help us understand the symbiosis between economic and religious practices in the countryside, forever changing the image of the rural Buenos Aires clergy.

In spite of its central role in the religious history of Argentina, Córdoba has only very recently started to attract some attention from historians. Valentina Ayrolo is, without a doubt, the author who has best studied the role of the Catholic Church during the transition from the *Ancien* Regime to the republic in Córdoba. This present study and its author are indebted to her.[37]

Colonial Córdoba had features of a traditional city. Cordobans put more stress on racial and social inequalities than on economic considerations to prevent an offspring's marriage. Susan Socolow argues that the Co*rdobans,* inhabitants of a city in economic stagnation, concentrated on race and social rank in their defense of their socio economic position. However, she states, Córdoban society was concerned with race, economic

[37] Ayrolo wrote several works on Córdoba's clergy but undoubtedly the most important is Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República: Clero y Política en la Experiencia de Las Autonomías Provinciales*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2007.

standing, social position, and morality. [38]

During the period I study, the Spanish Bourbons were clearly willing to subject the Church to a rigid control on the part of the state, as Josep Barnadas emphasizes.[39] In general, much work on Bourbon Mexico has focused on the relationship between Church and State. Nancy Farriss presented a classical institutional perspective of the loss of Church privileges. David Brading explained how the Bourbon reforms undermined the authority of the clergy and, ultimately and paradoxically, of the entire monarchical system.[40] More recently, William Taylor has shown that the Reforms not only threatened the financial position of the clergy but also undermined their authority vis-à-vis their parishioners. By subverting this pillar of support for monarchy, the Bourbons nurtured a general climate in which subaltern impertinence could spill over into a larger disdain for Spanish rule—especially when officials attacked popular religiosity.[41]

Nevertheless, the broad subject of Latin American ecclesiastical renovation at the prodding of the Bourbon state has received surprisingly little scholarly attention. Nancy Farriss's work of some twenty years ago remains the standard account of the juridical aspects of the "crisis of ecclesiastical privilege."

These three classic works about the relationship of the Church and the late colonial society offer an extremely helpful framework and multiple insights into the period. The following critiques, however, should be offered: they present a picture which makes the Spanish Crown seem to be more in control of the situation than it really was.

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[38] Susan Socolow, "Acceptable Partners".
[39] Josep Barnadas, "La Iglesia Católica en la Hispanoamérica colonial", in Leslie. Bethell (ed.) *Historia de América Latina. 2: América Latina colonial: Europa y América en los siglos XVI, XVII, XVIII.* Barcelona: Crítica, 1990, 185-207 and 241-245.
[40] See Nancy Farriss, *Crown and Clergy in Colonial México* and David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*.
[41] William B. Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred.*

Also, they neither provide an analysis of internal Church dynamics nor do they study the relationship between Church, religion, and a non-Indian community.

Another problem of this "Holy Trinity" works on Spanish American Church is that they all end their analysis at the end of the colonial period. Traditionally, studies of the colonial period stop with the decade of the 1810s, as this period is considered to be the beginning of national history. However, new studies in the last few years are challenging that discontinuity. Victor Uribe-Uran, for instance, maintains that a period that includes but not stops with the revolutions for independence is more useful in understanding Latin American history than the more traditional periodization.[42] I believe that the "Age of Revolution" was a period of major change and collapse, occurring just as the social and political roles of church, churchmen, and their authority became a burning question. Throughout the entire period general patterns of change –particularly the social, religious, and political practices highlighted here—can be traced from their origins in the mid-eighteenth century to their resolution well into the next century.

Embracing the idea of a revolutionary era, Brian Connaughton shows that the upper clergy welcomed the Bourbons Reforms until they realized that the monarchy had weakened the priests' authority.[43] In Mexico, Connaughton describes a phenomenon similar to the one I locate in Córdoba during the 1820s. Guadalajara's clergy wrote pamphlets and aimed their sermons against the Mexican republic. It is of special interest that they developed an idea of "Providential Mexico" –a nation that because of its divine mission needed clerical guidance. "Providential Mexico," a concept that Connaughton

[42] See Victor Uribe-Uran, *State and Society in Spanish America during the Age of Revolution*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2001.
[43] Brian Connaughton, *Clerical Ideology in a Revolutionary Age: The Guadalajara Church and the Idea of the Mexican Nation 1788-1853*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002.

claims to be exclusive to Mexico, can also be extended to Córdoba.

In most recent years, historians such as Pamela Voekel, for example, have rejected the traditional historiography that states that the major conflict of the late colonial period was that between Church and State. Instead, she argues that there was a powerful, innovative, and modernizing force coming from within the ecclesiastical institution. She labels this force "enlightened Catholicism."[44]

Like Voekel, I believe there are strong ties between secular modernity and the origins of traditional religiosity. In this dissertation I stress the significance of religion for understanding the period. I consider that there are close connections between Conservative reactions to enlightened practices and anticlerical liberalism of the later nineteenth century.

I divided this dissertation into five chapters. Chapter 1 describes the situation in Córdoba after the expulsion of the Jesuits. The Franciscan Order was strengthened after this episode, and the Franciscans became the heirs of the prestige the Jesuits had enjoyed. After coming into possession of the University, they negotiated with the Bourbon authorities in Córdoba, despite the efforts of the local elite to displace them. The University of Córdoba was the only Jesuit University in the continent not handed over to the secular clergy after the expulsion.

Chapter 2 analyzes Franciscan recruitment patterns, from the beginnings of their settlement in Córdoba in the mid-seventeenth century to 1850. The last decade of the eighteenth century was a critical moment, when vocations began to decline, a trend that lasted for thirty years. This drop does not seem to have been caused by the Bourbon

[44] See Pamela Voekel, *Alone before God*.

reforms, but rather, by the attitude of a society that found better alternatives to rise in the social scale other than having their children join the regular clergy.

Chapter 3 analyzes changing behavior toward the Franciscan. For the Cordoban society, who benefited from a new Atlantic world, the Franciscans appear as a foreign power, sometimes linked to a state perceived by locals as voracious. As a result, people became reluctant to financially support the Franciscans and locals and even slaves sued the Order.

The order was mostly present in the urban areas. The new *Propaganda Fide* Colleges (newly established in Salta and Santa Fe) provided some dynamism to the Order. However, this renewal process was not completed, since the vast majority of the members of Propaganda Fide were Peninsular. The revolution interrupted this potentially dynamic process.

In Chapter 4, I analyze how an institution based upon traditional values faced the revolutionary process born in May 1810. The revolution took place at a time when the Order was divided by internal disputes. These disputes were not, however, between Creoles and Peninsulars, as the traditional historiography maintains. It was not the place of birth of these individuals which defined sides, but rather, their connections with Madrid.

Logically, the Franciscans who lacked connections with Madrid joined the revolution right away. The others had the necessary tools to adapt to the new rules. The new governments needed symbols to consolidate their revolution. They soon found new allies in the Franciscans, who had the ability to persuade their parishioners of the benefits of the new situation. Thus, the Franciscans and the revolutionary government forged an alliance. These uncomfortable partners stayed together during the whole decade, but by

the beginning of the 1820s, the alliance became unworkable due to the advance of liberalism.

The 1820s brought the reform of the regular clergy and the religious tolerance law, as we can see in Chapter 5. Fray Pacheco´s trip to Rome and Fray Castañeda´s feverish writings, exemplify the initial reaction on the part of the Franciscans, due rather to a sense of purpose than to conviction.

The Franciscan Order lost the place it had occupied vis-à-vis the local power after the expulsion of the Jesuits. They had ceased to be the enlightened elites´ uncomfortable partners, because the latter considered they did not need them to consolidate their own power.

The new place for the Franciscans was the countryside, where the new governments sent them. But government was extending its power to those areas, and the current leaders at the time went back to considering them necessary again, this time to consolidate their own power in the countryside. As in colonial times, to be a Franciscan became a good option for some youngsters. As a result, in 1830, the number of Franciscans had increased to a level they had only reached back in 1750. The uncomfortable partners finally found a safe place in the republican era.

Córdoba's importance as a hub of the Catholic Orders and Church institutions, when combined with the new requirements from the Spanish Crown to have everything meticulously registered, provides a rich body of documentation to examine religiosity.[45]

[45] To define religiosity is as difficult as it is to trace it. Scholars in the past have attempted to arrive at a common definition. They used several terms –such as piety, devotion or popular religion—which I will also use as synonyms for the phenomenon I seek to uncover. Ultimately, however, past scholars agreed only on the complexity of this concept—for some in itself an argument for its validity. I understand religiosity as any practice –communal or individual— related to a belief in a superhuman power. The main difficulty in tracing religiosity is that it is usually entangled with other practices–mostly social or economic—and thus, it hardly ever becomes undifferentiated when it is visible. However, it is not the purpose of this dissertation to

Churchmen and ordinary Spaniards, slaves, women and men, all those who crossed paths with religious individuals in any way were registered and collected in documents found in the *Archivo del Arzobispado de Córdoba* (AAC). In a word, in the AAC it is possible to trace the everyday in the functioning of the Church.

The *Archivo de la Provincia de Córdoba* is a general repository containing Córdoba's government records, and criminal and civil cases relevant to this study. Government records allow on to study the increasing involvement of clergymen in politics in 1820s. The number of lawsuits related to religious issues helps to measure changes in religiosity.

The *Archivo General de la Nación* –in Buenos Aires--contains documentation on the application of the reforms in Río de la Plata, in both the colonial and national periods. The *Archivo General de Indias*, in Seville, holds information on the general laws and their application in the colonies as well as the Spanish imperial perspective on ecclesiastical matters at the end of the colonial era. *The Lilly Library* at Indiana University, Bloomington, also possesses a valuable set of Latin American Manuscripts particularly in its collection of the *Arzobispado de Quito*. By using this collection it is possible to follow the Spanish Crown's disposition towards the Catholic Church in the colonies from sixteenth century through the 1820s.

In order to better understand the complexity of the dynamic relationship between religion and society, I compare Córdoba with the more liberal Buenos Aires. This approach allows me to analyze general patterns of change and continuity as well as

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search out each and every form of religious practice in late colonial and early republican Rio de la Plata. I am specifically interested in those religious practices that can serve as indicators of economic, social and political changes. For an excellent and succinct discussion on religiosity, see Martin Austin Nesvig (ed.), *Local Religion in Colonial Mexico*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006, xvii-xxv..

regional specificities.

Latin America has been labeled a place of persistence from colonial to modern times.[46] People from Córdoba, nevertheless, made active decisions to change in the early nineteenth century. Paradoxically, their change was to create tradition, giving observers the impression that religion and tradition had always been there. In this way, Córdoba is a region emblematic of the continent. Perhaps, historians need to go back to the drawing board to revisit the capacity of modernity to create tradition.[47]

[46] For an excellent discussion on the topic, see Jeremy Adelman (ed.), *Colonial Legacies: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
[47] The best account of the relationship between tradtion and modernity can be found in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

CHAPTER 1

JESUITS´ HEIRS (1767-1800)

While solving a political trouble, the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 created a social problem for the Spanish empire: how to replace the best educators and missionaries of Latin America. The vacancy created a vibrant competition among Church agencies.

This chapter analyses the Franciscan Order in the Río de la Plata. By studying career patterns and the relationship between the Order and the Crown, one can see how the Franciscans successfully applied for the newly open position.

Using prosopography and life stories, the social history of individual within the Order to recognize what was ordinary and the unique, I watch the Franciscan social and political resources in motion, when they used them to negotiate with the authorities the administration of the University, in spite of the tireless efforts the local elite made to displace them.

The Franciscans in Río de la Plata

According to a traditional story of the Order, on 16 April 1209 Saint Francis of Assisi appeared before Pope Innocent III, who, after some hesitation, gave verbal sanction to the Franciscan Rule. The Order of Friars Minor was legally founded with the obligation of complete renunciation of property.[48] Their members increased rapidly and spread first through Italy, then into Europe, and soon after the Spanish conquest of

[48] Charles Herbermann (ed.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Robert Appleton Company, 1913.

America, over the Iberian New World.[49]

In the mid-sixteenth century, a few Friars arrived in Argentine territory, specifically in the southern portion of the Peruvian Franciscan Province of *Doce Apóstoles* and created the *Custodia de San Jorge del Tucumán*. Within fifty years, the Order was firmly established in the region with the creation of the Franciscan Province of *Nuestra Señora de la Asunción del Paraguay.* By the last third of the eighteenth century, the order oversaw thirty-four Indian villages and *doctrinas* (communities of newly converted Indians), as well as seventeen convents in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Corrientes, Santa Fe, La Rioja, Salta, Santiago, Tucumán, Jujuy, Catamarca, Asunción, Villarica and Montevideo. Almost 45% of all clergy was in the province of Buenos Aires, distributed in six convents, two of which served the purpose of training the provincial clerics. These convents were called *Conventos Grandes*.[50]

[49] In 1524, a first group of Franciscans arrived to Mexico under the leadership of its superior, Martín de Valencia. Because of its number, this group has been known as "the Twelve". See "Orders Given to 'the Twelve," in Kenneth Mills and William Taylor (eds.), *Colonial Spanish America. A Documentary History.* Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1998, 46-51.

[50] The Franciscans had two *Conventos Grandes* in Buenos Aires, one in Córdoba and one in Asunción; one college and one university in Córdoba; and one convent in each of these cities: Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Santa Fe, La Rioja, Salta, Santiago, Tucumán, Jujuy, Catamarca, Asunción, Villarica and Montevideo. AHPBA, 7.4.2.68 Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Serafico Patriarca de la Pcia de Ntra Sra de la Asuncion. 1791.

MAP 1.1: CITIES WITH FRANCISCANS CONVENTS. FRANCISCAN PROVINCE OF ASUNCIÓN (1800)

About 15% of all Franciscans resided in the provinces of Paraguay, which had three convents; 16%, in the province of Córdoba, (two convents, which also housed novitiate residences) and the ex-Jesuit University, under Franciscan rule between 1767

and 1808. The remaining six convents, located in the province of Tucumán, lacked a novitiate residence and made up approximately 12% of the Franciscans.[51]

TABLE 1.1. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF FRANCISCANS. PROVINCE OF ASUNCIÓN (1791)

	Buenos Aires		**Paraguay**		**Córdoba**		**Tucumán**		**Pueblos**		**TOTAL**	
	N	%	**N**	%	**N**	%	**N**	%	**N**	%	**N**	%
Creoles	**99**	24.8	**45**	11.3	**53**	13.3	**28**	7	**29**	7.1	**254**	63.5
Europeans	**82**	20.5	**11**	2.8	**15**	3.8	**25**	6.3	**13**	3.1	**146**	36.5
Total	**181**	45.2	**56**	14.1	**68**	17	**53**	13.2	**42**	10.5	**404***	100

* 4 Franciscans without data.
Source: AHPBA, 7.4.2.68. Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Pcia. de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción. 1791

The clerics living in the villages and *doctrinas* comprised a small proportion of the Seraphic plan: barely over 10% during the whole period.[52] They, together with a few other clerics sent by their convents, could be found in rural areas.[53] It was also the case for the whole of the regular clergy. The Franciscan Order was an institution settled in the Rio de la Plata, and overwhelming concentrated in the urban world. (See Table 1.1). [54]

In México, the Franciscan Order had declined after a *Real Cédula* (Royal Decree) issued on October 4, 1749, forcing bishops to expropriate the monasteries located in indigenous villages in order to convert them into parishes. The *Real Cédula* was not

[51] Records available for the lists of Franciscans of 1788, 1791 and 1793.
[52] Franciscans or Friar Minors were also known as Seraphics coming from Seraphim, the smaller of the nine orders of angels in medieval angelology.
[53] This proportion is almost identical to the one Morales found in Mexico in the same period. In Mexico, the friars living in the missions there represented only 12% of the staff Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order", 333-334.
[54] Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order," 328.

implemented in the Río de la Plata in the same way as in Mexico. Thus, this event could not be blamed for the decline of the Order in the region. On the other hand, the size of the indigenous population in the Rio de la Plata was much smaller than in the New Spain, and therefore, any modification which might have altered the ratio between clerics who did missionary work and clerics who led a monastic life would not have had a devastating impact in that region.

In the Río de la Plata, the Franciscans inherited the missions of the Guaraní area from the Jesuits. Eight out of the 34 missions administered by the Franciscans towards the end of the eighteenth century had originally belonged to the Jesuits. Indeed, because of the Spanish Crown, the Franciscans of the Río de la Plata enlarged their missionary work.

Origin, age structure, and regional distribution of the Franciscans

In the Río de la Plata, the proportion of European-born clergy was much higher than in other regions. In Mexico, for example, only 17.5 % of the clergy were Peninsular, compared to 36.5% in Río de la Plata.[55] By the mid-eighteenth century, place of origin, which manifested itself early among the religious orders, was becoming more relevant. However, the Peninsular faction was better received in the Río de la Plata than in other Spanish American regions. [56]

Before their ordination, all Franciscans spent between three and eight years at the

[55] Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order," 338.
[56] In the lists of staff that the Franciscans sent to the government, the clergymen born in the Americas were labeled as *Indianos* or *Americanos*, but never as Creoles. In this study, we will use indistinctly the last two labels because the word *Indiano* changed the meaning it had by that time. It is interesting to highlight that in Mexico, the individuals born in the Americas were labeled as *Hispano Mexicanos*. Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order," 338.

Novitiate. Regardless of the clerics´ place of origin, this period did not vary substantially. A minor difference between Creoles and Peninsulars can be seen in the average age of the ordained priests. Their average age for those of Spanish American origin was approximately 44, and it was 46.5 for those of European origin. This difference can be attributed to the fact that the Spanish priests were immigrants. In her study of the immigrant Spanish merchants, Susan Socolow establishes that the average age of arrival in the Río de la Plata was 25 years old.[57] This also applies to the age of entry into the seminary. Thus, an average American entered the seminary between ages 17 and 18, whereas a European would do it between ages 20 and 21.

In Buenos Aires, Peninsulars constituted 45.3% of the clergy. More than half of the priests who came from Spain resided in the convents of the city of Buenos Aires and its surroundings. Only 31% of Peninsular-born priests lived in rural areas. The European priests would rather stay close to the port than travel to the inland regions.

The Franciscan Chapters

Like all regular orders, Franciscans held periodic elections every three or four years. These elections called Chapters (*Capítulos*) brought representatives of each convent together to decide which would occupy the provincial positions until the calling of the next Chapter.

Until the 1820s, most of the Chapters were held in the different convents in Buenos Aires but for a few meetings held in Córdoba or Santa Fe. However, after the

[57] Susan Socolow, *The merchants of Buenos Aires 1778-1810. Family and Commerce*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, 18.

Reform of the early 1820s, that limited the power of *Porteño* Franciscans, all the Chapters occurred in Córdoba, the city that would emerge as the core of the Order in the region.

The highest position in the province was the Provincial Minister (*Ministro Provincial*) who was elected during the Provincial Chapters.[58] After leaving office, the Provincial Minister became a *Padre Provincial*, a member of the Definitorium (*Definitorio*), a clerical *elite* that decided the major issues in the province. The Definitorium defined the most important issues of concern to the province consisting of nine rotating members and the *Padres Provinciales*, permanent "Senators for life" in a system that combined democratic, aristocratic and patriarchal characteristics.

The election, to put a name to it, was a selection according to dignity and intellectual and moral qualities known by all. The act of choosing was the expression of something that existed before, formalized in the old sense of the word, as a representation of "authority, dignity, character or a recommendation of a person".[59] Nevertheless, since the expulsion of the Jesuits, the meaning of the appointments in the regular orders was modified. Since 1767, to support or not support the Jesuit past divided the Chapters of the regular orders up to Independence.

Almost every priest was assigned a certain task to be carried out until a new chapter was held. In these gatherings, Franciscans also decided the destination of each clergymen. (See Table 1.2).

[58] There were also chapters when Franciscans decided important issues but they did not include elections. They were called Intermediate Chapters.

[59] François-Xavier Guerra, "Ciudadanos o vecinos? Ciudadanía versus gobernabilidad republicana en México. Los orígenes de un dilema", in Hilda Sábato (ed.), *Ciudadanía política y formación de las naciones: perspectivas históricas de América Latina.* México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999, 55.

TABLE 1.2. CHAPTERS. FRANCISCAN PROVINCE OF ASUNCIÓN (1760-1828)

Chapter	Convent	Date
Provincial	San Jorge, Córdoba	January, 1759
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	January, 1760
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	September, 1761
Intermediate	Recolección del Rincón de San Pedro	May, 1766
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	February, 1768
Intermediate	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	August, 1769
Provincial	Santa Ana, Santa Fe	May, 1770
Intermediate	San Jorge, Córdoba	January, 1773
Provincial	San Jorge, Córdoba	February, 1774
Intermediate	Santa Ana, Santa Fe	December, 1775
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	April, 1777
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	October, 1778
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	July, 1788
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	September 1791
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	May 1793
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	November 1796
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	September 1801
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	June 1803
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	March 1805
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	November, 1806
Intermediate	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	October, 1808
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	May, 1810*
Provincial	Once Mil Vírgenes, Buenos Aires	February, 1811
Intermediate	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	August, 1812
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	September, 1814
Intermediate	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	February, 1816
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	September, 1817
Intermediate	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	March, 1819
Provincial	Recoleta, Buenos Aires	September, 1820
Intermediate	San Jorge, Córdoba	March, 1822
Provincial	San Jorge, Córdoba	September, 1823
Intermediate	San Jorge, Córdoba	April, 1825
Provincial	San Jorge, Córdoba	September 1826
Intermediate	San Jorge, Córdoba	April, 1828

Source: AHPBA. 7.4.2.67. "Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Prova. de nra. Sra. de la Asunción, perteneciente al virreinato de Bos Ayes"; AHPBA 7.4.2.68. Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Pcia. de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción, 1791; AHPBA 7.4.2.76. Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico de la Pcia. de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción, 1793; AHPBA 7.4.2.61. Tabla capitular de la religión de San Francisco de la Pcia. Del Río de la Plata, 1796; AHPBA 7.4.2.79. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia de Paraguay, 1801; AHPBA 7.4.2.78. Nomina de oficios y empleos en el convento grande de Buenos Aires, 1803; AHPBA 7.4.2.81. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia. De la Asunción del Paraguay, 1805; AHPBA 7.4.2.83. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia. del Paraguay y tabla capitular de elecciones, 1806; AHPBA 7.4.2.85. Nómina de los religiosos del Paraguay, 1808.

Major cities were the most coveted destinations, especially Buenos Aires and Córdoba. While title and seniority were important, in certain cases, a position of lower hierarchy was preferred as long as was in a large city. In this way, priests would slowly

ascend from the lowest to the highest positions and from the periphery to the central regions, in a system one could define as "an upward spiral".

There was always controversy between the authorities of the Order and the priests who were to comply with the duties and destination they had been assigned. Civil authorities often interfered in these disputes, although the ultimate decision was made within the orders. The authorities understood their interference as a way to limit the power of the high ranking clergy at the same time that they consolidated their own power acting as mediators. Duties and destinations also acted as a reward and punishment system for the members of the orders. Furthermore, almost every convent had a prison or disciplinary house for more severe cases. There are also records of the practice of using stocks to punish clerics who tried to escape.[60]

The Chapters were the most significant point in the hierarchical system of the Order. The fate of all clerics during the next four years was at stake. It is no wonder, then, that problems arose every time the Chapters were summoned.[61]

Making a career within the Order

Age and seniority were crucial within the Franciscan Order. Prestige was important for this life as well as for the next. Funeral honors for a cleric would be divided according to the number of years he had served as a Franciscan: three low (or read) Masses for a deceased "modern" priest; six, for an "old" one. Neither his origin nor his

[60] During eighteenth century, stocks were used against Fray Francisco Merino and Francisco Romano in the Convent of Asunción. Both Friars disobeyed the Guardian Fray Luis Bolaños, drifting by distant farms during three months, without returning to the convent. Margarita Durán Estragó, *Presencia franciscana en el Paraguay, 1538-1824*. Asunción: Ediciones y Arte, 2005, 37.

[61] The Order of Mercedarians, for example, had more than one dispute over the election of their Generals, even armed strife. See Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos*.

condition mattered.[62] It is not surprising then that to become Minister Provincial, clerics should be over 50 years old and have served in the Order for more than thirty years.

Previous residence in either the Convent of *Observancia* or the Convent of *Recolección de Buenos Aires* constituted a *sine qua non* if a priest desired to become a Provincial Minister or a member of the Definitorium during the Colonial period.

A priest took several steps before he got to the Definitorium. After one year in the Novitiate, the cleric obtained the Franciscan habit. Right after this, the Theology Master requested permission from the Visiting Commissary for his disciple to take holy orders. During colonial period, sixteen was the minimum age for taking the vows.[63] The new Franciscan took both public and secret vows concerning the Church, Saint Francis and the Virgin Mary.[64]

After being ordained, a priest who wished to continue his training would enter one of the four *Estudios Generales* that the Franciscans had in Córdoba, Paraguay and Buenos Aires. Once a priest had finished his seven years of studies (three years of Philosophy and four of Theology), he graduated with a degree of *Lector*, or Professor of Arts (Philosophy). After teaching Arts for three years (Logic, Physics and Metaphysics), Canon for one year, and Theology for four years (Dogmatic Theology, Vespers or Moral, Holy Scriptures and Rhetoric), *Lectores* would obtain the degree of *Jubilados*. The number of times the priest had fulfilled the cycle would be added to this degree. That is to say, they became *una vez jubilado* and then, *dos veces jubilado*. Very few priests obtained

[62] Old Franciscan was someone with more than ten years as a member of the order. AAC. Archivo del Convento de San Jorge, Córdoba. Misas de los religiosos Difuntos.
[63] Subsequently, la *Asamblea del Año XIII* will set the age to take the vows at 30 years, even though it will never have real effect. Later, the Reform of the 1820s reduced the age to 22 years. AAC. Legajo 3, Document 14, setiembre de 1823.
[64] AAC. Legajo 21, 1. Document 5: Profesion of brother don Manuel de la Torre y Vera Córdoba, 11 de mayo de 1798.

the Degree of *Jubilado* or *Dos Veces Jubilado*.

TABLE 1.3. POSITIONS AND DEGREES. FRANCISCAN PROVINCE OF ASUNCIÓN (1767-1829)

Position or Degree	Description	Period
Provincial Minister	The Friar who held the main position in the province	From one Chapter to the next
Member of *Definitorium*	The 9 most important friars, including *Padres de Provincia*	From one Chapter to the next
Guardian	The Friar who held the main position in a convent	From one Chapter to the next
Predicador Conventual	A Friar sent to a rural mission	From one Chapter to the next
Lector Jubilado	A Friar who taught for more than 15 years	Permanent Degree
Lector Jubilado 2 veces	A Lector Jubilado that taught for more than 12 years	Permanent Degree
Predicador General	A Predicador Conventual who served for several years. There was a permanent number of 32	Permanent Degree
Padre de Provincia	A former Provincial Minister	Permanent Degree

Source: AHPBA. 7.4.2.67. "Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Prova. de nra Sra. de la Asunción, perteneciente al virreinato de Bos Ayes".

Another degree of high standing was that of *Predicador General* (General Preacher), a rank granted by the Order to a priest for his outstanding work. The number of *Predicadores Generales* was constant: thirty two throughout the province. There was always at least one in each convent. Every *Predicador General* had been a *Predicador Conventual* at least once before. This was not a degree but a Chapter position assigned to a priest for a period of four years. Two friars were chosen to be *Predicadores Conventuales* for each *Convento Grande*; other convents had only one *Predicador*

Conventual.[65] The obtaining of a Degree was strictly regulated by the Definitorium. Only the *Lectores Jubilados* and the *Predicadores Generales* could be promoted to the position of Provincial Minister.

Some career examples

There are several examples of clergymen careers that prove that by the late Colonial period, the Franciscans developed an effective system of promotion and rewards. Before the Revolution of 1810, that threatened the system and obliged the regulars to creatively adapt to the new world, the Franciscans seemed to solve most of the problems from within the Order. In the next lines, we are going to analyze some of these examples.

Pedro Josef Sulivan was born in the Americas in 1750 and entered the Order at the age of sixteen. He acted as *Lector* in the province of Buenos Aires and was later elected as Guardian, or Higher Prelate, of the Convent of Montevideo. At the age of 41 he became a *Lector Jubilado*. Two years later he was transferred to the Convent of *Observancia* in Buenos Aires. In 1801, he was elected Rector of the University of Córdoba and two years later, at 53, Provincial Minister. After 1806, he became a member of the Definitorium.

Fray Nicolás Palacios, a Creole, acted both as a member of the Definitorium and as a Guardian during his career, but it was only in 1766, at age 63 that he was elected Provincial Minister. This election came almost half a century since Fray Nicolás entered

[65] For more information, see Miguel Medina, *Los Dominicos en América Presencia y actuación* de *los dominicos en la América Colonial Española de los siglos XVI*- XIX. Madrid: Mapfre, 1992, 56-57.

the Order. He had then the title of *Predicador General*. Palacios resided in the Convent of *Observancia* of Buenos Aires from 1780, until his death in the following decade.

After being Guardian and Synodal Examiner, the Creole priest Josef Pucheta was elected Provincial Minister at 61, with the title of *Lector Jubilado*. In 1793, by the end of his mandate, he became a member of the Definitorium.

Fray Pedro Sánchez, a Spaniard, was appointed Provincial Minister in 1788 at the age of 51. In 1791, he became a member of the Definitorium, while residing in the Convent of *Recolección* in Buenos Aires. Fray Thomas Ramírez and Fray Francisco Calvo, both of them Europeans and *Lectores*, were members of the same Definitorium. Like Fray Pedro, they were also *Padres de Provincia*.

Only some clergy had access to the positions of higher honor. Lázaro Orué and Josef Gamarra are examples of the experience of the majority of Franciscans. Lázaro and Josef were both Creoles and studied together at the Convent *Grande* of Asunción in the mid 1780s. Both choristers were ordained in 1791, but, due to the rotating system, Lázaro was sent to Córdoba and Montevideo. Josef stayed in Asunción until 1801, when he was elected to serve in the missions as a priest among the Indians. Neither Lázaro nor Josef had any title or had ever been to Buenos Aires. They would never have access to any important position.

Fray Pantaleón García and Fray Francisco de Paula Castañeda were examples of successful careers. Pantaleón García was born in Buenos Aires in 1755, and joined the Franciscans in the same city at the age of 18.[66] After training to become a priest, he

66 Data about Pantaleón García and Francisco de Paula Castañeda, from Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (hereafter AHPBA). Archivo de la Real Audiencia. Reales Ordenes. Legajos 2.7.4,2.61; 2.7.4,2.62; 2.7.4,2.63; 2.7.4,2.67; 2.7.4,2.68; 2.7.4,2.73; 2.7.4,2.75; 2.7.4,2.76; 2.7.4,2.77; 2.7.4,2.78; 2.7.4,2.79; 2.7.4,2.83; 2.7.4,2.85; 2.7.4,2.86 y 2.7.4,2.87.

continued his religious education, became a *Lector* and obtained the position of *Predicador*. Pantaleón soon stood out for his oratory and intellectual skills. Even though he was a *Porteño*, his career flourished in Córdoba. He earned a doctorate in the local University and in 1786, he became *Lector de Vísperas*. In Córdoba, Pantaleón soon held numerous important positions, and became Rector of the University between 1802 and 1807. At the beginning of the century, he was elected Minister Provincial.

The career of Francisco de Paula Castañeda was not as meteoric as that of García. Francisco de Paula was born in Buenos Aires in 1776, into a well-off family in which religion fulfilled an important role. At the same time as Francisco entered the Franciscan Order, his sister entered the Order of the Sisters of Saint Clare.[67] Francisco did not earn a doctorate, even though his parents could have paid for his studies at the prestigious University of Chuquisaca.[68] Castañeda revealed himself very early as a rebel who challenged his parents´ plans for him.

According to Castañeda, he entered the Convent of *Recoleta* in Buenos where "I spent my whole year of novitiate sleeping", and

> "it was a scandal for our community to see that I did everything wrong and that it was my fault that order was disrupted... in the choir. The community seriously tried to declare I was useless for the monastic life".[69]

However, Castañeda was a favorite of Fray Cristóbal Gavica, a teacher of novices and *Lector* of Sacred Theology. He assured Castañeda that "his vocation was true, and invoked a million reasons to persuade his peers...not to refuse me the possibility to take the vows"[70] In 1798, Castañeda was ordained in that Córdoba, since there was no bishop in Buenos Aires. He was granted the Chair of Philosophy at the University of Córdoba,

[67] Néstor Auza, *Doña María Retazos. Francisco de Paula Castañeda*, Buenos Aires, Taurus, 2001, 12.
[68] *Ibidem*, p. 14, Buenos Aires, 10 de octubre de 1822, 225.
[69] *Ibídem*.
[70] *Ibidem*.

and became a close friend of Pantaleón García. Both men would experience successful academic careers. Good connections cultivated inside the Order were more important that good family ties.

The regular clergy and the Bourbon Reforms

During the second third of the eighteenth century, an event of far-reaching consequences took place in the Spanish Empire. In 1765, Pope Clement XIII declared that "the Jesuits breathe piety and holiness to the maximum."[71] Considered in retrospect, this resolute opinion conveys a tone of irony. Beginning in 1759, the Society of Jesus had been banned successively from Portugal and France. Almost two years after the Pope pronounced these words, on February 27, 1767, Charles III signed a royal command in El Prado which decreed the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish dominions. On March 1st, Aranda, the King's Prime Minister, issued a set of regulations containing detailed instructions for viceroys, presidents and governors of the West Indies and the Philippines. As of July of that same year, the Jesuits were evicted from all colleges, missions or residences in the Spanish territories. In 1773, the Society was suppressed throughout the Catholic world.[72] This episode was the major religious event of what historians label as the Bourbon Reforms.[73]

From the sixteenth-century conquest of America, the Church, in association with the Spanish Crown, tried to transfer a European Church into one that could function in the

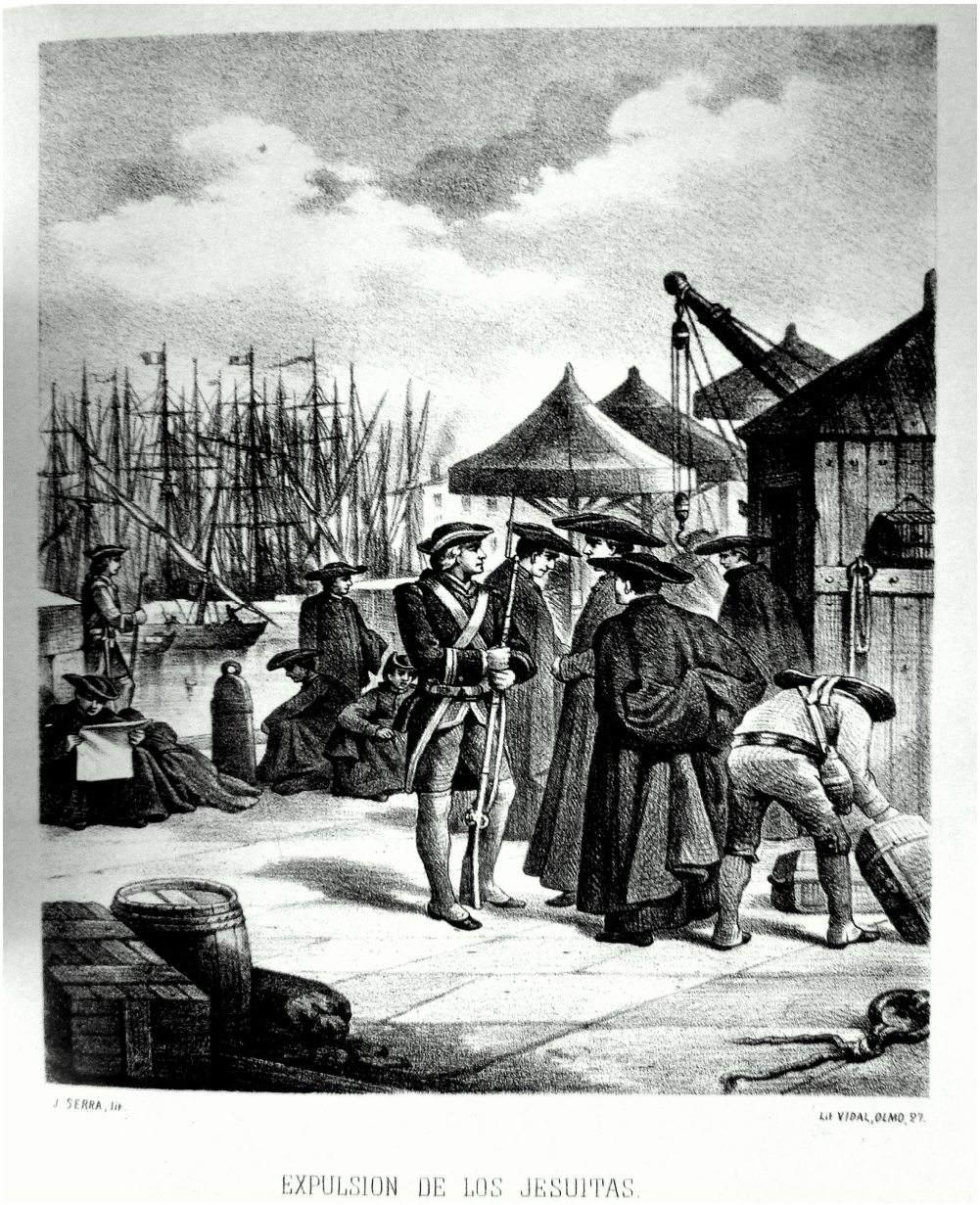
[71] Quoted by Efraín Bischoff, "Los jesuitas y Córdoba", in *Archivum*, 9 (1967), 83-84.
[72] See David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*, 3-19.
[73] By the end of the seventeenth century, the House of Bourbon, a French royal house, started to rule Spain and carried out a series of modernizing reforms in the government, particularly after the Treaty of Utrech of 1713. See John D. Bergamini, *The Spanish Bourbons: The History of a Tenacious Dynasty*. New York: Putnam, 1974.

New World. Multiple adjustments were made from the basic instrument used to convey its religious message -language- to the requirement of a certain level of sedentarism on the part of the aborigines, without which no missionary strategy would have ever succeeded.[74]

The arrival of the Jesuits, a new and dynamic order, at the end of the sixteenth century, revitalized the pastoral drive in the New World. Both the Church's and the colony's social, political and economic framework were deeply affected by the Jesuits. Long before their expulsion, their actions divided the whole society.

[74] The Council of Trent (1545-1563) was one of the Church's most important councils. It achieved an extraordinary transformation of discipline and administration of the clergy. The Americas, recently discovered for Europe, were not taking into account in the Council. See Roberto Di Stefano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia argentina*, 16-17.

FIGURE 1.1: EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS (1767)



Source: *Historia de América Latina Colonial*, https://alcolonial.wordpress.com/2013/04/20/expulsion-de-los-jesuitas-imagenes/

The Jesuits were part of the regular clergy. These orders were the mostly involved in charity, education and missionary work.[75] Even before the arrival of the Jesuits, the

[75] The regular orders are the congregations made up of persons of either sex who observe a common life, and are bound by specific vows of religion and obedience. The members of the Orders are called, in general, regulars because they follow a particular rule (Latin, regula) of their order. Conversely, the rest of

Franciscans, the Dominicans and the Mercedarians, also regular orders, carried out different religious roles in the American Continent. All three exerted an important influence on local social life, including assistance to the sick, charity and education.

The regular orders were the Church agencies most involved in Baroque Catholicism, a type of devotion that increasingly was an anathema to the Bourbons. Throughout Spanish America, the orders engaged in pompous festivities, became involved in multiple fraternities and organizations and were the chief organizers of the burial system. Central to both Baroque Catholicism and *Ancien Regime* society, was the displayed of social hierarchies. Individuals were assigned places in festivities, fraternities, organizations and burial grounds vis-à-vis their positions in society.[76]

However, the Enlightenment promoted new ideas of equalitarianism that the Bourbons, their Ministers and even a good portion of the Catholic Church hierarchy attempted to apply in the colonies.[77] As part of the Crown's modernizing project, religious Orders would increasingly become superfluous and thus forced to change the very basis of their existence if they wanted to survive.[78]

It was among the regular clergy where historians maintain that the decline of the religious power could be more acutely felt. Ecclesiastical studies have verified a crisis in the religious orders, whose members started decreasing inexorably and drastically towards the last quarter of the eighteenth century, at the same time that the secular clergy

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the clergy are called secular, because they belong to their time or century (Latin, seculo). *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, online ed., s. v. "Regulars."

[76] For an analysis of the Baroque Catholicism, see Pamela Voekel, *Alone before God*, particularly chapter 1.

[77] David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*, 3.

[78] The expulsion of the Jesuits was the most spectacular episode in a policy which tended to strengthen the diocesan structures by relegating the religious orders to the status of "auxiliary troops". Some scholars have seen this policy as "aimed mainly at subordinating the regular clergy to the diocesan authorities and at transferring funds to the secular clergy". Roberto Di Stefano and Ignacio Martínez, "Frailes de gorro frigio", 150.

increased in numbers. Due to their structure and organization, the regular clergy were the most available to gain access to desolate places.[79]

When compared to central areas like Mexico or Peru, the Río de la Plata was one of these desolate places of the Spanish empire and thus, the presence of the regulars was important. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, in the entire territory, approximately 800 regulars served a population of half a million. More than half of them were Franciscans. (See Table 1.4).

TABLE 1.4. NUMBER OF REGULARS AFTER THE EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS. RÍO DE LA PLATA REGION (1767)

Order	Number	Percentage
Mercedarians (1796)	171	21.6%
Franciscans (1791)	404	51.1%
Dominicans (1795)	216	27.3%
TOTAL	**791**	**100**

Source: AHPBA. ARA, Reales Órdenes; AHPBA. 7.4.2.63, Tabla capitular la religión de Sto. Domingo, 1795; AHPBA. 7.4.2.76, Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico de la Pcia. de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción. 1793.

The expulsion of the Jesuits produced a restructuring of the Spanish American ecclesiastical field at all levels. Immediately after the expulsion, there was a marked increase in the number of petitions to establish convents in the River Plate territory.

In 1768, the bishop and the Governor of Tucumán, the secular Cabildo (Town Council) and the Parish priest of Catamarca requested the establishment of a Mercedarian convent, because they considered the size of the clergy in the area was too small – 14

[79] What some considered an attack on the church, is appreciated by others just as a modernization that did not admit the regular clergy, considered as a medieval hindrance and a symbol of backwardness See Roberto Di Stefano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia argentina*, 183-225.

clergymen for 13,000 souls. Indeed the clergymen/population ratio in Catamarca was ten times lower that in central areas of the Spanish American Empire[80].

However reasonable the request, it was rejected it. The *Real Audiencia of Charcas* (Royal Court of Justice) found that "such foundations serve no other purpose but to make the Friars rich". On April 6, 1768, the member of the *Audiencia*, Don Pedro Joseph Gutierrez stated that:

> *"what the Prosecutor has stated may be true in other Provinces of Peru, but not in the provinces of Tucumán, Buenos Ayres or Paraguay, where the clergy observe the rules and their Statute does not allow them to acquire goods, and the territories are so poor they can never send any money, only pay for their natural support "*[81]

In Spain, the Council of the Indies decided that the problem "could be rectified by increasing the number of clergymen in the existing Convent of the Order of Saint Francis, without the need of establishing new foundations".[82] Almost immediately after the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Spanish Crown appointed the Franciscans of the Río de la Plata region as heirs of the sons of St. Ignatius. In return, the authorities expected greater spiritual "productivity" on their part.

A few years later, in 1784, the Council of the Indies had allowed the Dominicans to establish a missionary college in the Estancia de Los Lules, a property that had belonged to the Jesuits in Tucumán. The difference in the opposing judgments lies in the location and the function of the convent. Whereas the Catamarca's college former would have added one more establishment aimed at the Creole and urban European population,

[80]Paul Ganster found a ratio of churchmen over parishioners of 1:10 for the core areas of the empire. See Paul Ganster, "Churchmen".
[81] AGI. Audiencia de Buenos Aires 602. "Expediente sobre fundación de un Convento de Religiosos Mercedarios en Catamarca diocesis del Tucuman. Años de 1778 hasta 1790". The translation of this writing, as all the translations in this study, is mine.
[82] *Ibídem*.

the purpose of the Tucumán's college was to train clerics to do mission work in rural areas. According to the Council, it would

> "*be the duty of the Dominicans go out to the fields and say Mass for the soul of the Founder of the Order as the Jesuits used to do*".[83]

The policy of the Council of the Indies was to relocate convents so that they would be better distributed. The Crown's attitude towards the new convents challenges the idea that the Bourbons systematically obstructed the power of the regular orders. Instead, the reformist program implemented by the Bourbons aimed at modifying the place that the orders had occupied in the ecclesiastical life until that moment. Table 1.5 reflects the rural/urban distribution of the Río de la Plata clergy towards the end of the eighteenth century.

TABLE 1.5. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE REGULARS IN RÍO DE LA PLATA AFTER THE EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS

	Mercedarians		**Dominicans**		**Franciscans**		**Total**	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban areas	155	**90.7**	201	**93.1**	358	**89.5**	714	**90.3**
Rural areas	16	9.3	15	6.9	42	10.5	73	9.7
TOTAL	**171**	100	**216**	100	**404***	100	**791**	100

* 4 Franciscans without data.

Source: AHPBA, 7.4.2.77 Nómina de los Religiosos existentes de la Provincia de Nuestra Señora de la Merced. Redención de cautivos cristianos. (1788); AHPBA, 7.4.2.63 Tabla capitular de la religión de Santo Domingo: AHPBA, 7.4.2.68 Nómina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Pcia. de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción. 1791.

The proportion of clergymen assigned to the cities, that is, the core of the Peninsular and Creole population in Colonial America, was 90.3%. Only 73 clerics out of 791 carried out their activities in rural areas. Cities, as Paul Ganster stated when referring to central colonial areas such as Mexico and Peru, were also a powerful clergy magnet in

[83] AGI. Audiencia de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires 602. "Expedte sobre fundación de un Colegio de Misioneros Dominicos en la estancia llamada de los Lules cerca de la ciudad de Sn Miguel del tucuman, que fue de los ex Jesuitas; y declaración que dho Colegio sea y se llame Convento".

the Río de la Plata region.[84] The city was the geographical central basis of the Orders in the colonial Río de la Plata region.

While the city became the key place for the orders, the Franciscans became the most important of the orders after the expulsion of the Society of Jesus. Moreover, the Order enjoyed a great prestige. In May 1785, when the Bishop of Tucumán, Fray Joseph de San Alberto, was promoted to the Bishopric of Charcas, two of the eleven candidates suggested for the newly vacant seat were Franciscans.[85]

FIGURE 1.2 THE UNIVERSITY OF CÓRDOBA (1800)

Source:. *Orígenes de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.* Universidad Nacional De Córdoba http://www.unc.edu.ar/institucional/historia/origenes

But the true relevance of the Franciscans was reflected upon another aspect. In August of 1767, a month after the expulsion of the Company of Jesus from the Spanish territories, don Francisco de Paula Bucareli –governor of Buenos Aires— chose the Order of St Francis to rule the University of Córdoba, formerly administered by the Jesuits. The cession of the regional most important teaching institution to the Franciscans increased

[84] See Paul Ganster, "Churchmen".
[85] The Spaniard Fray Jerónimo Rodríguez Ridoces, Guardian of the Convent de Salamanca and Fray Joseph Manuel de la Vega, former member of the Definidtorium of the province of Cantabria were candidates to the Bishopric of Córdoba. Finally, Ángel Mariano Moscoso was electe to the office. He was the Bishop of Córdoba until his death in 1804.

their already significant power.[86] The Franciscans replaced the expelled Jesuits as the viceroyalty's principal educators and missionaries.

The Franciscans, having already taught elementary school to the children of the Cordoban elite, would now teach these same children, who had become young men. To understand the importance of the Order in the region, out of the main fifty-two Cordoban priests in the first half of the nineteenth century, forty-nine had been educated by the Franciscans.[87]

However, the Franciscans were not the Crown's first choice to continue the academic work of the Society of Jesus. The instructions of the Count of Aranda regarding the expulsion of the Jesuits explicitly chose the secular clergy to take over the University.

> *"In those towns where there are seminaries where education is provided, the Jesuit directors and teachers will be immediately replaced by secular clerics who do not belong to their doctrine"*[88]

A similar resolution concerning the University of Córdoba was adopted by the Council of the Indies in April 1768. But Governor Bucareli handed the governance of the University, as well as of its annex, the Colegio de Monserrat, to the regulars of St. Francis as a provisional measure. At least, one nineteenth-century historian believed that the behavior of the Governor of Buenos Aires was caused less by a hostile attitude towards the Cordoban secular clergy than by a feeling of excessive caution, since he was taking into consideration the fact that the secular clergy had been learned the ideas of the banished priests, and could not be trusted with the education of the young.[89]

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[86] Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Don Bosco, 1971), VI, 517.
[87] See Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República,* 121.
[88] Quoted in Juan Garro, "Secularización de la Universidad de Córdoba. Una página de su historia, 1767-1808" *Nueva Revista de Buenos Aires*, 1 (1882), 506-507.
[89] *Ibidem*, 507-508.

Years later, in a memorial by the Cordoban clergy against the Franciscans, a member of the Cordoban clergy stated that,

> "We have enough proof to be persuaded that the secret maneuvers of the regulars of St. Francis, their particular favor in the eyes of your Excellency's predecessor, and other strings they have pulled on their own behalf, have affected the King's decisions, with no other cause than to protect this religion"[90]

The Cordoban clergy did not exaggerate the Franciscan ability to exert some influence over the authorities. The Córdoba Franciscans convinced Bourbon officials that it was they, not the seculars, who should manage the University.[91]

The choice the State made over the Franciscans was not only the result of an isolated measure on the part of some Bourbon official like Bucareli. The Franciscans negotiated with the Crown's bureaucracy to get the University. They even offered the Governor to teach with the most suitable faculty at no cost to the Crown.[92] As a result, like in no other part of the Continent, the authorities decided to hand the Jesuit University over to the Seraphic Order.[93] (See Table 1.6)

[90] "Memorial del clero de Córdoba al Exmo. señor Virrey Marqués de Loreto sobre la legitimidad de sus derechos, contra los regulares franciscanos, que aun los tienen usurpados — año de 1785. Don Gregorio Funes, entonces canónigo de merced, y ahora decano de esta santa iglesia, vice general, provisor y gobernador del obispado". In *Ibidem*, 507-509.

[91] There is a massive bibliography about the Universidad de Córdoba. For classic analysis, see Alfredo Pueyrredón, *Algunos aspectos de la enseñanza en la Universidad de Córdoba durante la regencia franciscana.* Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1953 and Abrahán Argañaraz, *Crónica del convento de N. P. San Francisco de Córdoba.* Córdoba: Coni, 1888.

[92] Valentina Ayrolo, "La Universidad de Córdoba en el siglo XIX. Escuela de políticos, intelectuales y administradores de los nuevos Estados," in Alicia Servetto and Daniel Saur (eds.), *Universidad Nacional de Córdoba y sociedad: escenarios y sentidos. Cuatrocientos años de historia.* Córdoba: Editorial de la UNC, 2013, 209-226.

[93] Besides the Jesuit universities, the Spanish Crown controlled another ten (in a joint venture with the Catholic Church); the Dominicans, four and the Augustinians, two. See Enrique Villalba, *Consecuencias educativas de la expulsión de los jesuitas de América*, Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija de estudios sobre la Universidad. Madrid, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid/Ed. Dykinson, 2003.

TABLE 1.6. JESUIT UNIVERSITIES. COLONIAL SPANISH AMERICA (1767)

University	Location	Situation after 1767
Real y Pontificia Universidad de Santiago de la Paz	Santo Domingo	Stopped functioning.
Real y Pontificia Universidad de Mérida	Yucatán	Stopped functioning.
Pontificia Universidad de San Ignacio Loyola	Cuzco	Stopped functioning.
Pontificia Universidad de San Francisco Javier	Bogotá	Stopped functioning. Reopened in 1930.
Universidad de San Gregorio Magno	Quito	Stopped functioning.
Universidad Pencopolitana	Concepción	Stopped functioning.
Real y Pontificia Universidad. de San Francisco Xavier	Sucre	Keep functioning under Royal control.
Universidad de Córdoba	Córdoba	Keep functioning under Franciscan control.

Source: Enrique Villalba, *Consecuencias educativas de la expulsión de los jesuitas de América*, Madrid, Instituto Antonio de Nebrija de estudios sobre la Universidad. Madrid, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid/Ed. Dykinson, 2003.

From the very first moment of the cession, Franciscans resisted multiple claims by the secular clergy. The Real Orden was the cause of their discontent. The secular clergy considered that the Franciscans appointment to occupy the University was a usurpation of their own rights. From that moment the aim of the secular clergy was to oust the Franciscans from the University. The unprecedented cession of the University to the Franciscans would place them in the center of all conflicts about power in Córdoba for the next forty years. In this struggle, the Order would appear, almost without intending it, as the lesser partner in an alliance with the Crown fighting against the Cordoban elite which controlled the Cabildo.

In the fight over the University, many directives and cédulas reales took decades to be implemented in Córdoba. It was only in 1808 that the University was finally handed over to the secular clergy, a decision made by the Crown forty years before. While they

governed the University, the Franciscans demonstrated their capacity to influence every decision that involved them.

Final Considerations

The governance of the Order was a crucial moment for the Franciscans: positions were disputed and convents were assigned. Gradually priests built their careers in a system that fostered personal ambitions. Education, seniority and performance were the visible stepping stones in a clergyman's career.

The Franciscan system of promotion usually worked without major problems during the late colonial period. However, each chapter was a moment of friction between the priests and the hierarchical powers, and as such, might open the door to state intervention. Factions were set up in a context where the number of Peninsulars in the region was much larger than in other viceroyalties.

In the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, the Franciscan Order was the one that boasted the largest number of individuals and distributed them well. However, as in the rest of the orders, that distribution was consistent with a logic that made cities almost the absolute center of action. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the regular clergy in the Río de la Plata was mostly urban.

During this period, unlike other regions, the Bourbon Reforms did not negatively affect the Franciscans. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, the opposite seemed to be the case. Their educational and missionary activities were strengthened by a measure taken by the Crown: a measure that put them in the powerful role of being *letrados*.

Some historians believe that the educated elites took part in power from the

colonial period and during a large portion of the nineteenth century.

> *The viceregal capitals housed a myriad of administrators, educators, professionals, notaries, religious personnel, and other wielders of pen and paper. Lost of the letrados were involved in transmitting and responding to imperial directives, so they could be found clustered around the royal representatives at the top of the social pyramid.*[94]

The priests, particularly, moved from evangelization to education. "Even though the first verb was conjugated by the religious spirit and the second by the secular spirit, the attempt at transculturation, learned from the European lesson, was still the same."[95] However, the regulars did not use the weapons of persuasion as the modern intellectuals would. The spiritual protection exercised by the regulars was a power relationship rather than the persuasive authority which, since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has tended to be considered the main instrument available to "intellectuals" to achieve material results in the social world they live in".[96]

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the power that the regulars exercised over the laics, and which allowed them to influence the decisions of the inhabitants of the colony, fell into a crisis. Their influence over the inhabitants of the colony dwindled, particularly after the expulsion of the Jesuits, one of the regular orders more closely associated to the task of transculturation. At that precise moment, the Córdoba Franciscans, seen as closer to the Crown's policies, were called to replace them.

Paradoxically, after their expulsion from the Spanish dominions in 1767, the Spanish American Jesuits themselves became the patriot *letrados*. In exile, the former Jesuits wrote libels and pamphlets against the Bourbon monarchy that highlighted the virtues of the Spanish American versus the Peninsular identity.[97] While the Jesuits

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[94] Ángel Rama, *The Lettered City*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996, 18.
[95] *Ibídem*, 25.
[96] *Ibidem*, 32.
[97] A Peruvian Jesuit, Juan Pablo Viscardo, wrote "La carta a los americanos españoles," the best example of

became patriot *letrados*, the Córdoba Franciscans became ecclesiastical *letrados*, a role they had never before performed.

Although they had no experience as *letrados*, they knew how to take advantage of the new situation. The decision to hand the University over to the Córdoba Franciscans put them in charge of training the elite. With their administration of the University, laymen first gained access to the degree of Doctor in Córdoba. In awarding doctoral degrees to the laity, the University became a good place where the Franciscans could establish relationships with the regional elites.[98]

But Córdoba's elite never saw the Franciscans as allies. Joining forces with the secular clergy, with whom they had strong ties, local *vecinos* fought against the Franciscans to recover the University. Franciscans were seen as agents of the Crown trying to control local power.

The assessment was not wrong. Some members of the *Ancien* Regime took advantage of the search for centralization to forge alliances with Crown officials. The centralization process, whose consolidation would take almost a century, would not have existed without the support of those sectors that, though rooted in the structures of the *Ancien* Regime, saw in this transition a possibility of increasing their own power. And here enter the Franciscans. The Order of the Río de la Plata learned how to bargain with

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a Spanish American identity encouraged by the Society of Jesus. See Jorge Myers, "Introducción al volumen I", in Jorge Myers and Carlos Altamirano (eds.), *Historia de los intelectuales en América Latina I. La ciudad letrada, de la conquista al modernismo.* Buenos Aires: Katz, 2008, 34.

[98] At the end of the eighteenth century, law studies were added (with the creation of the School of Law and Social Sciences), and from this time forward studies at the university were no longer exclusively theological. After 1810, some laymen were to play important roles in the early revolutionary governments. Juan José Castelli, for instance, graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in 1784. Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República*, 122. Among other students, José Gaspar de Francia, who would become a Paraguayan independence leader and dictator, completed his studies at the University by the 1780s. Domingo Laino, *José Gaspar de Francia. El conocimiento como arma*. Asunción: Ediciones Cerro Cora, 2010.

the authorities, who, in turn, found allies in the Seraphs to support their policies.

Crown and Franciscans signed an agreement of mutual convenience from the moment Governor Bucareli´s chose the Franciscans as administrators of the University of Córdoba.[99] The Franciscans appeared to be the only ones who could help the Crown to control the Cordoban locals. A new partnership was born.

[99] Bucareli could also have chosen the Dominicans to be in charge of the University. It could have been the logical choice if the King wanted to erase the Society's power in his dominions, since Dominicans and Jesuits used to be rivals by tradition, especially when it came to disputes over the administration of the Spanish American colonial universities. Enrique González González states that in all the cities that had both a Jesuit and a Dominican university, there were plenty of lawsuits between them trying to eliminate the competition. See Enrique González González, "Por una historia de las universidades hispánicas en el Nuevo Mundo (siglos XVI-XVIII)", en *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación Superior),* 1:1 (2010), 77-101.

CHAPTER 2

CÓRDOBA AS POLE OF FRANCISCAN ATTRACTION (1650-1850)

By the end of the eighteenth century, the decline of the number of clergymen produced a severe crisis of the Catholic Church. Both the decline and the crisis were the result of Crown's policies that tried to limit Church power and society's changing attitudes towards religion.

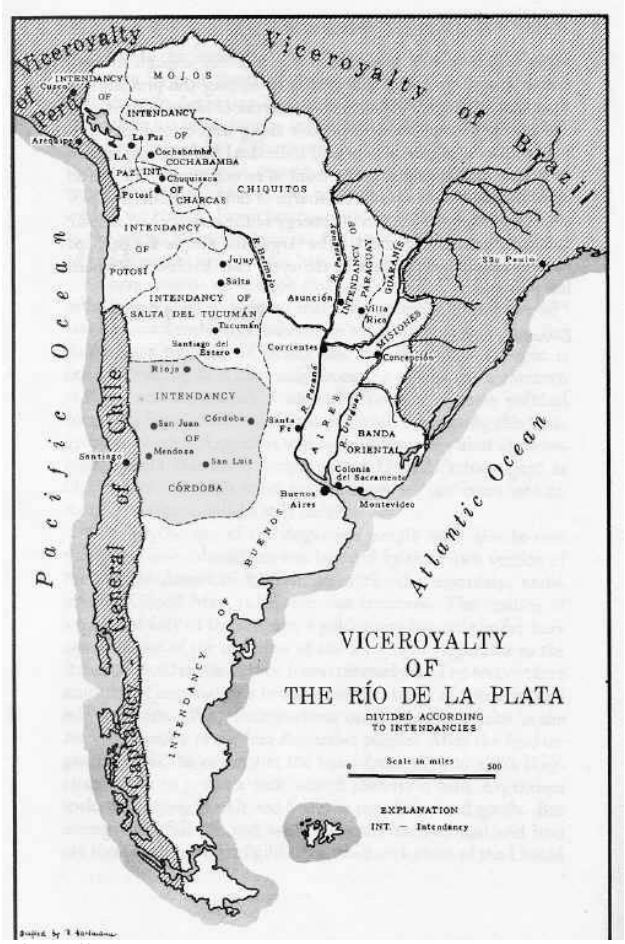
To assess the impact of the crisis, I analyze the Franciscan recruitment patterns in Córdoba, from the beginnings of their settlement in the mid-seventeenth century until 1850. I also focus on the last decade of the eighteenth-century to show if Córdoba's society found better alternatives to rise in the social scale other than having their children join the regular clergy.

Córdoba and region: economy

The Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata was probably the region of Spanish America that profited most from the Bourbon Reforms. In 1776, the Spanish Crown created the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, separating the southern portion of the Viceroyalty of Peru from Lima and elevating Buenos Aires to the status of a viceregal capital. This elevation and the increased legal trading activity that accompanied it, along with the inclusion of the silver-producing province of Upper Peru within the area, resulted into a new era of prosperity for both the capital city and its hinterland. Buenos Aires

opened to the Atlantic world.[100]

MAP 2.1: LOCATION OF CÓRDOBA IN THE VICEROLTY OF RÍO DE LA PLATA (1782)



Source: *Viceroyalties*, Colorado College, http://www2.coloradocollege.edu/Dept/HY/Ashley/HY104/images/MapKeys/ViceRoyalties.jpg

Yet the effects of the Reforms were far from being regionally balanced. The Bourbon Reforms created a virtual territorial division that would carve the region into two for at least the next century: a progressively wealthier metropolis looking overseas and an increasingly impoverished interior looking for alternatives. Córdoba appeared in the middle of these two worlds as a city that, while taking advantage of the Reforms,

[100] Susan Socolow, *The Bureaucrats of Buenos Aires, 1769-1810: Amor al Servicio.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1987, 1-3.

would also suffer from their distance in wealth and resources compared to Buenos Aires.

In 1809, the new trade policies issued by the Spanish Crown made the gap bigger. The opening of Buenos Aires to the world had a deep effect on local artisanal and manufactured production of the interior and Córdoba, particularly. In this context, Córdoba and its elite —from the independence up to approximately the coming to power of Juan Manuel de Rosas— would attempt to politically differentiate itself from Buenos Aires.[101]

Córdoba and the reforms

From the middle of the seventeenth century, the port city of Buenos Aires experienced steady economic and demographic growth. Primarily a commercial city, it was elevated to the capital of the new Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata in 1776, taking on a host to new administrative functions. The city had a sizable artisan group and a large sector tied to the processing of hides for export. While there was wealth inequality in Buenos Aires, the city also provided many opportunities for the daring and the lucky. For example, according to the evidence provided by census and parish records, the growing mulatto population of the city found it relatively easy to move across blurred racial lines.

While the opening afforded by free trade policies meant greater competition for the interior regions of the viceroyalty that produced cheap cloth, there was a general downturn in the interior economy. The historiography held that the economy of Córdoba

[101] Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica".

was adversely affected by the new policies of free trade.[102] However, recent research has shown that the Bourbon Reforms did not worsen Córdoba's economic situation, but in fact, improved it. Córdoba experienced an economic reactivation as from mid eighteenth century, as reflected in increased tax revenue. The city kept its traditional link with the north, complementing it with importing and exporting goods through with Buenos Aires's port.[103]

The Bourbon Reforms also produced institutional change. In 1785, the city became the capital of the Intendancy of Córdoba of Tucumán, a region that included the current provinces of Córdoba, La Rioja and Cuyo. The first Provincial Governor (*Gobernador Intendente*) was Rafael de Sobremonte.

Originally, San Miguel de Tucumán was the seat of the Episcopate. However, Córdoba's agricultural wealth and prestige gradually overshadowed Tucumán: the Episcopal chair moved to Córdoba in 1699. From the late sixteenth century on, Córdoba was one of the two Apostolic Sees in the Spanish South Cone. Called the Bishopric of Tucumán, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction covered the regions of today's northern Argentina. In 1806, it was renamed the diocese of Córdoba and included Córdoba, La Rioja, San Juan, San Luis and Mendoza.[104]

The consolidation of Córdoba as a province-diocese in 1806 was due to deficiencies in the spiritual care in an overly large territory, but, above all, to matters related to the *Derecho de Patronato* (Board of Trustees). Viceroy Sobremonte stated the reasons that Cuyo be transferred into the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Córdoba.

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[102] Mark Szuchman, *Mobility and Integration in Urban Argentina*.
[103] Ana Inés Punta, Córdoba *borbónica*, 83
[104] It retained those boundaries until 1834, when San Juan, San Luis and Mendoza became a separate bishopric. Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República*, 22-25.

"Besides this there is more damage to the civil and political order that is worth of attention, such as the obstacles that the Governor of Córdova finds in the way the Deputy Board acts regarding Mendoza, Sn Juan and Sn Luis, provinces that fall under the jurisdiction of the Bishopric of Chile as regards their economy. The Bishopric has influence on the Distribution of the Doctrines and Economic Benefits, assigns, together with the Prelate, Parishes to criminal priests, and in all other respects new support must be provided, but there are many inconveniences since the Prelate resides in Santiago de Chile and the Deputy Board, in Córdova"[105]

With these words, Sobremonte, the personification of the ideal Enlightenment official, showed how the Spanish State perceived religion at the end of the eighteenth century. It was necessary that ecclesiastical jurisdiction should match civil jurisdiction, so that the right of the Patronato (Board of Trustees) may be applied efficiently. With this arrangement, the state would be able to limit any sovereignty other than its own. Religion thus became a matter of state.

During Sobremonte's government, visible urban advances were produced in the city. Trade unions and police services were regulated and multiple public works were improved. As many other Spanish American cities, new ideas were reflected in infrastructure improvements.[106]

The Reforms did not displace existing economic sectors. Mule trade continued to be the main economic activity. In spite of modernization, Córdoba continued to depending on sales to Salta and Jujuy. The local elite was made up of the traditional mule owners and the recently arrived importers from Buenos Aires, Creoles, Portuguese and Peninsulars. Conflicts among these groups did not seem to exist. Moreover, the opening of Buenos Aires to free trade did not produce a decrease in manufacture production and export from Córdoba. There were no conflicts between Córdoba and Buenos Aires during

[105] AGI, Buenos Aires 602, Audiencia de Buenos Aires. "Expediente ser erección de un nuevo obispado en la Ciudad de Salta, dividiendo el de Cordova de Tucuman; y negando la solicitud dela ciudad de Mendoza en el Reyno de Chile, reducida a que se erija en ella otro obispado. Consultas, materias y provisiones eclesiasticas de Tucuman 1701-1808".
[106] *Ibidem.*, 178.

the Bourbon period. Instead of displacement, there was activity diversification.[107]

The local elite was not excluded from politics, although with the emergence of the *Intendencia*, the Cabildo lost ground. Even though the State exercised more social control in the city and countryside, the Bourbon Reforms did not seem to negatively affect the power of Córdoba traditional elite. On the contrary, the expansion of civilian and military personnel created new opportunities for the elite.[108]

The vigor of the economy was echoed in the demographic growth of the region. By 1813, Córdoba and its hinterland totaled 69,000 inhabitants.[109] Such growth was the result of active trade, plentiful food and the lack of epidemics, as well as a strong health policy undertaken by the first Provincial Governor, the Marquis of Sobremonte.

Population increase helped to diversify the "human capital" of the region. The flow of immigrants, primarily from Spain, included a significant number of government bureaucrats and military officers in addition to a considerable contingent of young merchants. These entrepreneurs crossed the Atlantic Ocean in search of opportunities to capitalize on the growing importance of Córdoba as a commercial town and bureaucratic center. In turn, this fresh wave of immigrants, provided local patriarchs with renewed opportunities for their daughters to marry influential Peninsular traders, thereby reinforcing their local clans in an age when local fortunes could be at risk by decisions made in Spain.[110]

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[107] *Ibidem*, 75.
[108] *Ibidem*, 253-257.
[109] Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba a Fines Del Siglo XVIII*. Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1993, 20-21. Aníbal Arcondo, *La población de Córdoba en 1813: Publicación homenaje a la memoria del profesor Ceferino Garzón Maceda*. Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1995.
[110] Aníbal Arcondo, *La población de Córdoba en 1813*, 77-78; Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba*, 45 and Héctor Lobos, "La inmigración española en Córdoba," in *Revista de la junta provincial de historia de Córdoba* 12 (1987): 155-177.

Córdoba as a Franciscan factory

Very little is known about the regular clergy's origins and social background in general and of the Franciscans in particular.[111] Analysis of the personal and family history of the candidates applying for the Franciscan habit helps to understand how the Franciscans were inserted in Córdoba's society. Table 2.1 shows that, between 1650 and 1850, 243 applicants tried to enter to the Franciscan Order through the Convent of Córdoba. Why did families on either side of the Atlantic Ocean choose the city of Córdoba as a destination for their sons, to become Franciscans?

TABLE 2.1. NUMBER OF APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN CONVENT OF CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

Period	**1650-1700**	**1701-1750**	**1751-1800**	**1801-1850**	**TOTAL**
Applicants	32	45	93	73	**243**

Source: AAC. Archivo del Convento de San Jorge (ACSJ), Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

The *Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus"* in the Archive of the Convent of *San Jorge*, in Córdoba, provides us with information on the age and origin of those who tried to enter the Franciscan Order as well as their parents' profession and origin. Based on this information, some trends show how for almost two centuries the Franciscan Order adapted and adjusted itself to the local social background.

The admission procedure to the Order required witnesses to attest to the

[111] As Mayo well pointed out years ago, every study of the colonial clergy as a social group makes it necessary to know the standards which have regulated their recruitment Carlos Mayo, *Los Betlemitas en Buenos Aires*, 41.

applicant's conditions. Two or three witnesses, always men, were questioned about themselves and their fitness to testify. They were also asked about the extent and form of acquaintance with the candidate, their parents and grandparents. The mechanism varied over time and from one candidate to another but, in general, those changes were always subtle.

The Franciscans queried witnesses about the candidate's involvement in public infamy as well as whether their families practiced "low trades" such as "butchers, executioners or town criers."[112] In addition, a priestly vocation had to be proven. Neither those in debt, nor those whose closest relatives were "so poor that they were in need of industry and labor from the Order" were allowed to enter. No action from their past could have consequences that affected their religious life. Moreover, the candidate could not be requesting entry into the order as a way to find shelter for crimes they had committed. A candidate could not be married, nor have given a promise to marry. Finally, the candidate as well as his parents and grandparents should be "descendants of good, faithful and Catholic lineage, neither of Jews, Moors or heretics nor of modern Gentiles, such as blacks, mulattos and not punished by the Holy Office".

These testimonies were generally taken in Córdoba, but there was great flexibility in this. Testimony was also given in Buenos Aires and overseas letters were sometimes accepted. Such was the case of the applicant Benito Ganigue who, in 1761, presented a letter from the Jesuit Convent of Gerona mentioning the virtues that the young man had shown in the convent. Benito had entered the Society of Jesus in Europe but now, in

[112] The *oficios viles* (low trades) were associated with manual labor, incompatible with the tasks of a clergyman.

America, he whished to enter the Order of Saint Francis.[113]

Having a regular clergyman give an endorsement that always helped the candidate. Fray Pedro Nolasco Duran, Mercedarian, served as a witness for Alejandro de Rojas y Aranda, who arrived alone from Paraguay in 1752.[114] Fray Felix Borras, Catalan Dominican, testified on September 20th, 1761, in favor of the already mentioned Benito Ganigue, who was from the same Spanish region.[115]

Membership in the regular clergy was not absolutely necessary to endorse an overseas applicant. Juan de Olivera, a resident of Buenos Aires and a native of the island of São Miguel, gave testimony in the Convent of *Once Mil Vírgenes* of Buenos Aires for Bernardo Vieira de Acosta, a native of Buenos Aires and son of Antonio Vieira de Acosta, also born on the Portuguese island.[116] The Order was flexible in accepting witnesses.

An applicant's case was further strengthened if he could demonstrate kinship with some member of the regular clergy. Juan de la Rosa Escobar introduced his Franciscan uncle, Fray Mariano Pérez, as his witness for admission to the Order in 1808.[117] In 1810, the testimony of his great uncle, Fray José Faustino Álvarez, Mercedarian, was sufficient support for the admission to the Order of Juan Diego Álvarez from Córdoba, in 1810.[118]

There were several cases of siblings who entered the Seraphic Order. The two sons of Manuel Antonio de Bustamante entered in the early 1770s.[119] Francisco de Peralta y Baquedano and his wife Isabel, immigrants from Santiago de Chile and Tucumán who

[113] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 34.
[114] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 1.
[115] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 34.
[116] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 21.
[117] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 4, 17.
[118] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 4, 20.
[119] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 54 y 56.

had settled in Córdoba in the early eighteenth century, decided to send three of their sons —Francisco, Nicolás and Narciso— to the Franciscan Order.[120] The sons of Bartolina del Rincón, a native of Córdoba, and the Valencian José Muñoz entered the Córdoba's Convent of *San Jorge* in the 1770s.[121] José Domingo and Damián, sons of the Asturian José Bustos and Mrs. Josefa de Villafañe, all residents of Córdoba, entered the Order at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[122]

During the admission procedure, the witnesses had to answer questions about the candidate and whether he was of legitimate birth. Sometimes, there was some flexibility in this area. For instance, José, the son of Francisco Marquez, Portuguese-born, and Eugenia de Almeida, entered the Order in 1740. José took his mother's surname, Almeida, because Marquez did not acknowledge him as his son.[123] The Franciscan Order was not oppose to the entry of natural sons. On the contrary, it could offer solutions to some families. Something similar happened with Antonio Francisco Dávila from Córdoba, born of unknown parents and raised by Captain Juan José Dávila, and with Juan Andrés Liscano from Santa Fé, the natural son of Bartolomé Liscano and Antonia Ramirez. Both entered the Order in the 1740s. [124]

The situation was more complicated in the case of Juan de Espinosa. Juan, native of Paraguay, was admitted to the convent at age 9, in 1681. He was the natural son of Alonso de Lamadrid and Maria de Espinosa, who later married to Pedro Pinto. The Franciscan Order provided a good solution for the new family strategy of the Espinosa-

[120] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 47, 48 y 54.
[121] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 46 y 64.
[122] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 4, 1 y 9.
[123] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 65.
[124] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 67 y 73.

Pinto's marriage.[125]

TABLE 2.2. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. NATURAL SONS. CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

	1650-1700	1701-1750	1751-1800	1801-1850	TOTAL
Natural Sons	2	3	1	2	8
Total over total applicants	5.9 %	6.5 %	1.1 %	6.1 %	3.3%

Source: AAC, ACSJ, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

It has been stated that the standards for admission to an ecclesiastical career became more flexible in the mid eighteenth century.[126] In the case of Córdoba, the entry of natural sons remained almost constant from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, as it shows Table 2.2. Furthermore, it is precisely in the second half of the eighteenth century that the proportion of natural sons drops to barely 1%. It is also the period with highest number of applicants over the two centuries I analyzed. Therefore, comparing Tables 2.2 and 2.3 suggests that the Franciscans' standards of admission became more flexible only when the number of applicants was low.

Sometimes, the applicant had entered another convent before coming to Córdoba. Manuel Lopez Cazón came from Asunción, Paraguay to Buenos Aires in 1753 and was later transferred to the Convent of Córdoba.[127] The Portuguese Valentín Ovales's itinerary was more extensive. Having entered the Convent of Lima, he presented himself in Córdoba in 1747. He presented no witness and there was no reference to his parents. Having been accepted in Peru was enough to enter the Convent in Córdoba.[128]

The distance between Córdoba and Asunción is about 600 miles. During colonial

[125] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 12.
[126] Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos*.
[127] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 2.
[128] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 77.

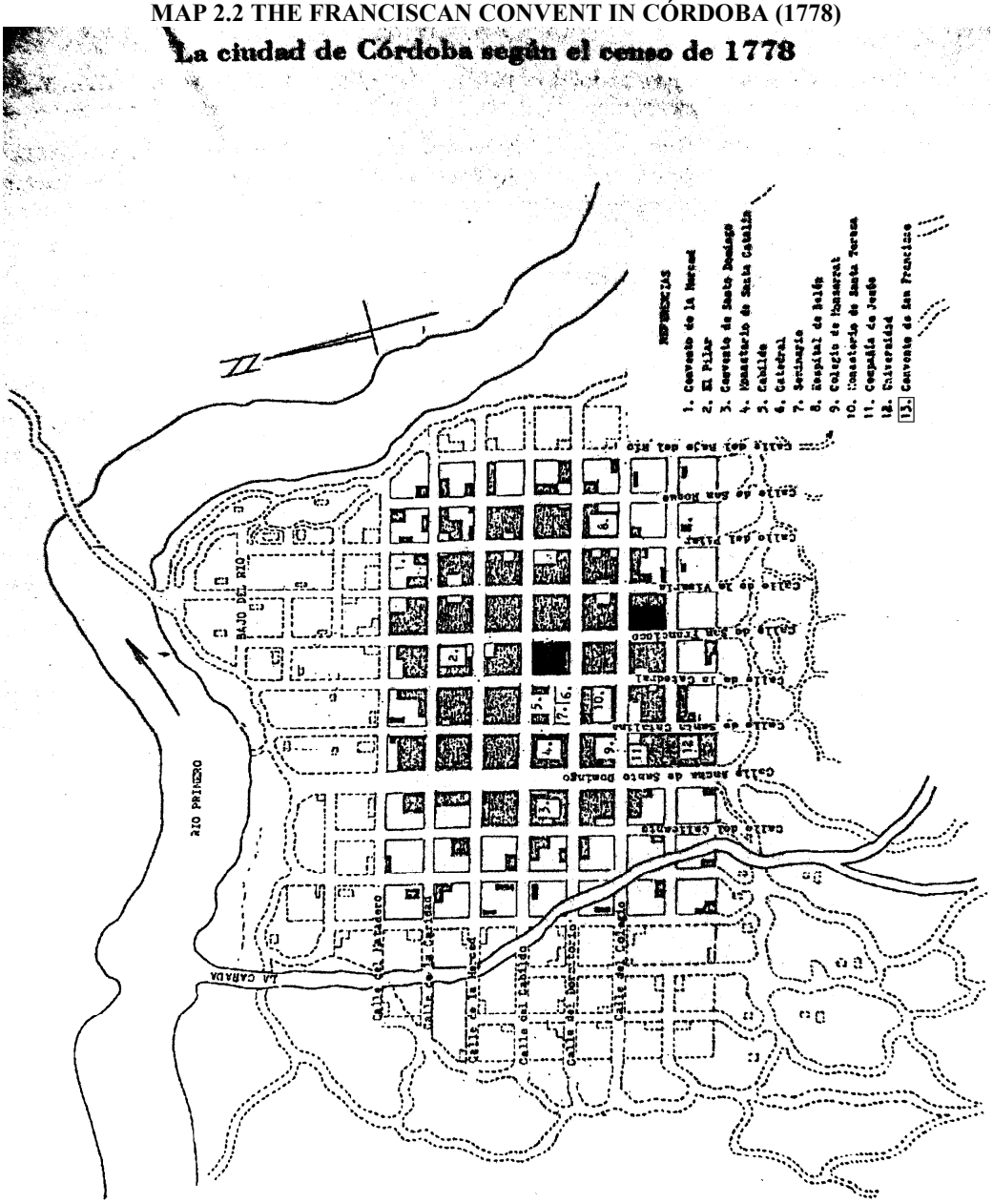
times, the journey took about three months, navigating the rivers Paraná and Paraguay, and then riding horses from the port of Santa Fe.[129] José Marcos de Guzmán, 16, and Alonso de Avendaño, 19, traveled together from Paraguay to enter the Convent in Córdoba in 1689. Both were sons of military men.[130]

Córdoba was an attractive destination for the potential Franciscans, especially those from Paraguay. Until the late seventeenth century, the Franciscans did not have training studies in Asunción. Only in the first half of the eighteenth century did the Paraguayan Franciscans opened a new one which housed a novitiate and a university.[131]

Entrance into the university was one of the reasons for a growth in number of Paraguayan applicants for the Franciscans habit in this period. The University of Córdoba acquired an increasing prestige during Franciscan administration because laymen first gained access to the degree of Doctor.

[129] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 17 y 18.
[130] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 2.
[131] Margarita Durán Estragó, *Presencia franciscana en el Paraguay,* chapter "Primer convento franciscano de Asunción".

MAP 2.2 THE FRANCISCAN CONVENT IN CÓRDOBA (1778)



In black, the location of the central plaza and the Franciscan convent.
Source: Emiliano Endrek, "El mestizaje en el Tucumán, siglo XVIII. Demografía comparada", *Cuadernos de Historia*, 35 (1967), 17.

Until the early eighteenth century, candidates only traveled from Paraguay. Since then, people began to do so from the Litoral and, from 1750, the growth of Peninsulars

who traveled alone from Europe to join the Order is remarkable. However, the proportion of applicants traveling alone to enter the convent was always low.

TABLE 2.3. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. REGION OF PROVENANCE. CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

	1651-1700 (a)		1701-1750 (b)		1751-1800 (c)		1801-1850 (d)		TOTAL
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Córdoba	**-**	-	**19**	44.1	**38**	41.7	**49**	72	**106**
Litoral	**9**	30	**10**	23.3	**15**	16.5	**4**	5.9	**38**
North	**-**	-	**3**	7	**14**	15.4	**8**	11.8	**25**
Paraguay	**21**	70	**5**	11.6	**12**	13.2	**1**	1.5	**39**
Spain	**0**	-	**2**	4.7	**10**	11	**6**	8.8	**18**
Rest of Europe	**-**	-	**4**	9.3	**2**	2.2	**-**	-	**6**
Total	**30**	100	**43**	100	**91**	100	**68**	100	**232**

Litoral: Buenos Aires, Corrientes y Santa Fe. North: Catamarca, Jujuy, La Rioja, Salta, Santiago del Estero y Tucumán. (a), (b) and (c): 2 applicants without data of origin; (d): 5 applicants without data of origin.
Source: Archivo del Convento de San Jorge, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

Analyzing the Franciscan candidates by origin, the general tendency was that the Franciscan Order in Córdoba overwhelmingly attracted men born in the same region. During the early years of the Order's existence, no individuals from Córdoba entered the convent but in successive half centuries, the Córdoba-born would constitute 44.1%, 41.7% and 72%, respectively. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Franciscan Order was becoming an increasingly local institution.

At the same time, the Litoral progressively ceased to send their sons to Córdoba. The percentage of candidates from that region who intended to enter the convent in Córdoba varied from 30% during the second half of the seventeenth century, to 5.9% during the first half of the nineteenth century. During those fifty years, only four

individuals traveled from the Litoral to Córdoba to enter the Order. Although there are no figures for the Franciscan recruitment in the Convent of Buenos Aires between 1800 and 1823, we can then guess that, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Franciscan Order cease to be a destination for young men from the Litoral.

Applicants' family background

As noted earlier, the Franciscan Order's entrance standards required that the applicant name his parents. Sometimes, origin was added to this information. The data indicates data on parent's origin increased from a low 15.6% in the mid-seventeenth century to a rate of 42.7% between 1750 and 1830. This suggests the growth of Córdoba city, whose inhabitants could increasingly draw their family origins more effectively.

Table 2.4 includes the parental origin of those individuals who sought to enter the Order when appeared in the application. For the period 1650-1700, it is worth mentioning the presence of parents born in the Litoral who sent their sons to the Franciscan Order. The aforementioned Paraguayan contribution that would disappear in the first half of the eighteenth century only to reappear between 1750 and 1800, probably as a result of the Franciscan administration of the university.

TABLE 2.4. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. PARENTS' REGION OF ORIGIN. CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

	1650-1700	1701-1750	1751-1800	1801-1850	TOTAL
Córdoba	-	-	10	12	**22**
North	-	3	1	5	**9**
Litoral	2	4	5	2	**13**
Paraguay	3	-	3	1	**7**
Upper Peru	-	1	-	-	**1**
Chile	-	3	-	1	**4**
Brazil	-	1	2	-	**3**
Spain	-	2	14	10	**26**
Europe	-	3	6	2	**11**
Total applicants mentioning parents' data	5	17	41	33	**96**
Total over total applicants	**15.6 %**	**37.8 %**	**44.1 %**	**45.2 %**	**39.6 %**

Source: AAC, ACSJ, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, mention of a parent became more common. Córdoba's convent generally recruited candidates from neighboring regions including the Litoral and the north of what would later be the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, including Upper Peru. But there were also parents who sent their sons from Brazil and Portugal. Córdoba was becoming an attractive place for foreigners and the Franciscan Order was a good destination for their sons.

The tendency began in the first half of the eighteenth century became stronger in the second half, when the city became a host to Europeans, particularly Spaniards, who found in the Franciscan convent a future for their sons. Of the forty-one applicants who reported parental origin, twenty mentioned that one of these parents was European-born. One can also already note that more Córdoba-born parents began to see Franciscan life as

an option for their sons. These trends continued in the first third of the nineteenth century. Mentions of one parent's European or Cordoban origin accounted for nearly three-quarters of the total entering the Order.

TABLE 2.5. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. FAMILIES' DECLARED REGION OF ORIGIN. CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

	1650-1700	1701-1750	1751-1800	1801-1850	TOTAL
Spanish father/Córdoba's mother	-	1	2 (a)	5	**7**
European father/Córdoba's mother	-	1	2 (a)	2	**4**
Latam Father/Córdoba's mother	-	-	1 (a)	1	**1**
TOTAL	**-**	**2**	**5**	**8**	**15**
Total over total applicants	**-**	**8.9%**	**5.4%**	**11.0%**	**6.1%**

Source: AAC. ACSJ, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.
(a) Includes one from RLP.

Even though the data in Table 2.5 are limited, they merely reflect certain societal patterns in the Cordoban region. From the second half of the eighteenth century, immigration into Córdoba was massively male. Men, mostly Spaniard-born, married Cordoban women. Of the 757 marriages celebrated in Córdoba between 1760 and 1800, 346 were between Córdoba natives; in 16 cases, the wife was foreign-born and the husband from Córdoba, and in 395 cases (or 52.5%), the husband was foreign-born and the wife, Cordoban.[132] Between 1750 and 1800, five foreign men married to a spouse from Córdoba entered a son into the Order of St. Francis. They represented 5.4% of all the applicants that entered the Franciscan Convent of Córdoba. The number increases in the first decade of the nineteenth century when another eight foreign-born men married

[132] Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba,* 45-46.

Córdoba-born women, but it is still a low number. Sending a son to the Franciscan convent was only one of many options for a Cordoban family by the turn of the century.

The Spaniards who arrived in Córdoba, mostly Galicians, assimilated into the local population, marrying local elite women, and thus entering trading. From 1750, the same happened to the Portuguese who, through various exhortations to the governors, were enabled to trade.[133] Very few married couples emigrated directly from the peninsula to the city of Córdoba. The Franciscan Pascual de Castro was the only Spaniard who crossed the Atlantic Ocean along with his family to enter the Order. Once accepted into the convent, in 1777, Pedro de Castro and María García, his parents, settled in the interior city.[134]

The Franciscans were not fully representative of Córdoba's demographic trends. Although they were part of the city's elite, they did not share the same interests.

As the result of natural population growth and of wave immigration, there was a constant population growth during the last decades of the Spanish Regime in Córdoba. By 1813, the region had more than 71,000 inhabitants in the area.[135]

Since 1750, the presence of descendants of Portuguese was also significant in the cloisters of Córdoba, as well as in the city. The sons of immigrants from the north of Spain, and especially Galicia, was comprised a major group joining the Franciscans in Córdoba. This reflects the migratory tendencies in Córdoba. Nearly half of the immigrants to Córdoba came from Galicia.[136] Córdoba was a feasible destination for

[133] *Ibidem.* 50-51.
[134] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 56.
[135] From the official census of 1778, Córdoba has a total of 7320 individuals, 3309 men and 4011 women. Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba*, 20. The census of 1813 was for the entire region of Córdoba. There were a total of 71,637 souls. Aníbal Arcondo, *La población de Córdoba en 1813*.
[136] 43.5 % of the migrants to Córdoba went from Galicia. The crisis in Galicia added to the existence of an important Gallego community in Córdoba were the causes of this fact. Dora Celton, *La Población de la*

those Galician families were suffering impoverishment crisis at the turn of the eighteenth century; and the Franciscan convent was an attractive destination for their sons.

It was also a feasible destination for the sons of immigrants arriving from Southern Spain. Between 1700 and 1850, one third of the applicants were sons of immigrants from that region, the same proportion of southern Spanish, within the total Spanish migration to Córdoba.[137]

There was also a change in the profession of applicants' fathers also seems. As table 2.6 shows, over time fewer military parents sent their sons to the Franciscan Order.

TABLE 2.6. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. MILITARY PARENTS. CÓRDOBA (1650-1850)

	1651-1700	**1701-1750**	**1751-1800**	**1801-1850**
Military Parents	17	6	6	0
Total over total applicants	50.0 %	13.0 %	6.7 %	-

Source: AAC, ACSJ, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

The decrease in the number of mentions of applicants' military parents is linked to a decrease in the choice of Córdoba's convent as a destination option for the sons of Asunción residents. The great majority of applicants who reported having a military father were Paraguayans. Paraguay was a region where people had high regard for military rank. The wealthiest men in the city usually had the title of Maestre de Campo.[138]

Military career offered prestige and the possibility of social mobility. Although seventy-six soldiers lived in the city of Córdoba in the census of 1813, none of them

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Provincia de Córdoba, 47.

[137] 32.5% of the immigrants arrived in Córdoba from the south of Spain. *Ibídem*.

[138] Martín Dobrizhoffer, *An account of the abipones, an equestrian people of Paraguay*, New York: Johnson, 1970, volume 3, 74-75

decided to send their sons to the city's Franciscan Convent.[139]

The other profession mentioned in the records is that one of physician. In the late seventh century, Ramón de Barcelona was identified as the son of the graduate Mr. Juan de Barcelona, physician.[140] It was the only time a candidate's father's activity was mentioned. This was not a peculiarity of the Franciscan convent. In the colonial period there were few professionals in Córdoba.[141]

Vocational Crisis? Franciscans' and the coming of the revolution (1750-1810)

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Córdoba was the second city (after Buenos Aires) attracting young men to the Franciscan Order. From a universe of 170 candidates, from1750 to 1790, between 19% and 37% of all the candidates of the Río de la Plata region entered the Convent of San Jorge in Córdoba. The rest entered the Franciscan Order mostly through the convent of Buenos Aires. The percentage of Cordoban candidates fell considerably in 1790. Nevertheless, in the last colonial decade, Córdoba concentrated nearly a 30% of the candidates, anticipating the shift from Buenos Aires to Córdoba as the center of Franciscan activities in the region.

During the last sixty years of Spanish rule in Río de la Plata, the number of candidates entering the Franciscan Order in Córdoba remained steady with approximately twenty applicants entering per decade, as we can see in Table 2.7. An important exception was the decade of 1790, when the number of candidates was reduced to only five.

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[139] Aníbal Arcondo, *La población de Córdoba en 1813*, 62-87.
[140] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 2, 33.
[141] Punta points out that toward the end of the eighteenth century, there were no professionals in the region. Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba borbónica*, 115.

TABLE 2.7. APPLICANTS TO THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. CÓRDOBA AND RÍO DE LA PLATA (1750-1810)

		1750 1760		1761 1770		1771 1780		1781 1790		1791 1800		1801 1810		TOTAL
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Córdoba	Creoles	**22**	32.8	**14**	14.6	**19**	22.9	**19**	28.4	**5**	8.3	**16**	34	**92**
	Peninsulars	**3**	4.5	**6**	5.8	**2**	2.4	**1**	1.5	**0**	-	**3**	6.4	**15**
Rest of	Creoles	**24**	35.8	**52**	50.5	**45**	54.2	**22**	32.8	**42**	70	**24**	51.1	**213**
RLP	Peninsulars	**18**	26.9	**30**	29.1	**17**	20.5	**25**	37.3	**13**	21.7	**4**	8.5	**107**
TOTAL		**67**	100	**103**	100	**83**	100	**67**	100	**60**	100	**47**	100	**427**

Source: AAC, ACSJ, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4. AHPBA7.4.2.87. Nómina de los religiosos del Paraguay. 1810.

The last sixty years of Spanish colonial rule found Córdoba showing entrance standards different from to the rest of the Franciscan province of Asunción. While the number of admissions was almost constant in the interior city between 1750 and 1810, in the rest of the Río de la Plata region, entry into the convent decreased decade after decade. While 103 candidates throughout the whole region were admitted in the 1760s, there were less than half applicants in the first decade of the nineteenth century. A similar crisis took place in Mexico. From 1700 to 1750, 614 novices took their religious vows but, from 1751 to 1800, only 275 made their profession of vows.[142]

Spanish-born candidates no longer sought the Franciscan Order as a place to spend the rest of their lives. As a matter of fact, from 1790 onwards, the number of Spanish candidates to the Order diminished constantly in absolute and relative terms. During the last decade of colonial rule, only 13 Peninsulars tried to enter the Río de la Plata Franciscan Order, constituting a bit less than 8.5% of the total when, historically, the

[142] Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order," 330.

percentage had been between 22% and 38%. In the particular case of Córdoba, after the entrance of Clemente Sánchez, from Aranjuez in 1787, only three more Peninsulars would enter the Order until 1810.[143]

After a peak of 37.3% Peninsulars entering convents throughout the region in the 1780s, the number of Spanish candidates fell increasingly until 1810. By contrast, the number of Creoles did not drop until the 1805. From that year to the end of the Colonial period, twenty-two Creoles and only one Peninsular —Brother Froylan Mellid— entered the Order.

Spaniards were leaving the Order before the 1810 Revolution, in part because new social mobility alternatives were attracting young men.[144] At the beginning of the eighteenth century, very few Peninsulars traveled from Europe to Córdoba to enter the Franciscan Order. The ones who did, like Brother Mellid, traveled alone. The war that began in Europe at the beginning of the eighteenth century also lowered the entrance number of Peninsular men into the Franciscan Order in Córdoba. But neither the militarization of society, nor the war in Europe seemed to have been the main reasons for the considerable reduction of the Peninsular sector at the end of the colonial period.

As more Peninsular men joined the elite of Córdoba, the Franciscan Order became less attractive. The commercial sector, the state bureaucracy and the military sector offered new opportunities for young men coming from Europe. Once certain success was reached in a new career, Peninsulars formed alliances with Córdoba's elite through marriage to their daughters.

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[143] AAC. ACSJ. Informaciones de "Genere, Vita et Moribus" de Aspirantes. Caja 3, 76.

[144] Halperín noted the impact of militarization as one of the conduits of social aspirations. Tulio Halperín Donghi, "Revolutionary Militarization in Buenos Aires 1806–1815," in *Past & Present*, 40:1 (1968): 84-107.

Entrance to the Franciscan Order could not be equated to the dynamism of the commercial sector; it did not offer the same incentive for social advancement for ambitious young Peninsulars. However, entrance to the Franciscan Order was still an option. Some immigrants encouraged sons to enter the Order. Commerce promised the possibility of upward mobility but the Franciscan Order offered stability and professional mobility within the convent. Nevertheless, while the Peninsulars were incorporating themselves into Cordoban society through commercial, state or military activities, the Franciscan Order was becoming increasingly Creolized by the beginning of the independence period.

Final Considerations

During the two hundred years that Franciscan Order functioned in colonial Córdoba, there was no mention of indios or mestizos entrance to the Order. The local indigenous population was scattered in the countryside and was numerically small.[145]

Recruitment appeared to be more flexible in other respects. During the whole period, there were a constant number of Franciscan candidates who were illegitimate but had no problem entering the Order.

Family background did not influence the possibility of career advancement within the Order. On the contrary, a good career in the Order gave its members possibilities of having more influence on society. By belonging to the Order, the Franciscan candidates acquired prestige and power. From there, they established their alliances.

[145] Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba borbónica,* 149. Unlike indians and mestizos, blacks were not allow to enter the Catholic Orders.

Being part of the Franciscan Order was a status symbol and, depending on the period, Córdoba's convent became attractive to different regions of Río de la Plata. Since the late colonial period, Córdoba was becoming increasingly important in the Franciscan scheme.

CHAPTER 3

THE FRANCISCANS IN CÓRDOBA (1767-1810)

The Sacred Congregation of *Propaganda Fide* was the department of the pontifical administration charged with the spread of Catholicism in non-Catholic countries. The importance of its duties and the extraordinary extent of its authority caused the cardinal prefect of *Propaganda* to be known as the "red Pope".[146] A major missionary revival started in Mexico at the end of the seventeenth century, when the Convent of Querétato became the first Colegio Apostólico de *Propaganda Fide* in the Continent.[147] The *Colegios de Propaganda Fide* stood as the most dynamic area within Baroque Catholicism.[148] In Latin America, the Jesuits and the Franciscans carried out this task.

The Franciscans constituted the fundamental axis of this vast organization. In the Río de la Plata, after the expulsion of the Jesuits, they obtained the Estancia de *San Miguel del Carcarañá*. It was there that they founded the *Colegio de Misioneros de San Carlos*, the first *Propaganda Fide* institution in the region.[149]

From the eighteenth century onwards, the Spanish Crown encouraged the regular orders to focus their work in the missions. This decision allowed them to bring both the sacraments and the imperial power to marginal regions. The Spanish Kings' plan was to Christianize through civilization; and the Franciscans, through their missions, schools and social assistance, became an essential factor in this enterprise.

This chapter analyzes the different roles of the Cordoban Franciscans and their

[146] See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. "Immaculate Conception."
[147] Ver Josep Barnadas, "La Iglesia católica en la Hispanoamérica colonial".
[148] See David A. Brading, Church *and State in Bourbon Mexico.*
[149] See Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina.* Buenos Aires: Don Bosco, 1970, volume 6, 379-383.

relationship with Córdoba society in the late colonial period. In a transitional era, missionary work, economic affairs and a legal presence were some of the features of this urban-oriented institution's struggling to maintain power.

Missionary work

The Franciscans took possession of the *Colegio de Propaganda Fide de Carcarañá* in 1780. It started functioning formally in 1786, the same year that Fray Miguel Ruiz del Riaño was appointed Guardian of. Ruiz, a Creole, who held the position of *Predicador*, had entered the Order in 1777.[150]

There were thirteen religious who came to the College from Spain, among them, *Predicadores* Thomas Orio, Ramón Miguel and Pedro García. Under Ruiz´s orders, they were in charge of mission work.[151] The vast majority of the Propaganda Fide missionaries would continue to come right from the Peninsula, a fact that would create difficulties after the 1810 Revolution.

In Carcarañá, as well as in the rest of the territory, the friars conducted their mission work in parishes, oratories and chapels inside the forts. The missionaries remained at each location from one to two weeks. They went from parish to parish preaching and hearing confession.[152]

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[150] AHPBA. 7.4.2.67. "Nomina de los religos. del ordn. del Serafico Patriarca de la Prova. de nra Sra de la Asumcn, perteneciente al virreynato de Bos Ayes".

[151] Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter AGN), IX.21.8.2 exp. 12. Thomas Orio came from the College of Olite, Pamplona. Like several founding Mathers of San Carlos, Orio served as missionary during nine years. Teófilo Pinillos, *Historia del Convento de San Carlos de San Lorenzo*, Buenos Aires, 1949, 32-33.

[152] All the information about the Franciscan missions was obtained from "Ceremonial de las misiones del Colegio Apostólico de San Carlos del Carcarañal. Año 1792", in *Nuevo Mundo*, 3-4 (2002-2003): 99-124. The Franciscan missionaries wrote a "Ceremonial of the missions" in 1792, a guide to the management of missions.

Franciscan missionaries spent six months in their convents, praying and studying, and the remaining part of the year travelling to the villages. They were usually sent to areas where the Catholic presence was weak. The mission had a marked pedagogical character aimed at reshaping life in the communities. The role of the missionaries was to encourage their parishioners to take part in the sacraments and rites regularly, hear confession, and exert moral influence upon their flock.[153]

Before going out on mission work, the clerics obtained permission from the Bishop and prepared their itinerary, their sermons and their doctrine lessons. As they travelled, their saddle bags contained a crucifix, wooden boards, a bell and a purple band, holy cards, catechism manuals, notebooks, wafers, inkstands, several books and grids to set up confessionals for women.

During the mission, quarrels in front of the parishioners were to be avoided. Before starting their journey, the friars sent a message to the parish priest of the first village they visited, stating their arrival date and requesting that he alert his parishioners about the upcoming mission and encourage them to attend. Since the majority of the ceremonies took place in the evening, local authorities were asked to patrol the village and ensure that the *pulperias* (general stores) and ball courts be closed during the mission evenings.

One of the main purposes of the missions was related to confession and Holy Communion. The parish priest and the school teacher took part in the ceremonies. Conducted by the newly arrived friars, the whole community was also involved in the ceremonies. This was one way in which the Franciscans related to villages distant from

[153] María Elena Barral, *De sotanas por la Pampa. Religión y sociedad en el Buenos Aires rural tardocolonial*. Buenos Aires, Prometeo Libros, 2007, 97.

the urban centers. A main purpose of this connection was to earn their living.

An ever awkward matter

Economic affairs have always been problematic for the Franciscans because they strictly follow the rule of poverty. According to the rule of Saint Francis, no friar, convent, or even the order itself can possess any real property. The firm adherence to this rule caused many problems. Since the Franciscans were only entitled to the use of goods given to them, they needed an intermediary, usually a layman.

This broker was the *Apóstol Síndical*, or Apostolic Syndic, a man appointed by the ministers to receive the alms given to the Franciscans in the name of the Holy See, and to pay it out at their request.[154] A Cordoban civil servant explained clearly what a Syndic was by the end of the eighteenth century:

> "Since money is necessary, the Supreme Pontiff names a secular Apostolic Syndic, a substitute authorized by the Holy See, who, in its name, receives the alms given by the faithful and provides for the requirements and the needs of the friars."[155]

In this way, all economic transactions which involved the Franciscans were done through an individual who reported directly to the Bishopric. The Syndic did not report directly to the convent but to the diocese. Whatever the Franciscans received through the Syndic was, in fact, the Bishopric's property. King Philip II stated that the Franciscans received neither a stipend nor an income, but alms.[156]

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[154] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. "Order of Friars Minor".
[155] Archivo de la Provincia de Córdoba (hereafter APC). Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiástico del clero al gobierno civil. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.
[156] APC. Ley 25 de las recopilaciones de Indias, libro 1, título15. Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiástico del Clero al Gobierno Civil. 1791-1854. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San Francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.

This situation, which a priori limited Franciscan autonomy, could nevertheless become an advantage. A Syndic always had connections. Towards the end of the colonial period, the *Syndico Apostólico* of the Convent of San Francisco de Córdoba was Bernabé Gregorio de Las Heras, a Cordoban merchant who had forged alliances within the provincial government.

Bernabé Gregorio de Las Heras, together with Antonio Allende, was one of the four representatives of the Cordoban *Cabildo* in 1772. De Las Heras was appointed by the interim governor, don Joaquín Espinosa y Dávalos, whose aim was to decrease the power of the Cordoban *Cabildo*. Don Bernabé was linked to *Porteño* commerce, importing goods from Castile via Buenos Aires. From 1770 onwards, he also participated in the mule business.[157]

The Franciscan Order, like other Church agencies, was a sphere where power could be built and supported. The benefits were mutual: the government obtained support; the priests, some influence, and sometimes, even material resources.

It was crucial for Franciscans to get some help from authorities because their main source of income was the collection of alms, an unpredictable way to support an institution. In addition, the process of begging for alms was a daily inconvenience. As one Cordoban Guardian explained:

> "we obtain them in this city through our own shame and, on many occasions, we are insulted and censored in multiple and inappropriate ways,"[158]

Alms were so scarce that they did not suffice to feed the 52 clerics of the Convent of Córdoba in 1791, "and as a result, many discipline problems arise, and this becomes a

[157] Bárbara Aramendi, "¿Poder local versus poder real? Conflictos entre el Cabildo de Córdoba y el Gobernador don Joaquín Espinosa y Dávalos" in *Andes*, 22:1 (2011).
[158] APC, Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiástico del clero al gobierno civil. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.

double edged sword for a Prelate."[159] These irregular earnings caused the priests to become unruly and forced the Franciscans to carry out tasks that they considered abasing.

This random frequency, as well as the fact that they could not own any property, was something that Franciscans used on their own behalf when asking the authorities for favors, especially, for tax exemptions. In August 1791, Fray Villanueva made a presentation at the *Cabildo* mentioning the fact that his convent received alms, but "that they could not own, have any claim to, or handle these alms, which did not belong to the Friars, nor to the Franciscan Order, as many people would think"[160]

The Franciscans interacted with the local society when collecting alms. Usually, parishioners were granted special papers including the favor of some saint in exchange for their donation. When it came to collecting alms, the Franciscans competed with other ecclesiastical institutions which also obtained their income in this fashion.[161] Auxiliary staff often helped collect donations, especially when donations took the form of products. In the Buenos Aires area, for example, wheat was the product most often collected.[162]

As in all male regular orders, lay brothers within the Franciscan Order were charged with the alms collection.[163] In 1813, for example, Fray Gaspar Cortes was in charge of visiting the homes of the Cordoban residents to collect the alms.[164]

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[159] *Ibídem*.
[160] APC, Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiástico del clero al gobierno civil. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.
[161] To understand the process of collecting of alms, see María Elena Barral, *De sotanas por la Pampa.*, 119-145.
[162] *Ibídem*, 126.
[163] A lay brother was a member of the Franciscan Order, or of any other religious institute, who were not ordained. While for different reasons unable to attain to the degree of learning requisite for Holy orders, are yet drawn to the religious life and able to contribute by their toil to the prosperity of the order. They occupied solely with manual labor and with the secular affairs of the convents. Herbermann, Charles, ed. (1913). "Lay Brothers". Catholic Encyclopedia. Robert Appleton Company.
[164] APC, TC 47, Carpeta 2, folio 138. Carta de Fray Lorenzo Santos, guardián de Córdoba al gobernador intendente de Córdoba. Córdoba, 25 de agosto de 1813.

TABLE 3.1. FRANCISCAN INCOME COLLECTED FROM BURIAL FEES. CÓRDOBA (1787-1791)

Year	Income
1787	142 pesos
1788	96 pesos
1789	41 pesos
1790	19 pesos
1791	87 pesos

Source: APC. Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiástico del clero al gobierno civil. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.

To understand the importance of alms for the Franciscans it is helpful to compare this income with another relevant source: burial fees. In 1791, the Convent of Córdoba raised a total of 772 pesos and 6 reales in alms, nine times what had been collected from burial payments that same year.[165] In the six years from which we have records form 1787 to 1791, Franciscans collected an average of 77 pesos per year from burial payments.[166] Meanwhile, in 1791, eleven families gave the Franciscans an average of 68 pesos each in alms.[167] (See Table 3.1).

The Franciscans had to constantly negotiate with laymen and the ecclesiastical hierarchy to support their activity. Most importantly, the strict observance of the rule forced them to rely completely on the community's eagerness to support them. Unlike seculars, they were not entitled to receive tithes, and unlike the rest of the Catholic Orders, they could not own or manage rural properties.[168] The Franciscans in Spanish America needed to constantly beg to collect alms, the only item that provided any income.[169]

[165] One *peso* was equal to eight *reales*.
[166] There were 150 deaths a year in Córdoba, what meant 6000 pesos for the church for burial fees every year. Burial fees were important for mercedarians and Dominicans but not for Franciscans.
[167] 1791 seems to be an ordinary year of collection of alms since there were no complaints from any member of the Order about it.
[168] Some members of the orders owned individually real estate. The Real Audiencia of Buenos Aires issued an act prohibiting this procedure in 1797. AHPBA, 7.4.3.44.
[169] Along with the constant difficulties, the Franciscan Order had a historiographic potential to show immediately communities' trend changes. In normal times, the dependence on the community produced a

Another traditional source of funding for the Franciscans were the C*apellanías*, a grant made in an individual's will through 5 % of the annual rent from one property given to the Church, in exchange for a specific number of masses celebrated in the name of the deceased for a specific number of years. The *Capellanía* involved several individuals: the founder (the one who created the *Capellanía*); the *patrono* (representing the founder); the *capellán* (Chaplain), (the priest in charge of the masses –in this case, a member of the Franciscan Order); and the *censatario*, (the person obliged to pay rent). [170]

Capellanías were a source of income for Franciscans but not easily converted into cash. There were several sources of conflict in a *Capellanía* (the property's appraisal, people's willingness to buy a good burdened by taxes), variables that should be considered in any analysis of the economic role of the Church in colonial society. In a colonial society with little cash flow, land became credit, and in theory, people's spiritual needs made capital circulate.

Nevertheless, the Franciscan Guardians complained that the *Capellanías* received goods instead of cash. As Fray Sebastián de Villanueba points out:

> …"and since it is known that we cannot force them, the owners of such goods fulfill the testators´ will when they wish, and they do it sometimes or never, and since it is disgusting to give money they are satisfied to contribute with cattle, wheat, flour, corn, pumpkins or dried fruit.."[171]

By the end of the eighteenth century in Córdoba, it was hard for the Order to find people willing to found a *Capellanía*, and difficult to manage these grants. In 1782, for example, the Franciscans had several problems with a *Capellanía* founded by the Master

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high level of interaction between it and the Franciscans that lived among them. Sometimes, however, it could also show how weak their position could be.

[170] See Abelardo Levaggi, *Las Capellanías en la Argentina. Estudio Histórico–Jurídico*. Buenos Aires: UBA, 1992.

[171] APC. Legajo 21. Subsidio eclesiático del clero al gobierno civil. Número 1. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San Francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.

don Martin of Gurmendi because "nobody who wants to buy the house has been found. Nobody wants to buy such an expensive house, and much less with that obligations to the Church".[172]

Furthermore, the capital was well below what was required. These proprieties were valued in 3,700 pesos, an amount far less what Guzmendi (the *fundador*) intended: he wanted to provide the *alms* of 3 pesos per every sung mass and 12 *reales* per each prayed. For Guzmendi's grant to the needed funds, the house appraisal should have been appraised at $ 4,320 but it only was $ 3,700. At a rate of 5 % annually, it produced only $ 185 and not the $ 216 Guzmendi wanted.[173]

In addition, Gurmendi's house had been deteriorating since 1771. Because the Franciscans were receiving so little from this *Capellanía*, they decided to renounce its benefices. Interestingly, when the *Síndico* explained the causes of their decision to the authorities, he failed to mention all the problems involved in the property. Instead, he underlined the aim of poverty. ("pr la estrechisima pobreza que prescribe la regal de N P S Francisco"). Clearly, the Franciscan discourse of poverty was a multipurpose tool that could be used at any time.

The growth of problems with *Capellanías* can be seen in Table 3.2, which includes all the lawsuits against the Franciscans of Córdoba between 1650 and 1850. The second half of the eighteenth century was a particularly conflictive period for the Franciscans. Lawsuits involving *Capellanías* increased from 3 in 1701-1750 to 10 in 1751-1800. The number of lawsuits was four times higher than in the previous period. This situation seemed to become more stable towards the next half century, although

[172] AAC. Legajo 3, "Memoria de misas dejadas al convento por el Maestro Martín Guzmendi".
[173] ($3 x 24 masses a year) + ($1.5 x 96 masses a year)= $72 + $144= $216

disputes were nevertheless higher than in any period prior to 1750.

TABLE 3.2. FRANCISCAN LAWSUITS. CÓRDOBA (1600-1850)

Cause of Lawsuit	1600-1650	1651-1700	1701-1750	1751-1800	1801-1850	TOTAL
Pesos	3	2	2	5	5	17
Indians	1	-	-	-	-	1
Slaves	1	-	-	3	-	4
Capellanías	**-**	**2**	**3**	**10**	**5**	**20**
King	-	-	1	-	-	1
Syndic	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total	**5**	**4**	**5**	**20**	**10**	**44**

Source: APC. Escribanía 1: 6.2, 1598; 52.8, 1621: 58.6, 1626; 68.2, 1634; 85.3, 1646; 119.1, 1663; 122.1, 1665; 132.2, 1670; 142.3, 1675; 185.6, 1696; 231.2, 1717; 149.5, 1723; 303.11, 1748; 305.4, 1749; 311.23, 1751; 314.1, 1752; 316.11, 1753; 318.4, 1754; 321.2, 1755; 347.14, 1762; 355.2, 1766; 357.9, 1767; 361.2, 1768; 366.13, 1769; 434.9, 1807; 435.11, 1808; 439.1, 1811; 460.2, 1826; 473.11, 1839; 473.11, 1839; 474.10, 1840; 484.5, 1851. Escribanía 2: 2.12, 1669; 11.14, 1706; 19.9, 1732; 21.24, 1739; 23.5, 1745; 32.32, 1764; 32.34, 1764; 35.6, 1766; 34.8, 1766; 64.23, 1785; 65.3, 1786; 70.20, 1788; 72.20, 1789; 80.11, 1792; 83.14, 1794; 84.24, 1794; 87.11, 1795; 109.13, 1806; 111.8, 1808; 146.14, 1850; 159.34, 1861; 195.1, 1876. Escribanía 3: 22.9, 1774; 39.23, 1784; 50.11, 1795; 63.7, 1815; 70.2, 1821; 79.2, 1825; 87.27, 1832; 165.3, 1877. Escribanía 4: 7.1, 1796; 11.6, 1798; 12.17, 1799; 13.18, 1799; 15.9, 1800; 27.7, 1806; 33.18, 1808; 39.34, 1810; 46.38, 1813; 46.14, 1813; 97.7, 1850; 101.22, 1854.

A growth in the number of lawsuits was caused by a number of concomitant reasons. Towards the end of the colonial period, the Cordoban population had grown substantially, and so had its litigating ability. In addition, Cordoban residents started to question the Franciscans' traditional ways of obtaining funding.

But the problems for the Franciscans were not only locally produce. The Spanish imperial politics in Europe also impacted negatively in the Córdoba's Franciscans. The French Revolution of 1789 generated a growing fear as well as distrust in the survival of the Old World monarchies. In 1790 the Spanish Crown required an Ecclesiastical Subsidy (*Subsidio Eclesiástico*) from all the Latin-American clergy, encumbering them with a sixth of their salaries in order to support Spain in an eventual war in Europe.

The Subsidy was part of an agreement between Rome and Spain. In essence, the Catholic Church guaranteed a certain amount of money originally drawn up in 1721 and

1746 by Popes to the Spanish Crown to support the wars against the non-Catholics.[174] It is interesting to see that the Crown only demanded the Subsidy in 1790, half a century after its creation. [175]

The Franciscans believed that the Crown could not demand this request of them. They asked for an exemption from the new law in 1791. When it was denied, Nicolas Vaz --the Guardian of the main Franciscan Convent of Córdoba-- asserted "we do not have to pay without a clear petition from the authority."[176] In 1794, Gregorio Funes --the Collector of the Subsidy in Córdoba and one of the most important churchmen in the region-- threatened to confiscate the properties from which Franciscans were being benefited. Funes, who would become one of the most important figures of the revolutionary government, seems to be a good Bourbon official trying to fulfill all the requirements of the Crown.[177] But Funes had other interests, too. As we will later see in more detail, the Deán was trying to take the University away from the Franciscans. This time, it would be difficult for the Seraphic Order to obtain a tax exemption.

During the struggle, Vaz demonstrated that he knew how to use the legal system to his advantage. What is more, he also knew how to cheat. Funes discovered that Vaz had not mentioned the income from two c*apellanías* the convent was receiving in a report. One of these grants was founded by doña Isabel de la Cámara, on the houses of Cabinda and Curemo, and produced 100 pesos yearly; the one drawn up by the late don Alonso de la Cámara, don Luis del Paso and don Juan Nunes de Iriarte, on the Chinsacate

[174] The Catholic Encyclopedia "Ecclesiastical Subsidy"
[175] See Elida Tedesco, "Iglesia y crédito en Córdoba. Los cambios a fines del período borbónico y de las primeras décadas independientes," in Gardenia Vidal and Pablo Vagliete (eds.) *Por la señal de la cruz: Estudios sobre Iglesia Católica y sociedad en Córdoba, S. XVII-XX*. Córdoba: Ferreyra editor, 2002, 75.
[176] AAC. Legajo 21, 1.
[177] See Miranda Lida, "Dos ciudades y un deán. Biografía de Gregorio Funes, 1749-1829" *Historia Mexicana*, 2008, LVll (Abril-Junio), 29.

estancia had a value of 1842 pesos and gave 91 pesos and 7 reales yearly.

> "The aforementioned *capellanías* were concealed in the report requested by this *Juzgado de Colecturía* (court) so that the Convent would be exempted from the payment of the Subsidy, as stated in the internal document in the file which refers to folia 27."[178]

The Franciscans of Córdoba knew how to use the legal system. Vaz made the person in charge of collecting the Subsidy go three times, with a notary and witnesses, to request the Subsidy. Moreover, the former Guardian did the same. The Franciscans of Córdoba not only rejected the *Subsidio* but they did not consider it fair.[179]

The grievances that were repeatedly registered after the enactment of the Bourbon Reforms represented the action of players in an economy based on the doctrine of privileges. The response took the traditional form of a formal complaint and petition seeking special dispensation, in other words, the restoration of special privileges. When these were not restored, the Franciscans just lied. In the end, an order to seize 61 pesos, 2.5 reales -the amount the convent should contribute annually- was issued. This seizure affected all revenues, *censos,* products and the income from the land.

The increase in lawsuits against Franciscans in the second half of eighteenth century added to the lack of economic support represents a new tendency in Córdoba, the hub of Jesuit activities in the region. Paradoxically, while the Order found increasing difficulties in raising funds, Córdoba was enjoying an economic resurgence and increased demographic growth.[180]

Almost twenty years later, in November 1808, after the fall of King Fernando VII, the Crown requested a new subsidy "to provide for the needs of Spain". However, the Franciscans were strong enough to obtain an exemption, as opposed to the rest of both the

[178] AAC Legajo 21, 1.
[179] APC. Legajo 21. Subsidio Eclesiástico del Clero al Gobierno Civil. 1791-1854. Número 1. expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al real Subsidio el convento de San francisco de Córdoba. Año 1791.
[180] See Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba Borbónica*.

secular and the regular clergy. The Government of Córdoba raised 40,250 pesos, of which 18,600 (46%) constituted the contribution of the Cordoban clergy.[181] The Franciscans had this time sufficient resources to fight the system. They negotiated an exception once again, but this time, they won.

Franciscans and slaves

Like in all the Catholic orders, a good number of slaves, approximately one slave every two clerics, worked for the Franciscans. By the end of the 1770s, more than 550 slaves were employed in the *rancherías* and *estancias* of the colleges of the regular orders in Córdoba. (See Table 3.3). These slaves were distributed across the estates of the province, both rural and urban. The slaves were used in a number of activities, from the simplest to those that required some skills. From an early age, men and women were systematically used by the regular orders to help them fulfill their goals. It was a workforce which was always available, and the Franciscans took full advantage of its production.

Slaves had specific functions in the convents. Many worked as builders and carpenters. They were under the supervision of a priest who acted as foreman. Other slaves carried out daily household chores. There were cooks, shoemakers, barbers, store attendants, gardeners and staff in charge of tasks related to religious celebrations, like organists and vergers. Slaves helped Franciscan priests at the infirmary. Male children slaves usually worked as servants to clerics. Only those who were single lived in the

[181] APC. Legajo 21. Subsidio Eclesiástico del Clero al Gobierno Civil. 1791-1854. "Lista de contribución del clero "para socorrer las necesidades de la España", 1808.

rancherías at the convents. Those who were married as well as those who suffered from some disability lived outside with their spouses. 286 free Afrodescendants lived along with the slaves in the *rancherías* of the convents of the regular orders. Most of them were mulatos, offspring of a male slave and a free woman. Apart from their legal status, their work was similar to that of slaves the slaves.

TABLE 3.3. SLAVES AND FREEMEN. REGULAR ORDERS. CÓRDOBA (1778)

Order	Slaves	Freemen	Total
Dominicans	65	146	211
Bethlemites	18	0	18
Mercedarians	112	35	147
Franciscans	57	0	57
Colegio Monserrat	70	0	70
Colegio Loreto	4	2	6
Catalinas Sisters	168	33	201
Teresas Sisters	56	70	126
TOTAL	**550**	**286**	**836**

Source: Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba a Fines Del Siglo XVIII*, 145.

Slaves were not only important as a workforce for the Franciscans. Selling slaves was a traditional source of income for the Order in Latin America.[182] Although theoretically they could not own slaves --or any other property—they were allowed to sell the offspring. In 1795, for example, the Franciscans of Córdoba promised the slave Pabla her freedom thinking that this action would facilitate the sale of her two daughters. Pabla was a slave woman "of 50, a bit sick but suitable for housekeeping". Franciscans decided to make the sale of Pabla's daughters appear as if it had happened prior to the implementation of the Ecclesiastical Subsidy, thus claiming a non-taxable operation. When the Franciscans failed to pay the Subsidy and the convent was seized, it was decided that the eleven-year old slave Margarita be handed over as payment. The seizure

[182] See Elida Tedesco, "Iglesia y crédito en Córdoba", 59.

was worth 49 pesos and 6 reales.[183]

The Franciscan practice of selling slaves was not new, but the access of slaves to justice was. In a continental context where slaves were increasingly using the courts, Pabla and her husband --the freeman Bernardino Guevara-- filed a suit against the monastery claiming her freedom.[184]

The documents do not reveal whether Pabla finally achieved liberty or not but it demonstrates that she and her husband had very accurate information about the convent and most importantly, that they –an Afrodescendant and his slave wife-- felt confident enough to fight against a Catholic Order.[185] Pabla's husband seems to know the law and had very accurate information about the convent. This suggests that Enlightenment ideas were filtering into large segments of Córdoba's population.

Life and death at the Convent

Besides religious training, friars taught in elementary education and grammar lessons for youngsters at the Convent of Cordoba. The curriculum included communicating the Christian doctrine, teaching the Sacraments, and guiding the children throughout Mass. As late as 1823, the Government provided Franciscans with catechism manuals so that they would teach the Christian doctrine. Likewise, several elementary

[183] APCba. Legajo 21. Subsidio Eclesiástico del Clero al Gobierno Civil. 1791-1854. Expediente sobre eximir de contribuir al Real Subsidio el convento de San Francisco de Córdoba, 1791.
[184] Bianca Premo, *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority and Legal Minority in Colonial Lima*. (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 264 and ss and also Christine Hunefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom: Family and Labor among Lima's Slaves, 1800-1854* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994). For Colonial Argentina, see Lyman Johnson "A Lack of Legitimate Obedience and Respect: Slaves and their Masters in the Courts of Late Buenos Aires" *Hispanic American Review*, 87:4 (November 200/): 631-657.
[185] AAC, Legajo 3, "Bernardino Guevara sobre la libertad de su esposa Pabla de Asís".

school students lived in the Franciscan convents. Education of the children's elite was one of the strongest bonds between Franciscans and the surrounding community. [186]

Except for mass and sacraments, there was little contact between Franciscans and women. One Franciscan friar was appointed Chaplain in the Convent of the Carmelite Order. On some occasions he could reside in the Carmelite monastery. In the Franciscan convents, there were no women who lived or worked for them.

The crude death rate for the Franciscan priests was approximately the same as that of Cordoban society at large.[187] Taking into account that the population was quite advanced in age, we can understand the need of the Franciscan convents to permanently renew their staff, something that would not change towards the end of the Colonial period. The sanitary conditions of the friars seem satisfactory.

The case of Father Pacheco

As was to be expected from a government which was expanding its activities, conflicts with religious orders were not alien to political activity. In colonial Spanish America, one source of conflict with the regulars was the placement of cemeteries. However, that conflict was solved in Córdoba without consequences.

In 1789, Sobremonte requested the priests' opinion regarding the placement of a cemetery outside the city.[188] The Mercedarians, as well as the Dominicans, were against

[186] In November 1823, Fray Miguel del Rosario asked the Board of Schools to give him several local catechisms. "Being extremely poor most of the children attending the elementary school, I am pleading three dozens of catechisms." APC, Gobierno, *Tomo 84 1823, Legajo 44,* Folio 379.
[187] Dora Celton, *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba,* 66.
[188] Ana Inés Punta, *Córdoba borbónica, 198-203* and AHPBA, 7.4.4.82. "Sobre entierros en los conventos de san francisco y sobre cementerios ventilados", 1791.

any change, since burial fees were an important source of income for them. The Franciscans failed to express an opinion, most likely because it did not constitute such an important source of income for them.[189] Although solicitors and other civil servants claimed a cemetery was necessary, it was only build in 1824.

Although the Franciscan Order was not involved in health services as an institution, some of their members were. Fray Pedro Pacheco, resident of the Convent of Córdoba between 1790 and 1814, taught basic Medicine in the Convent and assisted Cordoban families. Pacheco was allowed to practice Medicine even though he was not a doctor. In a letter to the Viceroy written in 1794 Governor Sobremonte requested, as was then the custom, that Pacheco be allowed to practice Medicine.

> "I could assure Your Excellency that in this town, which lacks doctors, we are forcefully tolerant, and I can hear the clamor of many people who request that Father Pacheco be allowed to practice Medicine as he has been doing so far."[190]

The case of Fay Pacheco illustrates the Order and its relationship to the Cordoban society. The Franciscans carried out a variety of activities, and thus had many ties with the community. It was common practice to allow some of them to attend the sick. Even though Pacheco did not hold any kind of degree, community members and authorities as well as doctors who held an actual degree, consulted him.[191]

However, rumors about Pacheco's activities began to spread throughout the town, and it was Pacheco himself who started a civil action to recover his good name, a

[189] The situation exploded in Mexico at the same time, in this case as a matter of health. See Pamela Voekel, *Alone before God*.
[190] Guillermo Furlong, "Médicos argentinos durante la dominación hispánica," in Guillermo Furlong (ed.) *Cultura Colonial Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Huarpes, 1947, volume 6, 127.
[191] Pizzo analyzes a lawsuit of nullity of marriage by inability to consummate the sexual act, filled in the ecclesiastical justice of Córdoba in 1801, where Pacheco became a key actor consulted not only by the authorities but also by the doctor himself, Fermín Gordon. The case is in AAC, Causas matrimoniales, Juicios de nulidad, legajo 199, 1800-1802,T. VI, expediente 5. The analysis in Liliana Pizzo, "Sexualidad matrimonial y salud. Un caso en Córdoba a principios del siglo XIX", in Mónica Ghirardi (ed.), *Familias iberoamericanas ayer y hoy. Una mirada interdisciplinaria*. Rio de Janeiro, Ferreyra Editor, 2008, 222-223.

common practice at the time. Until the end of the eighteenth century, a Franciscan priest without a valid degree could still act as a medical professional. But from then on, he would need a certificate issued by the government to continue his practice. He got it in 1794.[192]

Pacheco continued to act as a healer after the May Revolution. In 1814, he promised the president of the Convent of La Rioja, Fray José Gabriel Calderon, he would refrain from healing in the future.[193] Governor Francisco Antonio Ocampo intervened stating that:

> "The Art of Medicine is forbidden to priests, especially to those belonging to the regular clergy who have not obtained special permission to practice it to attend the Poor when professionals are lacking. It would be the responsibility of the *Tribunal de la Patria* if, by neglecting the Civil and Canonical Laws it tolerated that Fray Luis Pacheco (*Lector Jubilado*) should continue healing either within or outside this city. "

Even after this ban, he was allowed to continue healing other Franciscans and their servants.[194] The city of La Rioja itself requested that

> "Fray Pedro Luis Pacheco should head to that destination to exercise his medical knowledge and alleviate those who suffer, given that the whole country is sick; and since this Friar has worked as a healer due to the lack of professionals, I hope that Your Excellency will send him to the aforementioned city."[195]

Finally, it was agreed that he would be confined to the Convent of La Rioja.[196] The Pacheco case offers a glimpse of the sort of problems the Franciscans faced from the first decades of nineteenth century. The Franciscans offered social assistance, something which became risky. Anything they did in the past in relation to civil society had to be legitimized by the government.

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[192] "Información producida a Solicitud del R. P. Lector Fray Pedro Luis Pacheco para vindicarse de varias imputaciones que le hacían". APC, Escribanía 1, Legajo 421, Expediente 2, 1794, f. 49 v.
[193] APC Gobierno. Tomo caja 40 Legajo 13. Folio 346.
[194] APC Gobierno. Tomo caja 40 Legajo 13. Folio 315
[195] APC Gobierno. Tomo caja 40 Legajo 13. Folio 349.
[196] APC Gobierno. Tomo 45. Legajo 18.

The Cordoban society, the Franciscans and the University

From the moment the University was handed over to the Franciscans, the secular clergy tried to evict them. The University was given to the Seraphic Order during the Bishopric of Abad Illana, a member of the secular clergy who was close to the Franciscans.[197] However, his successor, Don Juan Manuel Moscoso began a campaign against the Franciscans. He sent a delegation to Spain which gave rise to the *Real Orden* of November 17, 1778, a decree that evicted Franciscans from the University. The order was never obeyed by Viceroy Vértiz, who wrote to the Crown that:

> "We have enough proof to be persuaded that the Franciscans´ secret intelligence, Your Excellency's predecessor's favor for them, and other resources, they used all them on their own behalf without any other purpose but to protect their order. All of these affected the King's will". [198]

Moscoso´s presentation, as well as the whole history of the Cordoban University during the Franciscan administration, allows us to understand the alliances at play between the Order, the Cordoban society and the central government. The Franciscans were able to reach a series of agreements with important sectors in the region to resist the attacks coming from the secular clergy, often allied with the *Cabildo* authorities.

In 1784, a new incident set these alliances to work again. The Franciscan Rector of the University, Fray Pedro Guitian, who succeeded Fray Pedro José de Parras, awarded graduation to a student without the agreement of all parties.[199] This episode caused a

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[197] Illana belonged to the regular order of the Premonstratenses. He was Bishop of Tucuman between 1764 and 1771, when he was promoted to the bishopric of Arequipa. In Arequipa, he founded the Propaganda Fide College of Moquegua, key to the Franciscan missionary work in that region. Alberto Tauro del Pino *Enciclopedia Ilustrada del Perú*. Lima: Peisa, 2001.

[198] Juan Garro, "Secularización de la Universidad de Córdoba", 508-509.

[199] In 1781, the Viceroy Don Juan Jose Vertiz granted father Guitián the degree of doctor of theology, following the example of the universities of Lima, Chile, Cuzco, Santa Fe de Bogotá and the ones in the metropolis, which gave the clergy free access to grades, without distinction between seculars and regulars. Juan Garro, "Secularización de la Universidad de Córdoba", 515-521.

controversy between the Rector and the faculty, on the one side, and the doctors and instructors who belonged to the secular clergy, on the other.

The leader of the secular clergy's faction was Doctor Don Gregorio Funes, a recent graduate of the University of Alcalá de Henares. His faction requested the Viceroy that the university was handed over to the secular clergy. Viceroy Vértiz´s decision, however, favored the Franciscans.[200]

In his presentation, Funes included a complaint filed by a Franciscan priest, Fray Pantaleón Benítez, against Fray Guitian. This information allowed the secular clergy to show that Guitian attacked members within his own Order.[201] The inclusion of Fray Benitez's information suggests that the secular clergy had allies within the Franciscan convent.[202]

Fifteen years later, in 1799, Don Ambrosio Funes, brother of the Deán and Mayor (*alcalde de primer voto*) of the *Cabildo* of Córdoba, presented a report to the Viceroy Marquis of Avilés, "in order to put a stop to the fast decline and the troubles that have given rise to fraud, intrigue and arrogance within the University of Córdoba."

Funes accused Guitian and his successor, Fray Pedro Sulivan, of embezzling the College's revenues, causing a general decline in the University and ruining the previously thriving Estancia de Caroya, which supported the University. According to Funes, Guitian

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[200] *Ibídem*, 510-521.

[201] AHPBA, 7.5.11. "Fray Pantaleón Benítez, lector de Moral de la UCBA, inicia recurso contra los procedimientos del padre rector interino Fray Pedro Guitian y su antecesor". Buenos Aires, 14 de febrero de 1791. Benitez resided in Montevideo but was in Salta opening the School of Philosophy. It was claimed that he was sent to this city "not as a mere removal as he stated in his appeal, but as a decent destination to continue his academic career."

[202] The *Real Audiencia* of Buenos Aires, was the highest court of the Spanish crown in the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata. It resided in Buenos Aires and began to function in 1783 until the *Asamblea del Año XIII* permanently disbanded it to replace it with the *Cámara de Apelaciones.* José María Ots Capdequi, *Manual de Historia del Derecho Español en las Indias y del derecho propiamente indiano.* Buenos Aires: Losada, 1945.

and Sulivan were incapable of governing the University. Besides, he wrote a private document denouncing Sulivan and Fray Pedro Luis Pacheco, a Professor at the University at that time.

Funes had many allies in the *Cabildo*. The city attorney (*Síndico Procurador),* don Benito Rueda, submitted two further reports, most likely written by Funes, since they were identical to the others. Other residents of Córdoba joined the demand.[203]

Attorney Rueda also accused Fray Pacheco of "being obsequious to the Honorable Bishop at the Estancia de Caroya".[204] The seculars charged the Franciscans with wasting their time by seeking connections among the civil and ecclesiastical authorities rather than doing their job at the University.

Each one of Rueda´s references emphasizes the machinations employed by Sulivan to keep his power:

> "he bribed his *Lectors* and gave them a safe conduct which allows them much freedom, of which Reverend Father Rector Fray Pedro Luis Pacheco benefits the most, and thus ensured himself six votes, which became seven when we counted his own: he also persuaded some Doctors to support his cause".

Moreover, Sulivan controlled the Chapters of his Order, in exchange for favors he obtained from the members of the Definitorium. He applied the same policy when it came to governors, to whom he, among other things, "offered lodging for several months."[205]

The struggle between the regular and the secular clergy was also a struggle between foreign and local clergy. Rueda objected to Sulivan's witnesses "on the grounds that they were his subjects and friends", a fact that "affects his financial capacity,

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[203] The following neighbors signed the report: Agustin Igarzabal, Juan Roldan, Juan Prado, Antonio Fraguelro, Pedro Maldi, Francisco Antonio González, Francisco Peña, Francisco Alvarez, Lorenzo Antonio Maza, José Eguiluz, Fermin Sierra Pico, Manuel Azúusulo, Francisco Bulnes, Manuel López y Gregorio Tejerina. APC, Caja 27. Archivo de Gobierno. Córdoba. Folio 362.

[204] He also accused Fray Pantaleón García of the same charges.

[205] He offered lodging several times in the estancia de Caroya, that belonged to the University, to the Allendes, a influential family of Córdoba, to governor Sobremonte and to the attorney on duty

diminishes his authority and may inspire feelings of insubordination in susceptible young people against those who rule them". To Sulivan, though, "the clerics who are my witnesses are friends only in the sense of the paternal feeling that comes from belonging into the same order".

To neutralize this hostile atmosphere, Sulivan presented favorable reports from the Cabildo regarding his behavior and the situation of the University and the College.[206] The provincial mayor Don Antonio de Arredondo strongly opposed these reports, and submitted a new petition to the Viceroy. He claimed he "would rather like to keep silent since he could say nothing favorable". And he agreed with Rueda on his accusations that Sulivan "usually has connections and finds individuals in this *Cabildo* who will favor him and thus help him get away with what he wants".

Arredondo knew each and every one of the internal conflicts of the Franciscan order. In his presentation, he pointed out that Sulivan had been removed from his post as Guardian of Montevideo by Fray Casimiro Ibarrola, who was a Visitor at the time. From all this "it is very easy to understand Reverend Sulivan's interest in the *Cabildo's* elections every year, because he wished an indolent City Attorney to be elected, who will be his ally". These maneuvers were executed along with Lieutenant Governor Pérez del Viso, who bought two servants from Sulivan at a very low price".

Clearly, the Franciscans kept the university because they knew how to negotiate strong alliances, first with Bishop Abad Illana, and then with the Marquis of Sobremonte. They continued this alliance with Interim Lieutenant Governor Pérez del Viso, Coronel

[206] On 13 October 1801, the Cabildo met to discuss Fray Pedro Sulivan behavior, a request made by Sulivan himself.

Don Santiago Alejo de Allende, Doctor Don Victorino Rodríguez and Don José Diaz, all of them influential residents of Cordoba.

One of the most important Franciscans in Buenos Aires, Fray Pedro Nolasco Barrientos, former Rector of the University and *Padre Provincial* of his order, was Viceroy Marquis of Avilés' confessor.[207] The Franciscans´ connections with power continued throughout the Revolution. Juan José Castelli, a member of the I Junta, was Sulivan's student.

In the meantime, a *Real Cédula* was issued in December 1800 to separate the Franciscans from government and the University. Although the news about the *Cédula* reached Córdoba in November 1801, it was not implemented for many years, a fact that proved that the Franciscans had enough connections to delay a Royal order. Simultaneously, in November 1805, the Marquis of Sobremonte decreed that Sulivan should be acquitted.

Finally, in October 1807, Viceroy Santiago Liniers, a friend of the Funes, met with a delegation from the Cordoban *Cabildo*. The delegation demanded that the *Real Cédula* of 1800 be implemented. The *Cabildo* considered that the Franciscan Order did not represent the local interests,

> "only an individual who has given up his patriotism, says the Cabildo, can be indifferent to the fact that the Regulars of San Francisco*, most of whom come from other provinces*, take these posts while the native clergy from this Bishopric and from this city must beg to make a living and humiliate themselves". [208]

Liniers had the order carried out "without delay when it comes to this sovereign decision; the place should be emptied before classes resume next year". On January 11

[207] Juan Garro, "Secularización de la Universidad de Córdoba", 528.
[208] The italics are mine.

1808, Deán Doctor Don Gregorio Funes was appointed Rector. The Franciscans were out of the University for ever.

Final Considerations

Much has been written about how the Bourbon reforms negatively affected the regular orders.[209] It has been argued that the decisions that were made in the metropolis were decisive for the Spanish American clergy.

In peripheral areas, on the contrary, the significance of rulings does not seem to be as prominent. In the case of the Franciscan Order in Cordoba, measures were only implemented when strong local interests opposed the Order. Conversely, it was also the local powers that stopped the implementation of that measures which originated in Madrid. The Franciscans were requested to contribute to the Ecclesiastical Subsidy which arose during the War of the Spanish Succession in 1721 only when officials who, like Funes, were opposed to the Order, occupied key positions. The Franciscans always managed to obtain an exemption, as they did yet again in 1808.

Sobremonte, Allende or del Viso, individuals who embodied local power, were able to delay any changes in the administration of the University of Córdoba almost until the end of the Colonial period. The University remained in the hands of the Franciscans, though orders requesting the opposite were regularly sent from Madrid.

New social behaviors challenged and transformed the way the Franciscans

[209] See Nancy Farriss, *Crown and Clergy in Colonial México* and David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*.

interacted with people.[210] Examples of these behaviors are the unwillingness of Córdoba's society to support Franciscan activities as well as the courage shown by the slaves to fight against them in the courts. Even the failed negotiation to get an exemption to the Ecclesiastical Subsidy was more the result of local than imperial developments.[211] The number of lawsuits between civilians and the Order increased in geometric progression, and the Franciscans found it increasingly difficult to collect the *censos* that had been founded on their behalf decades before.

Even the slaves felt less fearful of confronting the Franciscans, and they initiated some lawsuits. In these processes, slaves proved they had access to important information regarding what happened in the convents, which provided them with the necessary tools to attain their goals.

This same kind of information was available to the enemies of the Order, who used it in their communications to the central government. They described each and every internal conflict among the Franciscans and tried to prove that there was dissent in an institution that was far from being homogeneous.

The lawsuits also show another facet that might account for these changes. The residents of Córdoba saw the Franciscans as foreigners because they came from other provinces. The documents also show a conflict between the Franciscans and a Cordoban elite emphasizing their sense of local identity.

However, the changes in the ways the clergy were perceived were limited. As late

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[210] At the same time, female Orders throughout Spanish America were changing their strategies by redefining their concept of poverty. See Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999, 186-188.

[211] For a deep analysis of the complex personality of Funes, see Tulio Halperín Donghi, "The Colonial Letrado as a Revolutionary Intellectual: Deán Funes as Seen through His Apuntamientos para una Biografía," in Mark Szuchman and Jonathan Brown (eds.), *Revolution and Restoration: The Rearrangement of Power in Argentina, 1776-1860.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994, 54-73.

as 1814, the city of La Rioja kept requesting Fray Pacheco's healing skills, although Buenos Aires, the new metropolis, did its utmost to prevent this from happening, and eventually to confining Pacheco to a convent.

Nonetheless, the *Propaganda Fide* Colleges contributed to renew people's religious fervor during the late colonial period. Officials as well as the clergy made a synergistic effort to bring order to the rural life and to carry out mission work. The 1810 Revolution interrupted this process, not through conscious political action but because the vast majority of the friars at the *Propaganda Fide* Colleges came from Spain. Again, a measure specifically aimed at the Franciscan Order ended up damaging it the most. It took the Franciscan Order more than a decade to understand and confront the new panorama.

CHAPTER 4

ADJUSTING TO REVOLUTION (1810-1820)

In 1810, when news that the Spanish King Ferdinand VII had been deposed reached Buenos Aires, the Creoles removed the Spanish viceroy. The *Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata* replaced the old Viceroyalty and a new junta, called the *Primera*, invited all the provinces to join the revolution. The move toward Independence failed in some regions, particularly in the north, and war broke out in a large portion of the territory.

Because of the pressure exerted by Madrid, Rome immediately condemned the revolution. As a result, the bishops were reluctant to support patriots since it meant breaking with the Church authorities, the King, and the Pope. The acceptance of the new regime challenged the clergy's own illegitimacy.

The chapter studies how an institution based upon traditional values faced the revolutionary process born in May 1810. I will argue that the new government would change the behavior of the Franciscans more because of its proximity than because of its revolutionary nature. By analyzing the attitudes of a group of individuals during the first decade of independence, we can see how the Franciscans reacted to a revolution that was shaping old and new values.

The Franciscan System

During the years that followed the conquest of the Americas, the religious personnel were composed entirely of immigrants from the Peninsula. As years went by

the number of native monks grew steadily: they were majority by mid-eighteenth century. This growth of a Creole clergy was similar all over the New World. It put in peril the Peninsulars' control of the orders. As a result, the Spanish Crown imposed a system of rotation, forcing the orders to alternate between a Peninsular and a Creole for the most important positions. The system, called the *alternativa*, generally favored the *Peninsulars* because it assured them that although they made up a shrinking percentage in all the orders, every two periods they would control a major position.[212]

In the colonies, the distinction between Creoles and Peninsulars was important through the centuries but in the last decades of Spanish rule, royal policy secured Peninsular control over important offices like the *Audiencias*.[213] Simultaneously, there was an analogous Crown's concern to establish a distinction by origin among the members of the Regular Orders. Beginning in the 1780s, the Crown requested from the regulars a list of all their members, including their names, positions and if they were Peninsulars or "Americanos" (Creoles).

The Seraphic order strictly followed the system, at least for positions of great importance and therefore, positions that generated more disputes. Each Spanish Provincial Minister was succeeded by a Creole one and vice versa, regardless of the title the friar had. (See Table 4.1). This chapter analyzes negotiations and conflicts hidden behind these perfect statistics.[214]

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[212] See Paul Ganster, "Churchmen". There are few works on alternative. For Mexico, see Francisco Morales, *Ethnic and Social Background of the Franciscan Friars in Seventeenth-Century Mexico*. Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1973, 54-75. For Peru, see Antonine Tibesar, "The Alternativa: A Study in Spanish-Creole relations in Seventeenth-Century Peru", *The Americas*, 9 (1955): 229-283.

[213] See Mark Burkholder, "From Creole to Peninsular".

[214] The alternativa system was met where the percentage of Spaniards was high enough to justify it. In other words, it was virtually impossible for the Dominicans, an order with an overwhelmingly Creole staff, to comply with the system. All the Dominican Provincial of Río de la Plata were Creoles. See Jorge Troisi

TABLE 4.1. THE FRANCISCAN "ALTERNATIVA." RÍO DE LA PLATA (1786-1810)

Chapter	1786	1788	1791	1793	1796	1801	1803	1806	1810
Provincial Minister	Nicolás Palacio	Pedro Sánchez	Josef Pucheta	Juan Echegara	Pedro Barriento	José Basalo	Josef Sulivan	Ramón Alvarez	Francisco Carvallo
Origin	C	P	C	P	C	P	C	P	C
Title	PG	PG	LJ	PG	LJ	PG	LJ 2	L	LJ
Age	63	51	61	53	62	57	53	54	46
Years in the Order	47	38	44	29	47	41	37	39	30

C: Creole; P: Peninsular. PG: Predicador General; L: Lector; LJ: Lector Jubilado; LJ2; Lector Jubilado 2 veces.

Source: AHPBA. 7.4.2.67. "Nomina de los religos. del ordn. del Seráfico Patriarca de la Prova. de nra Sra. de la Asumcn"; AHPBA 7.4.2.68. Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico Patriarca de la Pcia de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción, 1791; AHPBA 7.4.2.76. Nomina de los religiosos del orden del Seráfico de la Pcia de Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción, 1793; AHPBA 7.4.2.61. Tabla capitular de la religión de San Francisco de la Pcia. Del Río de la Plata, 1796; AHPBA 7.4.2.79. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia de Paraguay, 1801; AHPBA 7.4.2.78. Nomina de oficios y empleos en el convento grande de Buenos Aires, 1803; AHPBA 7.4.2.81. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia. De la Asunción del Paraguay, 1805; AHPBA 7.4.2.83. Nomina de los religiosos de la Pcia. del Paraguay y tabla capitular de elecciones, 1806; AHPBA 7.4.2.85. Nómina de los religiosos del Paraguay, 1808.

The *recurso de fuerza* provided a way that a member of a regular order used ordinary Courts of Justice to make claims against resolutions from Ecclesiastic Courts. The basis of the *recurso de fuerza* was that the King had to protect his subjects from violations of their rights.

The *recurso* endangered the practice of the institution itself.[215] From 1786, *recursos* were presented before the *Real Audiencia* in Buenos Aires. The judges were very cautious in the use of this right and, in general, did not rule against the Order's

Melean, "El sistema de ascenso en las ordenes regulares," in Carlos Mayo (ed.), *Estudios de Historia Colonial Rioplatense*. La Plata: Editorial de la UNLP, 1995.

[215] The right of Patronato was a set of special powers that the Popes awarded to the Iberian kings in exchange for the support of the Catholic Church. By this system, the Crown controlled major appointments of Church officials and managed.

dispositions.[216] Nonetheless, these cases reflect the individual and group dissent and their struggle for space, hierarchy and career improvement. They were also a new way to create new alliances. An analysis of the *recurso de fuerza* provides the opportunity to better understand the functioning of the Franciscan Order.

The authorities of the Order paid attention to the needs of laity, sometimes against the will of its own members, as shown in a *recurso* presented in Paraguay. In 1793, residents of Aguayí complained about the aggressive sermons of Fray Santiago Encina, *Predicador* among the Indians in the missions of Itapuá. The residents requested Encina's removal, a *recurso* which had been used against other priests. Although this *recurso* would leave eight towns along the Parana coast without a priest, the Franciscan Order still decided to remove Encina. Encina presented counter-charges against the superiors because they removed him following the people's request.[217]

Sometimes, the *recursos de fuerza* presented an opportunity to reverse situations that were not precisely unfair. Fray Hipólito Sepúlveda was an assistant priest in a rural parish of the Buenos Aires province. The problem was that Sepúlveda was appointed in 1808 but still had not taken office in 1816. Due to Sepulveda's absence, the Franciscan *Definitorio* appointed Juan José Dupuy to replace him. Dupuy started an investigation on Sepúlveda and forced him to surrender the ornaments, sacred vessels and books he had previously received. Sepúlveda then requested a *recurso de fuerza* against the *Definidor* accusing him of depriving him of his position and of opening an investigation without

[216] Silvia Mallo, "Justicia eclesiástica y justicia real: Los recursos de fuerza en el Río de La Plata.1785-1857", in *Trabajos y Comunicaciones*, 25 (1999): 267-292.
[217] The lawsuit in AHPBA 7.5.13.3. Santiago Encina was born in 1744 and entered the Order in 1761. AHPBA 5.3.34.10. "Nomina de los religiosos del Paraguay", 1786.

having the necessary authority or jurisdiction.[218]

In 1803, eleven Franciscan friars opposed the appointment of Fray Fernando Carrera as Guardian of the convent. Carrera was originally located in the province of Asunción but was later transferred to Mendoza, in the Franciscan province of Chile. While the former Guardian was collecting alms in the form of cattle, Carrera presented himself at the convent and took charge of his position. All friars opposed the new Guardian but did not dare to face him and opted, instead, to seek shelter in the Augustinian convent in Mendoza. From there they presented their *recurso* to Buenos Aires although the complaint was rejected because of jurisdictional issues, going to the court in Buenos Aires instead of Chile. The analysis of this *recurso de fuerza* does not reflect an atmosphere of indiscipline or lack of authority. Indeed, the eleven friars of Mendoza accepted the hierarchy of the new Guardian though his authority was not legitimate.

In 1798, Fray Pantaleón Benítez presented a *recurso* against the Venerable Definitorio, presided over at that time by Fray Pedro Guitián. Benítez believed that he had been unjustly removed from his professorship and transferred from Montevideo to Córdoba. The case brought up internal disagreements in the convent among distinguished Franciscans. Fray Benítez, a prestigious friar, *Lector Jubilado* and former professor of Sacred Theology and Ethics at the University of Córdoba, was confronted with Guitián and Fray Pedro Sulivan.[219] The *recursos* show that the Franciscan Order did not behave as one body. Inner problems were canalized and fostered, but not generated, by state

[218] The lawsuit in AHPBA 7.5.11.26. Information about de Hipólito Sepúlveda in AHPBA 7.4.2.85. "Nomina de los religiosos del Paraguay", 1808.
[219] The lawsuit in AHPBA 7.5.11.29. Information about Pantaleón Benítez in AHPBA 5.3.34.10. "Nomina de los religiosos del Paraguay", 1786.

decisions.

In the analysis of *recursos*, one figure stands out in the game of the relations among Franciscans: the *Comisario de Indias*. During the colonial period, each religious order had a Commissioner in Spain overseeing the Provincials of that Order in the Americas. Towards the end of the colonial period, the *Comisario de Indias* of all provinces and colleges of Saint Francis in the Indies was Fray Pablo de Moya.

The *Comisario de Indias*, from Madrid, strived to regulate the personal ambitions of the Franciscans that hindered the interests of the Order. In 1798, he reformulated the grade system in order to curb the individual interests of the older priests who did not leave room for the younger ones. His system would remain alive until the independence. According to Moya:

> "*Jubilados* are destined to a *second Jubilación* hindering the younger priests' careers. They become ***ambitious***, and superfluously invest themselves in titles and honors". [220]

In 1801, Francisco Manuel Palazuelos, a Spaniard born in 1740 who joined the Order in 1760, was removed from his position as Guardian of the convent "Observancia de Buenos Aires". The year before, *Comisario* Moya had chosen him for the post but the *Definitorio* in Río de la Plata did not agree with this measure and removed Palazuelos. Palazuelos, who already was *Padre Jubilado*, presented charges to the *Real Audiencia* against the Provincial Minister and the *Definitorio*. Palazuelos himself decided to finish the proceedings.[221]

The case of Palazuelos proves that the local powers could face metropolitan

[220] As explained in Chapter 1, the first *Jubilación* was obtained after three years of teaching philosophy and twelve of theology. The Second was for those who taught another twelve years of theology. AHPBA, 7.5.11.29. "La Primera jubilación con utilidad manifiesta de la Provincia de tener mucho más sujetos de lustre y desempeño." The italics are mine.
[221] The lawsuit in AHPBA 7.5.12.3. Information about Francisco Manuel Palazuelos en AHPBA 5.3.34.10. "Nomina de los religiosos del Paraguay", 1786.

powers. It also evidences disputes among powers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Such disputes will continue after the May Revolution.

Franciscans and the May Revolution

By the end of the colonial period, Pantaleón García was one of the most successful Franciscans. In addition of being the President of the University of Cordoba, he was known throughout the Spanish Empire. In 1805, six volumes of his sermons were published in Madrid.[222] The story of how those volumes reached the printing house reveals not only García's connections in Río de la Plata but also the dynamic networks the Franciscans enjoyed at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

At the same time, Fray Tadeo Ocampo was a Franciscan missioner in the Apostolic College of Moquegua, Peru. He was a leading fray not only in his community but also in all the Viceroyalty of Peru. In 1796, after being prompted to *Colegio Propaganda Fide* of Moquegua's college, Fray Tadeo travelled to Europe to receive the body of Saint Fortunata, whose mortal remains lay in a catacomb in Rome. By the end of that year the remains of Saint Fortunata reached Moquegua.[223]

Ocampo travelled frequently to Europe via Buenos Aires, the city where he

[222] P. García, *Sermones panegíricos de varios misterios, festividades y santos*, Madrid, Imprenta de Collado, 1805-1810. This collection contains 80 sermons said during religious holidays held in Córdoba. The publishing of Córdoba's sermons in Madrid, was not the first time sermons went from one place to another. There were also examples of that practice in New Grenade, and Peru. I am thankful to Jorge Cañizares-Ezguerra for that information. Unfortunately, we know little of the process of printing: who sponsored it, where the manuscripts arrived, how they were edited, how they got the licenses, whether there were any other Creoles involved.

[223] Santa Fortunata was born in Palestine, the daughter of a well-established family. She was converted to Christianity soon after the birth of this faith. According to the legend, she refused the proposal of an emperor. She was then persecuted and martyred, saving miraculously her life several times. Her remains were brought to Rome. Retazos de la historia de Moquegua", *Expreso de Lima*, 14 de octubre de 2001.

professed. On one of those trips, Fray Tadeo discovered Pantaleón García and his sermons. He quickly perceived the value the sermons had. The publishing of sermons was not an everyday thing. Even in Spain the sermons used were mainly those translated from the French. The work of García is "in its gender, the first to come out from the Indies regular cloisters."[224]

In the forward of the writings, Fray Tadeo described the pact between the Orders and the Spanish Crown, a pact that resulted in the Franciscans going to the Americas. Regular orders "increased the number of vassals for the Spanish Monarchs, inspiring them at the same time with the Christian ideas of submission and respect for the Sovereign," thus the Spanish Crown "granted the regulars the faculty to build houses and monasteries in that part of the globe."[225]

The publishing of Garcia's sermons attempted to both deepen religious feeling and consolidate submission to the Spanish sovereign.[226] The sermons –printed in 1805 and reprinted in 1807 and 1810— circulated around the empire and were used by the Franciscans of both continents as an inspiration.[227]

In addition to Garcia, the sermons of Fray Mariano de Velasco, another Creole Franciscan, reached Madrid. Velasco was born in Paraguay and was the uncle of the future dictator Gaspar de Francia. Velasco´s sermons were included in one of the six

[224] "They should reach the press". Fray Tadeo Ocampo, "Presentación" in *Sermones Panegíricos*, II-III.
[225] *Ibídem*, VII.
[226] García's sermons confirmed the alliance between Crown and Catholic Church, set centuries before as a result of the Spanish Pactista tradition. For Spanish pactismo in Latin America see François-Xavier Guerra, *Modernidad e independencias*. For Brading, on the other hand, the pact was already broken by the end of the Colonial period. See David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*.
[227] The copy of the sermons in Harvard's Library has the following annotation: "Used by Fray Pascual de Rivero. Cost with their six companions: 179 reales." I understand that the sermons circulated both in Spanish America and Spain, although I cannot statistically established the magnitude of this network.

Garcia's volumes.[228]

The *Comisario* Fray Pablo de Moya also had an important role in this intellectual exchange. Moya "was the patron of these writings".[229] Fray Pablo served as liaison between Spanish America and Madrid. He was the main figure in this network woven by García, Ocampo, Velasco and himself. Pantaleón García consolidated his prestige in Madrid. Using the relational capital he had, García handled spurious maneuvers for the Franciscan Chapter in 1806 in Buenos Aires. That year was particularly vibrant for the Franciscans.

In June, British troops invaded the region and took Buenos Aires with little resistance. One month and a half later, the British were surrounded and defeated. In the meantime, the regular orders of the city presented a written statement to the British authorities not only accepting their authority but also praising them, an act condemned by the *Porteños*.[230] The only order that did not sign the document was the Bethlemite, the only one also whose majority of members were Peninsulars.[231] The regulars were willing to continue exerting their service without the Spanish Crown.[232] Once the English were defeated, the statement of the regulars was almost forgotten.

In November of 1806, a Chapter meeting held in Buenos Aires elected the Peninsular Fray Ramon Alvarez as Provincial Minister with the support of former

[228] Velasco facilitated the entry of Gaspar de France to the University of Cordoba. See Domingo Laino, *José Gaspar de Francia.*
[229] Fray Tadeo Ocampo, "Presentación", III.
[230] See Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina*, volume 7, 74-83.
[231] See Carlos Mayo, *Los Betlemitas en Buenos Aires*, 43.
[232] At first glance, the attitude of the regular clergy could show some dissatisfaction towards the crown. However, there was already a demonstrably successful experience of coexistence between Catholic clergy and British authorities at that time. Since 1763, the British troops occupied French Canada --at that time, New France- allowing the Catholics freedom of worship. There were other examples of religious tolerance in occupied areas in British and Dutch islands as Curacao or in places such as Havana and Manila.

Provincial Fray Pedro José Sulivan and Fray Pantaleón García.[233]

Álvarez had been a favorite of García. Nevertheless, it was not García who was publicly criticized but rather his ally, Fray Sulivan, who had transferred some friars who opposed his plans to destinations far from the voting location.

Fray Pedro Tadeo Bermúdez Quintana was living in Buenos Aires but temporally transferred to Montevideo. Quintana's statement shows the variety of resources the García-Sulivan group had used to gain power. He stated that in exchange for his transfer to Montevideo, many friars did the reverse route towards Buenos Aires in order to vote in favor of Sulivan's candidate: "the number of voters was increased to include the ones that García thought were his supporters". He also denounced the existence of "associations of friars" and mentioned irregularities in the Chapter of 1774, irregularities that Fray Pablo de Moya, who already was the *Comisario*, decided not to investigate. A similar decision was made by the prosecutor of the Audiencia, who disregarded Quintana's claim.[234]

The functioning of Garcia's network allows three inferences. First, even at the end of the colonial period, regular orders were still crucial for the plan of Spanish domination in the Americas. Second, inner loyalties in Franciscan convents were related to the priests' social networks, which could cross the Atlantic, rather than to their origin. That is to say, within the orders, the conflict between Creoles and Peninsulars did not have the same strength as in other spheres, since it was not the origin of the priests that caused a rift between them but the availability, or lack thereof, of networks in the metropolis. In

[233] The English Invasions delayed the Franciscans elections that were supposed to be held in June 1806, AHPBA, 7.4.2.68.
[234] AHPBA. Archivo de la Real Audiencia. Legajo 7.5.11.38. AHPBA, 7.5.11.38, 1806. See also Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina*, volume 7, 440-441.

this scheme, Creoles could accommodate their needs without confronting the Peninsular elements. Even more, they enjoyed greater success when both, Creoles and Peninsulars, became allies.[235]

Third, the system of *alternativa* as the root of Creole-Peninsular conflict is a simplification. Pantaleón García, a Creole, is the Peninsular spearhead. The division seems to have been between the connected-cosmopolitans and the provincial-locals. The connected-cosmopolitans, such as García, had also the capacity to adapt to the new rules imposed after 1810.

After the May Revolution, clerics were the most intellectually prepared class; they had prestige and social influence. Nevertheless, those three aspects had undergone a crisis well before the revolution began.

The clergy were not a homogenous group, not even within the same order. Revolution provided the factions inside the orders with an opportunity to reach positions of power.

As mentioned in the introduction of the chapter, with the coming of the revolution, the clergy now faced a difficult conundrum: either to support or defy the new regime. Uncertainty came from the fact that the acceptance of the new authorities would jeopardize their own position since the pillars of the clergy's power came from the *Ancien* Regime: the King and the Church.[236]

In 1810, there were three bishops in the territory of Río de la Plata: Benito Lué y

[235] All the biographical data about the Franciscans in AHPBA, "Nómina de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Paraguay y tabla capitular de elecciones," 1806, 7.4.2.83. It seems that something similar happened with the merchants of Buenos Aires toward 1810. There was a division between the elite and the poor traders, which was also, though not in an absolute way, a division between Peninsulars and Creoles. See John Lynch, "El reformismo borbónico e Hispanoamérica" in Agustín Guimera, (ed.) *El Reformismo Borbónico.* Madrid: Alianza, 1996, 47.

[236] Data on clergymen and independence extracted from Juan Durán, "La Iglesia y el movimiento independentista rioplatense.".

Riega, in Buenos Aires; Rodrigo Antonio de Orellana, in Córdoba, and Nicolás Videla del Pino, in the Salta diocese. The position of all three was immediately put into question after the revolution.

Right before the revolution, Bishop Lué had sustained that "all the Spaniards that are in the Americas should take control of the government."[237] On May 26, 1810, the revolutionary Junta forced him to resign. Although he remained in the city, the relationship between the Bishop and the Junta was always tense until his death on March 1812. Because the Holy See was vacant until 1834, it was only then that Pope Pius VIII appointed Mariano Medrano Cabrera, vicar of Buenos Aires.

In Córdoba, Bishop Rodrigo Antonio de Orellana, rose up together with Governor Juan Gutiérrez de la Concha, former Viceroy Santiago de Liniers, and Martín de Alzaga against the May Revolution. The movement was failed and its leaders were executed with the exception of Orellana who, thanks to his ecclesiastical investiture was confined to Buenos Aires as a political prisoner. In 1811, Orellana returned to his position in Córdoba to be later confined in different convents. In 1817, he escaped to Río de Janeiro and moved to Avila, Spain, where he died in 1822.

Salta's Bishop, Nicolás Videla del Pino, acknowledged the Buenos Aires Assembly in June 1810. Nevertheless, in April 1812, Manuel Belgrano, General of the Army of Alto Peru, jailed him on suspicion of seditious actions. Videla was moved to the convent of *La Merced* of Buenos Aires, where he publicly pledged allegiance to the independence in 1817. Until his death in March 1819, he performed tasks related to his Episcopal ministry. Until the 1830s, there were no legitimate bishops in the *Provincias Unidas del Rio de la Plata*.

[237] *Biblioteca de Mayo*, 2, 1053.

The new government had a privileged place for religion and the clergy. In this respect, the revolution was a process of continuity with the previous regime. On May 26th 1810, the Buenos Aires Cabildo Abierto declared that they had "to promote by all possible means the preservation of our Holy Religion". They quickly declared that the celebration of San Martin de Tours as the patron of Buenos Aires would continue.[238] The same day, the superiors of the four Orders in the city --Mercedarians, Dominicans, Franciscans and Bethlemites- swore their allegiance to the new government with the rest of the ecclesiastical authorities.[239]

In June, Presbyter Manuel Alberti was entrusted with overseeing the *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, the first official press of the revolutionary government. In September, Priest José de Chorroarín was put in charge of the Public Library. In November, always of the same year, the *Junta* ordered that "all elementary schools should have religious priests as principals."[240]

Thus, unlike the ecclesiastical authorities, the rest of Rio de la Plata's clergy supported the 1810's emancipation, with no distinction between secular and regular. Several members of the clergy acted as men of letters of the independent period, and some of them reached political positions.[241] Most of them, together with the authorities, embraced the revolution in its totality.[242]

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[238] *Biblioteca Mayo*, XVIII, p. 16138. The C*abildo Abierto* was a special mode of assembly of the city inhabitants during the Spanish colonial period, in case of emergencies, like the one in May 1810 in Buenos Aires. The *Primera Junta* was the government created as a result of that emergency.
[239] Ver Rómulo Carbia, *La revolución de mayo y la iglesia*, Huarpes, Buenos aires, 1945.
[240] *Acuerdos del extinguido Cabildo de Buenos Aires*, 4, Tome 4, 274-275.
[241] Which meant going against their religious state and be in ethical conflict about their obedience to Rome.
[242] Lértora Mendoza states that several clerics were important ideological references for the Rioplatense independence. Among others, she mentions Luis José Chorroarin, who served twice as president of the Constituent Congress (1817 and 1819); Diego Estanislao de Zavaleta, who held several public offices; Antonio María Sáenz, president of the National Congress of 1816 and first Rector of the University of Buenos Aires, in 1821; and Jose Eusebio Agüero, vice-rector of the College of the Unión del Sud. According to Lértora, these clergymen were developing a new political philosophy combining

On May 25, 1810, the day the Creoles declared the new government, the Franciscans gathered in their Chapter of Buenos Aires to decide who would lead the Order for the next three years. This chapter was, in many ways, a religious reproduction of the political events that occurred outside the monastery.

As a result of the election, Fray Francisco Javier López Carvallo was elected Provincial Minister. The chapter, as usual, was divided between a Peninsular and a Creole faction. The American-born Carvallo was part of Garcia's faction, with ties to Madrid.[243] Unhappy with the chapter's decision, the Creole faction appealed to the *Primera Junta*. In November, the *Junta* decided to revoke any arrangement made by the chapter. Predictably, a new chapter held on 5 February 1811 elected a Creole, Fray Cayetano José Rodríguez, as the Provincial Minister. Rodríguez had no known ties with Madrid. But the new chapter was followed by a new appeal, this time from the Spaniard faction. Meanwhile, from Cádiz, *Comisario* Moya tried to keep the Franciscan Order under his control. Moya approved the first election of 1810 in February 1811 and, again, in May of that year.

The Revolution quickly intensified the internal conflicts within the orders. Unlike what happened during the colonial period --where the churchmen responded to external challenges—as soon as the Revolution began, the Franciscans now appealed to the authorities to solve internal conflicts. Relations with Madrid and with Rome had been severed, and the Franciscans, by requesting the intervention of the *Junta*, legitimized the authority of Buenos Aires in religious affairs. Unwillingly, the Franciscan Order became

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independence ideas and Catholic tradition. Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista", 208-209.

[243] The description of the entire situation in Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina*, volume 7, 438-450.

the first institution to recognize the *Primera Junta* right of Patronage.[244]

Correspondingly, politics channeled personal ambitions. The Revolution allowed local churchmen to gain access to privileged positions that were formerly denied either by the system of *alternativa* or by their lack of connections with Madrid. What had changed in 1810 was the political context.[245] Detached from their Peninsular superiors, dragging old situations, religious priests appealed, accepted and took advantage of the new government's arbitration. At the same time, it offered a new source of internal disputes. Although the friars belonged to a corporation, they were also individuals who wanted to improve their professional careers, sometimes at any cost. The Revolution opened new opportunities inside and outside the cloisters rapidly perceived by the churchmen. Casimiro Ibarrola, for instance –the Franciscan who appealed to the Junta in 1810—would eventually become *Comisario Provincial*, the same position of mediator between the government and the orders that Fray Moya occupied. But there was a slight difference between Moya and his successor's context. Buenos Aires now replaced Madrid as center of decisions.[246]

Convents were not isolated from the rest of the colonial society and, consequently, they were touched by conflicts outside their boundaries. Sometimes these conflicts were exposed earlier in the convents than on theoretically more contested grounds. Disputes

[244] It is necessary to highlight this decision of the Franciscans in 1810. After that year, the practice to appeal to the political authorities would extend as a form of resolution of arising conflicts among regulars. In 1818, for instance, ten Mercedarians asked the Supreme Director, José Rondeau to avoid the annulment of a Chapter in which the elected Definidores were not "the president's candidates". AHPBA 7.5.12.1. See also Valentina Ayrolo "La estela de la ley de obispados de 1813 en la administración diocesana." *Anuario Historia Argentina Enrique* Barba. Forthcoming.

[245] See Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República,* 121 and Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos*.

[246] Fray Ibarrola had one of his main conflicts as Comisario with the Colegio de Propaganda Fide of San Carlos in 1814, whose members –Franciscans as well—were mostly Spanish. Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina*, volume 7, 54.

between Peninsulars and Creoles in the Army, for instance, did not take place until the Revolution of 1810, decades after those within the orders.[247] Politics penetrated the convents before it penetrated the barracks.[248]

The theory of Pierre Bourdieu on the social structure offers some hints to better understand Franciscan Politics at the time of the May Revolution.[249] Priests who occupied a position of dominance in the order tried to sustain it and for that they used a type of capital gathered from title possession, acknowledgement from their peers and charges previously obtained. Other religious priests established interests and strategies in order to obtain status and symbolic gain in the Order.

Young priests did not have enough symbolic capital but had specific interests in furthering their careers sharing the same interest with the Franciscan authorities. The structure of this system was internalized by the Franciscan agents and shaped their *habitus*. The *habitus* was to value the disputed good, which was the position inside the Order. Agents devised strategies to achieve promotions, which ended up being their interest in life.

All this system was exacerbated with the revolution, which opened a huge gap between the objective and subjective positions of friars, resulting in intense power struggles inside the convents. Displaced priests tried to modify the established relations of force and found in the revolution a possibility to change the rules of the game. Their situation could improve by putting much less capital at stake than the one needed in an

[247] See Gabriel Di Meglio, "Os habéis hecho temibles'. La milicia de la ciudad de Buenos Aires y la política entre invasiones inglesas y el fin del proceso revolucionario, 1806-1820" *Tiempos de América*, 13 (2006): 151-166.
[248] In Mexico, meanwhile, the monastic life did not present too many problems toward the end of the colonial period. Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order", 341.
[249] "Espacio social y poder simbólico", in Pierre Bourdieu, *Cosas dichas*, Madrid: Gedisa, 1993, 127-142.

ordinary situation.

The May Revolution provided a new framework to old inner conflicts. The Franciscans started to act more in accordance with the personal goals they wanted to achieve rather than to fulfill the interests of the order they belonged to.

On May 23rd 1813, Fray Lorenzo Santos, Guardian of the Franciscan convent in Córdoba sent an urgent letter to the Mayor Governor of his jurisdiction Juan Antonio Ortiz de Ocampo. In it, Fray Lorenzo asked Ocampo about how he and the other Franciscans would participate on the celebrations for May 25th of that year.

"The assistance to the celebration has to be with my community or not? And should I attend to the complete Church service or only to the Te Deum?" [250]

Santos' doubts were honest. Recently, *Asamblea del Año 13* had declared for the first time that May 25th had to be a civic celebration and since this was a novelty which introduced new behaviors, priests had to learn how to implement them.[251]

Three years after the May Revolution, the Franciscans had adapted relatively easily to the new Creole government. A restructuring in the personnel – logically in favor of the Creole element– and nullified elections, did not affect significantly the Franciscan Order. But the *Asamblea* presented new challenges.

The Second Triumvirate *de las Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata organized* the Asamblea del Año XIII after the triumph of the revolutionary troops in the battle of Tucumán in September 1812. The patriotic triumph increased the rhythm of the revolution urging the government to summon Representatives from the provinces.

Since the May Revolution itself, there was the idea to create a legislative body that

[250] Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI). Gobierno, Tomo/Caja 36, Carpeta 1, Legajo 7 Convento de San Francisco 1813, Folio 54.

[251] Seek for consensus was necessary to ensure loyalty to the new government. The *Asamblea* created the civic holiday of May 25. It was "the culminating moment of the new revolutionary liturgy". Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Revolución y Guerra*.

could provide the basis for the principles of the popular sovereignty. With those premises, the Assembly opened its sessions in January 1813 until January 1815. Its main goals were to proclaim the independence and to draft a constitution which defined the institutional system of the new state. Even though none of the original goals were achieved, the *Asamblea* established several numbers of norms and symbols for the new Río de la Plata's institutions.[252] Many of the norms concerned religion and in particular regular orders. Due to the new regulations, the Franciscans had to develop imaginative solutions to face a threatening situation. New challenges and opportunities appeared.

One of the first Franciscans to take advantage of the new situation was Fray Cayetano Rodríguez. The nullified Chapter of 1810 and the new Chapter of 1811 promoted Rodriguez into the hierarchy of the Order. Cayetano's subsequent career is a good of the possibilities presented by the revolution.

Fray Cayetano José Rodríguez was born in San Pedro, Buenos Aires, in 1761 and joined the Franciscan Order in 1776 when he was 16 years old. He was already a priest in 1783, a teacher at the University of Córdoba between 1783 and 1790, and a *Lector Jubilado*, in Buenos Aires in 1810.[253]

The May Revolution changed his life. Until then, he was an intellectual with remarkable knowledge of Philosophy and Science. His teachings on General Physics and Logic were published. He was an academic reformer.[254]

In 1810 he started a relentless political career outside the Convent walls. A few months after the nullified Chapter, he was appointed director of the Buenos Aires Public

[252] See Marcela Ternavasio, *Gobernar la Revolución: poderes en disputa en el Río de la Plata, 1810-1816*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2007.
[253] AHPBA, 7.5.12.23, 1810.
[254] Celina Lértora, *La enseñanza de la filosofía en tiempos de la colonia*. Buenos Aires: Fecic, 1979, 241.

Library, a position he held until 1814. In 1813 he was named to the *Asamblea*, where he was in charge of keeping the minutes of the sessions. Fray Cayetano also wrote for *El Redactor*, the official newspaper of the *Asamblea*. In 1816 he was elected representative of Buenos Aires to the 1816 *Congreso de Tucumán*.[255]

Simultaneously, he composed patriotic songs and several sonnets. But his most outstanding work as a *letrado* was his panegyric of Mariano Moreno in April 1811.[256] The relationship between the Secretary of *Primera Junta* and Rodríguez was strong. It was Moreno himself who went to the Franciscan convent in November 1810 to demand a new Chapter after the problematic one in May 1810. It was after that Chapter that Cayetano became Provincial Minister. The revolution opened new possibilities for Fray Cayetano, turning him into one of the most representative priests in the pantheon of national heroes. The Revolution created new opportunities for those who knew how to take them.

But the *Asamblea* presented also new challenges. The Franciscans were required to constantly show their loyalty to the revolution. Before public Franciscan demonstration, such as the one on May 25, the priests consulted with the authorities to even the tiniest details. In the months that followed January 1813, the Franciscans praised the revolution and wrote patriotic sermons that were sent all over the territory.

In 1813, the *Asamblea* answered a question that had been posed in 1810: how should the Franciscans state their adherence to the new system? That explains the despair of Cordoba's Guardian in 1813. Fray Lorenzo Santos was sincere when he asked: should we go to the celebration of May 25th?

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[255] José Pacífico Otero, *Estudio biográfico sobre fray Cayetano José Rodriguez y recopilacion de sus producciones literarias*. Córdoba: Imprenta de Domenici, 1899.
[256] *Ibidem*, 47-49.

From 1813 on, situations in which priests had to prove their endorsement of the government multiplied. Fray Pedro Nolasco Iturri, Guardian of the convent in Cordoba, in 1816 sent a list of the new duties of the convent to the Governor of Córdoba noting that "I am very pleased, that all that was performed was to the liking and satisfaction of Your Honor".[257] Iturri pointed that "the least I can do is to applaud the diligence, prudence and wisdom that is shown in such righteous deliberations."[258] In 1819, priests were forced to wear the national cockade in public places.[259] The post-revolutionary regime was devoted to the building of new symbolic systems and the Franciscans had to learn the new language.

Fray Pantaleón García was a Franciscan that adjusted to the new situation. As he participated in the faction of connected-cosmopolitans during the late colonial period, it did not seem that García would have sympathy for the new regime. However, his talent as a lecturer was well known, and revolution found him to be an excellent spokesman for the new system.

García was put in charge of sermons at several public celebrations in Cordoba's Cathedral. He excelled particularly on the anniversary of the revolution in 1814 and in the celebration of the victory of Maipu in April 1818. Based on his ability as a communicator, a much needed asset for revolution, García joined the new system late and continued as Franciscan referent after the revolution.

In his patriotic sermons, García referred to Bacon and Montesquieu and even mentioned the rupture of the social contract as a basis for freedom: "it is the obligation to

[257] AGI Gobierno. Tomo 47 1816. Legajo 21 Correspondencia del Guardian de San Francisco.
[258] AGI. Gobierno. Tomo 47 1816. Legajo 21 Correspondencia del Guardian de San Francisco. Folio 137
[259] AGI. Gobierno, Caja 74, Legajo 34, Provincial de Predicadores de Buenos Aires, Folio 590. Written instrument issued in Buenos Aires but with force of law also in Córdoba.

fulfill the social contract what links the parts with the whole."[260]

The contract mentioned by García was not Rousseau's but probably the Jesuit Francisco Suárez's.[261] Even though he used enlightened language, his support to revolution was based on traditional ideas. "Bourbons who… despised the sacred duty they had with Spaniards on both sides of the world…were incapable of hiding it", he stated in his sermon on May 25th, 1814.[262] And further: "if Ferdinand abandoned us… the contract is broken and the oath ended."[263]

While the Franciscans were valuable allies of the Revolution, it is clear that their political views were not identical. The Franciscans placed more importance on the Absolutist Power of the Spanish monarchy as a cause for revolution than on the right of people to elect the new government. The contract mentioned by García was not about men associated freely but about the sovereignty God gave them, and which they gave to the King. Because the King had been absent since 1808, power had to return to the people. The origin of power was different for the Enlightenment than for the Franciscans but the revolutionary potential was the same.[264]

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[260] "Proclama sagrada dicha por su ilustre autor fray Pantaleón García, en la iglesia catedral de Córdoba, el 25 de mayo de 1814" in Adolfo Carranza (ed.) *El clero argentino de 1810 a 1830: oraciones patrióticas*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta de M. A. Rosas, 1907, 101.

[261] Furlong argues that Rousseau's works entered Río de la Plata in the early nineteenth century. However, it is impossible to deny an indirect knowledge of the *Social Contract* at the end of the eighteenth century. Furlong recognizes that the theories of Montesquieu and Voltaire were known in Río de la Plata on the first date. Guillermo Furlong, *Nacimiento y desarrollo de la Filosofía en el Río de la Plata (1536-1810)*. Buenos Aires: Kraft, 1952, 235.

[262] "Proclama sagrada dicha por su ilustre autor fray Pantaleón García", 96.

[263] *Ibidem*, 101.

[264] Jaime Peire, on the other hand, states that enlightenment was penetrating discursive practices. See Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos*, 341-346. Catholic historiography argues that the ideological affiliation of the independence movement did not lie in the American or French revolutions but in Scholasticism, in particular in the ideas of Francisco Suárez. Suárez supported the doctrine of popular sovereignty, which had come to Latin America with the Jesuits. Juan Durán, "La Iglesia y el movimiento independentista rioplatense".

The clergy's support of the revolution had its logic.[265] The events of May 1810 did not immediately produce a revolution. Indeed, the *Junta* initially identified itself as "keeper of the rights of Ferdinand VII". From there, stems the ideological support of some clergy members that sustained the legitimacy of the revolution. In this sense, it was presented as a continuity of traditional Christian thinking.[266] Only in November 1810 did some articles of Mariano Moreno in the *Gaceta de Buenos Aires* define the revolution as a process which interrupted three hundred years of despotism.[267]

Pantaleón García modified his opinion about the Bourbons he had praised during the colonial period. He proposed to end tyranny "through cannons and rifles," and made a cult to God and Homeland.

Curiously, almost simultaneously, the Franciscan–Paraguayan Fray Velasco, whose sermons had circulated through the Spanish empire with those of Pantaleón, also became a feverous revolutionary. Velasco was the author of the pamphlet called "Proclamation of a Paraguayan to his Countrymen", a harangue against Gaspar de Francia.

In the harangue, Franciscan Velasco tried to convince Paraguayan not to separate from Buenos Aires. Velasco, who resided in Buenos Aires, received a recommendation of Supreme Director Gervasio Posadas before General Commissioner of Regulars Casimiro

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[265] The academic training of the Creole clergy had two main centers, Córdoba, with its university and convents and Buenos Aires, with its convents and the College of San Carlos. Juan María Gutiérrez, *Origen y desarrollo de la enseñanza pública superior en Buenos Aires*. Buenos Aires, La Cultura Argentina, 1915, chapter 4: "Enseñanza de la Teología (1776-1821)". Before the opening of the College, elite members studied in the Dominican, Franciscan and Mecedarian convents. Studies continued from 1776 to 1818, with a decline between 1807 and 1811, due to the British invasion and the revolution. Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista".

[266] It is necessary to understand the logic of their theological support. One might wonder whether the Franciscans were in ideological conditions of questioning authority or if any political authority was legitimate by the only prerequisite of exercising it.

[267] Beatriz Dávilo, "La revolución del Río de la Plata: entusiasmo, desaliento y mito fundacional". *Araucaria*, 13 (2011): 1126-1146.

Ibarrola "for his interest in that the notable merit of Father Velasco would not pass unnoticed." With that support, Velasco was named Provincial of the Franciscans in Paraguay.[268] Once again, civil revolutionary power gave power to a Franciscan.

Another Franciscan that stood out during revolution was Fray Francisco Castañeda. Until the revolution in 1810, perhaps due to his age, Castañeda occupied minor positions in the Order. But soon his sermons in Buenos Aires made him famous, not only for their content but also their style and popular tone. Even though he was originally a member of the Peninsular faction, based on his popularity, Castañeda was appointed to deliver a sermon at the Buenos Aires Cathedral on May 25th, 1815. In his sermon, Castañeda praised the Revolution because it had severed its ties to Napoleonic Spain. He also spoke against "capricious, extravagant and despotic ministers".

His praise for the revolution ended there. He reminded the audience that "we have done nothing in six years of revolution."[269] In a style similar to that of Joseph de Maistre,[270] Castañeda assigned Revolution to providence and not to men, stating that "what happened on May 25th is not our work but God's."[271] While Castañeda was popular among the people he was less so with authorities. Unlike García, his sermons were edgy and created conflicts with authority.

Fray Luis Pacheco was another speaker for the new regimen. His patriotic sermon

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[268] The document is included in José. Vázquez, *El doctor Francia, visto y oído por sus contemporáneos*, Buenos Aires, Eudeba, 1975, 113-114.

[269] As in all the sermons of this time, Castañeda wrote using an inclusive first plural person. "Sermón patriótico pronunciado en la Catedral de Buenos Aires el 25 de mayo de 1815 por Fray Francisco de Castañeda" in Adolfo Carranza (ed.,) *El clero argentino de 1810 a 1830*, 160.

[270] Joseph de Maistre (Savoie, 1774) was one of the main thinkers of the European counter revolution. De Maistre argued that the French Revolution was God's response to man's boldness to organize his own future. See Jorge Troisi Melean, "Empezar la revolución: De Maistre y el estado de naturaleza en Rousseau." *IV Congreso Nacional de Ciencia Política "Desempeño institucional y control democrático a fines de siglo*", Buenos Aires, noviembre de 1999.

[271] "Sermón patriótico pronunciado en la Catedral de Buenos Aires", in Adolfo Carranza (ed.,) *El clero argentino de 1810 a 1830*, 160.

of 1817 exalted "military and political leaders" who acted with patriotism in "sustaining justice" as well as "judicious Spaniards" who joined the reasonable Americas in its search for freedom and independence.[272]

The pulpit was the focal point from which the principles of liberation of the peoples in the Americas radiated.[273] Sermons focused on exalting the May Revolution as the ending of Americas' slavery. Religion provided a symbolic flow to revolutionary imagery, in particular for the underclass.[274]

Spanish American priests preached obedience to the monarchy as a divine mandate, but by the late eighteenth century the Bourbon dynasty had dispatched the moral and political legacy of the Hapsburgs. The traditional authority of the crown was fragmented by its attack on the Church.[275] The traditional alliance between crown and church left the clergy an ally for new revolutionary regimes. Franciscans transformed themselves into speakers of the new system by criticizing the morality rather than the politics of Bourbon despotism.[276]

The new authorities acknowledged that the clergy was needed as an ally in order to convince the people of the importance of supporting the new government. But little by little, the revolutionary government forced clergy to preach about political change from the pulpit.[277] The uncomfortable partnership tightened their ties.

After the May Revolution, members of the orders did not know if they still

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[272] "Sermón de acción de gracias al Todopoderoso, que en el solemne aniversario del 26 de mayo dijo en Catamarca fray Pedro Luis Pacheco, del Orden de San Francisco, en el año l817," in Adolfo Carranza (ed.,) *El clero argentino de 1810 a 1830*, 223-243.
[273] On revolutionary sermons, see Nélida Pilia de Assuncao, Aurora Ravina y Monica Larrañaga, *Mayo de 1810: entre la historia y la ficción discursive.* Biblos, 1999, 58-78.
[274] Roberto Di Stefano, *El púlpito y la plaza*.
[275] See David Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*.
[276] On revolutionary speech, see Beatriz Dávilo, "La revolución del Río de la Plata".
[277] Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Revolución y guerra*, 171.

belonged to a legitimate institution. They were in the midst of a conundrum between an institution they were supposed to support and a new state they had to acknowledge. Who should they obey? The Pope, the Bishop, the Governor, the Supreme Director, the Order's Provincial or the General of the Regulares? *The Comisaría de regulares* solved the question, by providing visible authority to obey.

On June 12, 1813 *Asamblea General* declared that "*the state of Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata* was independent from all ecclesiastical authority out of its territory".[278] As a consequence of this statement, the *Asamblea* created the *Comisaría General de Regulares*. It was a clear exercise of sovereignty and patronage by the *Asamblea*.

The *Comisaría de Regulares* replaced the *Comisario de Indias* that each order had in Spain and was in charge of placing the provincials of the orders in America under its authority. The *Asamblea* now freed the entire Church from any ecclesiastical authority outside their boundaries. The *Comisario de Regulares* swore fidelity to the nation, not to King Ferdinand like the former *Comisario de Indias*. Thus, the new *Comisaría de Regulares* had the provincials from all orders under their authority.

The same faction that was put in authority by the revolutionary government now controlled the Franciscan Order. The *Asamblea* deprived *Comisario de Indias* Moya of any authority in Río de la Plata, but still he kept on fighting from Madrid, condemning the Chapter of 1810 and supporting the Royalist cause in the entire continent.[279]

Thus, the creation of the *Comisaría de Regulares* was not only a way to control

[278] José Chiaramonte, *Ciudades, Provincias, Estados: Orígenes de la Nación Argentina*. Buenos Aires, Emecé, 2007, 196.
[279] In 1813, for example, Moya sent an accolade to Fray Pedro José Hernández, monarchist, editor of *Apología de la intolerancia religiosa* and a member of the Franciscan order of Valencia, Venezuela. See "Apología de la intolerancia", http://club.telepolis.com/dioluis/.

the orders, but also as a way to punish Moya because he had questioned the Franciscan authority in Río de la Plata. The *Comisaría* was created to negotiate between Franciscan authorities and members of the revolutionary government. The creation of Comisaría de Regulares cut ties with Europe but opened the possibility of solving problems quickly by appealing to a State that was authoritarian but also effective.

It seems logical that the first *Comisario* was the Franciscan Fray Casimiro Ibarrola. Ibarrola had appealed to the Junta in 1810, giving it the opportunity to exert the Patronage.

The *Comisario's* use of authority can be seen in an episode involving the Franciscans of the convent of *Propaganda Fide de San Carlos* in Santa Fe. When Ibarrola appointed a Guardian for the convent, he found a staunch resistance. The Franciscans of *Propaganda Fide,* all Peninsulars, stated that Pope Pius VI already had foreseen the situation they now faced. They argued that if for any reason the authority of the *Comisario de Indias* was absent, the convents could choose new authorities by themselves. Ibarrola sought support from the government that, in turn, ordered the friars to obey him.[280]

The friars complied with the order, but they made clear that they would acknowledge the *Comisario's* authority only in public but not in spirit. The government reacted immediately and ordered that each priest should personally express his stance in writing. Only three friars continued to rebel. They were sent to Buenos Aires but soon after escaped to the Banda Oriental.

[280] The full account in Américo Tonda, "El convento de San Lorenzo durante la incomunicación con Roma. Contribución para el estudio de la Comisaría Central de Regulares", *Revista del Instituto de Historia del Derecho*, 22 (1971):122-164 and Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la Iglesia en la Argentina*, volume 7, 54.

It was a lost for the Franciscan Order, but it was a cost to pay in order to sustain their alliance with revolutionary authorities. The movement of *Propaganda Fide* --one of the most dynamic agencies of the Catholic Church- was at a serious disadvantage because it was composed mainly of Spanish clergymen. Revolutionary government did not accept an organization whose members were mainly Peninsulars. As a result, the *Propaganda Fide* colleges disappeared in Río de la Plata.

The *Comisaría General de Regulares* lasted only three years. Ibarrola was in charge from June, 1813 until his death in January, 1815. The Dominican Fray Julián Perdriel succeeded him but when the latter died in May, 1816, the Congress of Tucumán decided to suppress the institution.[281]

The *Comisaría de Regulares* rewarded a Franciscan that showed loyalty to the revolution in its early days. The orders suffered deep transformations between the end of the colonial period and the beginning of the independent one.[282] But many of its members had the capacity to negotiate compromise and obtain benefits for their order.

Based on the experience of the Cortes de Cádiz, in March 1813 the *Asamblea* ended the Inquisition in Río de la Plata.[283] In Córdoba, after the edict was issued, there were two cases regarding Franciscans that should have previously been sent by the Holy Office.

In 1813, Fray José Gregorio Ramírez, who had been appointed to a rural mission in the district of Córdoba, was accused of persistent drunkenness. The major concern of

[281] Ravignani, Emilio *Asambleas Constituyentes Argentinas: seguidas de los textos constitucionales, legislativos y pactos interprovinciales que organizaron políticamente la Nación.* Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1939, volume 1. "Sesión del 12 de octubre de 1816", 263.
[282] See, mainly, the work of Roberto Di Stefano.
[283] Jose Chiaramonte, *Ciudades, Provincias, Estado,* 195.

the superiors was that Ramírez liked to drink in public and sometimes pronounced blasphemies such as "Jesus as man had had the same passions as we have, also himself was drunk once". The rural parishioners, in turn, condemned Fray Ramírez.[284] When they witnessed Ramirez's conduct, they reported it to the main priest, Ramirez's supervisor.[285] The rural laity knew which door to knock on.

The priest, Don Estanislao de Learte, took the case to Bishop Rodrigo Orellana, who started a process. The Bishop decided to send Ramírez' case to *Comisario* Ibarrola, who decided to close it so that it did not reach the public.

Fray Francisco Ferreira presented another kind of menace to the Franciscans. In 1813, Fray Ferreira was accused of promoting impious and heretical propositions in presence of other Franciscans, although they warned him against his views. Ferreira had not only questioned the virginity of Mary --"Saint Joseph had marital access to her" -- and the infallibility of the Pope --"the Pope can lie"-- but also praised predestination.

The *Asamblea* considered Ferreira's words to be a judicial matter and appointed Bishop Orellana to take charge of it. The *Asamblea* had abolished the institution of Inquisition but not the concept of Inquisition. After the revolution, particular beliefs were not a private matter but one of the state. After sustaining that his duty was to defend faith, Bishop Rodrigo de Orellana appointed Fray Pantaleón García to lead the investigation.

García discovered that Ferreira neither possessed any heretical book nor had any individual promoting his ideas from outside the monastery. Finally, Ferreira declared that everything he had said was only a joke. García sent his report on to the Bishop,

[284] For scarcity of rural priests in Río de la Plata, see María Elena Barral, "Las parroquias rurales de Buenos Aires entre 1730 y 1820," *Andes*, 15 (2004): 19-53.
[285] It is interesting to note that even though half of them had trouble understanding the questions of the investigator during the official hearing, the peasants followed the principles of catechism. AAC, Legajo 3, "Acusación contra el P. Gregorio Ramírez."

disapproved the results of the investigation and sent the whole file to the Comisario Ibarrola. Ibarrola, in turn, decided to end the matter in order to keep everything in secret and out of the public knowledge.

Ferreira's dossier seems to be another affair caused by internal disputes among churchmen rather than the product of new ideas influencing old priests. Internal politics had an effect on the convents. The scandal and not the content of Ferreira's words were the real cause of the way this case was closed.[286] *Comisario* Ibarrola, who was an official of the revolutionary government but also a Franciscan, opted to protect his Order.

The free-womb law, also passed on by the *Asamblea*, undermined the traditional Franciscan practice of obtaining income through the selling of slave children. The law, intended to gradually abolish slavery, endangered one of the habitual sources of income of the Franciscans at a time when their earnings were already dropping. The law, promulgated at the end of January 1813, stated that all those born in territory on or after January 31, 1813 should be considered free. [287]

In Table 4.2, I compare the number of Afro-descendants in the religious orders in Córdoba between 1778 and 1813. Those newly born from slave mothers, called *libres por la patria* (free for fatherland), were manumitted after 1813. Nevertheless, as they continued living with their mothers they were included in the census taken in the convents.

[286] AAC. Legajo 3, "Proceso por herejía del hermano franciscano Fco. Ferreira".
[287] Jose Chiaramonte, *Ciudades, Provincias, Estados*, 149.

TABLE 4.2. REGULAR ORDERS AND AFRODESCENDANTS. CÓRDOBA (1778-1813)

Order	1778			1813			
	Slaves	Free	Total	Slaves	Free	Libres por la patria	Total
Dominicans	65	146	211	43	40	3	211
Bethlemites	18	-	18	71	-	-	18
Mercedarians	112	35	147	95	6	3	147
Franciscans	57	-	57	16	-	-	57
TOTAL	**550**	**286**	**837**	**209**	**46**	**6**	**255**

Source: Dora Celton. *La Población de la Provincia de Córdoba a Fines Del Siglo XVIII,* 145. Arcondo, Aníbal, *La población de Córdoba en 1813: Publicación homenaje a la memoria del profesor Ceferino Garzón Maceda*. Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1995.

Between 1778 and 1813, the number of African descendents in the convents decreased by 69% and the number of slaves, by 62%. A year after the enforcement of the free-womb law, six children were already free. At that time, no female slaves were living in the Franciscan convent. Their ability and determination to use the justice system contributed to decrease the Franciscan options in slavery.

Thus, free-womb law was a compromised solution which did not deeply affect Franciscans, despite having been the sale of slaves an important source of income during the colonial period.[288] Paradoxically, while they were losing traditional sources of income, Franciscans changed their mind regarding the subsidies they send to the government. The defeat in Sipe-Sipe in November 1815 meant the loss of Upper Peru for the Provincias Unidas. After the defeat, Cordoba's governor, asked Franciscans to keep contributing to the patriotic cause. The response of the Guardian Francisco de Mendiolaza, in January 1816, was different from the traditional stance during the colonial period:

"Filled with the most piercing feeling caused by the great needs that presented our fatherland

[288] On the gradual disappearance of slavery, see Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Historia de América Latina.* Madrid, Alianza 2008, 128-129.

> after the unfortunate contrast in the Sipe-Sipe battle, according to what was expressed by Your Lordship in the communication of today, I answer that, of course Your Lordship can count with four hundred pesos in cash that I will immediately deliver."[289]

Although the Franciscans did not pay the amount the governor asked they offered some gold and silver carved jewelry, valued at 200 pesos "as proof of the feelings that this encouraged." Instead of asking for an exemption from the government because of the traditional poverty of the Order, Franciscans decided to collaborate. A state they had to obey was no longer on the other side of the Atlantic but very close to them. This changed the attitude of the Franciscans: sometimes they were willing to negotiate, sometimes to adhere without hesitations.

In exchange for promoting some Franciscans, the revolutionary government demanded the Order's authorities limit the action of those who did not pledge loyalty to the new system. In 1816, for example, all the Franciscans Guardians were renewed by appealing to the royal Patronage.[290] A year later, in May 1817, Governor Manuel Antonio Castro admonished Guardian Fray Manuel Bustamante to stop "Father Preacher Franco Vazquez from entering Tucumán". Vazquez was Peninsular who had not shown any loyalty to the new system.[291]

As late as 1819, counterrevolutionary voices were heard among Franciscans. In May 1819, The Guardian of Cordoba's convent, Miguel Benavides, received a letter from the Governor Mayor of the Province which read that Fray Vicente Antonio Sánchez refused to celebrate sacraments in the countryside "in an arrogant and disobedient form."[292] Therefore it was asked that he should be cloistered in the convent. The official tone is cordial but imperative:

[289] AHC. TC 47, Carpeta 2, folio 135.
[290] AHPBA. 7.5.12.23.
[291] AHC. Caja 54. Carpeta 4. Legajo 25.
[292] AHC. Caja 60. Carpeta 3. Legajo 15.

"The substantial, Reverend Father Guardian, is that the prudent measure is executed, since what I had solicited is convenient and will avoid more transcendental consequences"[293]

Franciscan authorities were officials of the new system and they had to keep order among those they directed. Sánchez returned to the convent.

Final Considerations

In this chapter we have observed how an institution based on traditional values, faced the revolutionary process of 1810. Despite what was expected *a priori*, the evaluation of the impact of revolutionary policies on the Franciscan Order was complex, giving room not only for conflictive confrontations but also for negotiations and alliances.

Before the revolution, the *alternativa* system worked efficiently in the Franciscan Order, continuously alternating a Creole and a Peninsular. This system however, concealed inner conflicts that began to implode before the revolution and continued after May 25, 1810.

After the May Revolution, Creoles were immediately incorporated to the new system. These individuals were members of the political faction that allowed the *Primera Junta* to exert power over of religious sovereignty. The newcomer Franciscans, who owed their power to the *Junta*, established a political-religious alliance that was worked in different ways.

The second group of Franciscans, the connected-cosmopolitans, skilled when dealing with power, had the tools to adapt to the new rules. The *Asamblea del Año 13*, voracious in its search for new allies with the capacity to convince believers of the

[293] *Ibidem*.

benefits of the new circumstances, needed them. Pantaleón García was the symbol of this phenomenon because he mastered one of the main communication channels of his time: the patriotic sermon.

Far from being a compact body, the Franciscan Order behaved as a group of individuals that share common values and multiple interests.

The *Comisaría de Regulares* was a place where Franciscans exerted power. It is important to mention that the government placed a Franciscan instead of a secular to control the Franciscans themselves. That choice came undoubtedly from a negotiation between the civil authorities and the Order.

Revolution, nevertheless, did not produce only good news for Franciscans. After 1810 there was a terrible impact on vocations in the Franciscan Order, as well as in all the Spanish American Catholic Church as a whole. Only six individuals applied for the entrance to the Franciscan Order between 1810 and 1820. Between 1820 and 1830, the number was low again: only eight individuals tried to enter the Franciscan Order in Córdoba. The vocational crisis was even greater if we take into account that the convent of Asunción was no longer been an option since 1810 and that of Buenos Aires since 1823. Córdoba was the only Franciscan convent where potential Franciscans could join throughout most of the 1820s. Of the 19 candidates in the 1800s, the Franciscan Order reduced its number to just 8, twenty years later. (See Table 4.3).

TABLE 4.3. FRANCISCANS ADMITTED TO THE CONVENTS. CÓRDOBA (1800-1830)

Admission	Total
1800-1810	19
1811-1820	6
1821-1830	8

Source: AAC. Archivo del Convento de San Jorge, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

The revolutionary process found a Church with multiple conflicts, accentuating, but not unleashing, the collapse of a regime based on the symbiotic relationship among ecclesiastical power, political power and the civil society. The new universe of values manifested itself in different manners, producing an advance of military and trade careers in detriment of clergy, which suffered a substantial decrease in ordinations.

This vocational crisis presented an enormous challenge for the Franciscan Order, especially because the influx of vocations from the Old World, in dynamic sectors such as the missionizing *Propaganda Fide,* was completely prohibited.

This situation, however, did not prevent the Franciscan Order from continuing to be influential. Franciscans had proven already that, since the times when the University of Córdoba was handed over to them, they knew how to negotiate and how to obtain benefits from their relation with power. The new government understood that the Franciscans were still important actors to gain followers from popular sectors, something much needed by the new system of legitimacy based on popular sovereignty. This alliance between Franciscans and the revolutionary government lasted a few more years, but in the 1820s deep threats put at stake its continuity.

CHAPTER 5

REFORMS AND COUNTER-OFFENSIVE (1820-1829): THE END OF AN ALLIANCE

In August of 1823, Fray Pantaleón García --Guardian of the Convent of Córdoba received a notification from José Gabriel Vázquez, ecclesiastical Vicar, requesting his opinion on the reform of regulars of the region of Cuyo, part of the diocese of Córdoba. Although the reform deeply limited the attributions of the regulars, García answered "the reform of the regulars... is not to destroy, but to improve monastic life." Nevertheless, he doubted it was possible to carry it out because he asked, "How will I be able to delegate my authority in a territory that does not recognize it?" García knew that although he agreed with the spirit of the reform he lacked authority to apply it."[294]

After the rupture between the *Provincias Unidas* and Rome it was difficult to know who among the Franciscans was going to rule and who was going to obey. That was exactly what García stated in his report. His acceptance of the reform was consistent with both his flexible personality and the new context. It is interesting to note that the Franciscan authorities as well as other orders' authorities saw the reforms as necessary.[295] Not all regulars, nevertheless, agreed with the new spirit of the times.

This chapter examines the attitude of Franciscans in the age of reforms. Through life stories and press debate, we show the birth of a proto conservatism that would set the pattern for the second half of the nineteenth-century. An attentive reader will notice that, particularly in this chapter, the sources are less quantitative and more qualitative. Indeed,

[294] AAC, Legajo 3, "Expediente sobre la reforma de regulares en la provincia de Mendoza".
[295] AAC, Legajo 3, "Expediente sobre la reforma de regulares en la provincia de Mendoza".

the established, bureaucratic Bourbon structure and the fiscal interest of the Bourbon state in the late colonial period provide historians with statistical sources during the last four decades of the Bourbon imperial power. The chaos generated by the war and the attempts made by the new authorities to stabilize the situation during the first two decades of ruling prevent the generation of comparable statistics.

Partnership threaten

In March 1816, a Congress met in Tucumán to resolve the issue of independence. A Declaration of Independence was issued in July that year. The most contentious issue after independence was the expansion of the port, pitting the *Porteños* against the rest of the country. The Buenos Aires customs was the chief source of public revenue and remained under the control of the port city.[296]

Competing ideas of what comprised the new nation sustained the struggle between Buenos Aires and the rest of the country. Along with a growing volume of trade in goods, new political ideas came. New goods and ideas confronted traditional habits of mind and labor. As a result, regionalism marked the period. Independence was not a complete solution and war finally broke by the end of the decade. The Battle of Cepeda, fought in 1820 between the Centralist, or Unitarian, and the Federal Parties, resulted in the end of the centralized authority. Cepeda thwarted the goal of Centralist leaders to govern the country under the Constitution of 1819. A new and short-lived constitutional republic led by Bernardino Rivadavia between 1826 and 1827, opened a new period with the Province

[296] For this section, we follow Jonathan Brown, "Buenos Aires as outpost of world trade" in *A Socioeconomic History of Argentina, 1776-1860.* Cambridge: Cambridge Latin American Studies, 2009, chapter 4.

of Buenos Aires emerging as the most powerful among numerous semi-independent states. The country remained integrated by 13 autonomous provinces. Each province tried to create a federal system but one by one failed.

Córdoba was the most important alternative to the power of Buenos Aires. During the 1820s, Governor Juan Bautista Bustos, the main provincial leader and an army officer, repelled the Porteño attempt to invade Córdoba.[297] From then on, Bustos ruled Córdoba with an increasingly strong hand. In 1824, he suppressed all *Cabildos* within the province, and did the same to all provincial assembly. As a result, no candidate could be elected except for Bustos. He stayed in power until 1829 when he was defeated by the Unitarians Juan Lavalle and José María Paz. Meanwhile, Juan Manuel de Rosas was beginning his control over Buenos Aires and the Rioplatense region.

In Buenos Aires, the 1820s was the decade that heralded the expansion of education and culture. The University of Buenos Aires was created in 1821. The new institution was made up of the traditional department of Sacred Sciences, Jurisprudence and Exact Sciences.[298] From the beginning, the Sacred Sciences department was unable to start classes due to the lack of students. A few years later it was suppressed.[299]

In the same decade, the new climate began to reflect the first signs of liberal thinking. The first issues to be considered were the rights of the individual. Liberalism would become universal by the second half of the nineteenth-century.[300]

From 1810 to the 1850s there was a growing dispute over power of the Catholic

[297] See Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República*, 77-83.
[298] Néstor Auza, "Periodismo, polemistas y apologetas en la Argentina del siglo XIX," in Josep Ignasi Saranyana and Carmen José Alejos Grau (eds.), *Teología en América Latina, II/2: De las guerras de independencia hasta finales del siglo XIX (1810-1899)*. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2002, 476-491.
[299] Néstor Auza, "La enseñanza de la teología en Argentina en el siglo XIX", in *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia*, 15 (2006): 201-217.
[300] Roberto Gargarella, *Los fundamentos legales de la desigualdad. El constitucionalismo en América (1776-1860)*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Siglo XXI, 2005, 175.

Church. The reaction of the Franciscans of Córdoba traces their struggle to remain central to the emerging society.

Between 1810 and 1820, regulars from Río de la Plata were able to hidden the strong links they had with a traditional world the new government was trying to erase. Through personal actions and negotiation, and sometimes with difficulties, the regulars maintain their space in power.

However, in the 1820, the growth of liberalism hindered the possibilities of establishing an alliance with the government. As a result, the clergy started a counteroffensive against the new liberal thought that became a model that the state would deploy forty years later. The counterattack was weak but created a Catholic environment that later would be used by the *caudillos*.

Two issues formed the axis of the religious debate of the 1820s: the reform of the regular orders and the law of religious tolerance. Most of the clergy had initially embraced the May Revolution in the 1810s but by the 1820s they were divided in those who supported and those who criticized the new measures.

Due to his particular behavior, Fray Pedro Pacheco was mentioned several times in this study. After showing dubious loyalty to the new regime, the sermon he delivered in Catamarca in favor of the revolution in 1817, seemed to turn him into a trustworthy friar. But Pacheco traveled from Catamarca to Buenos Aires at the beginning of 1821 to spread the rumor that the Pope had elected him as the new Bishop of Salta, after the death of the last one, Videla del Pino.

Faced with that situation, Deán Funes, who was asked about the legality of the election, pointed out that the Pope, lacked the power to appoint bishops in the Río de la

Plata.[301] Funes' statement served more as an opportunity to gain popularity than an answer to a concrete need. The government of Buenos Aires did not give the matter much importance because Pacheco could never present any papers to sustain his claim, probably because they did not exist.

Subsequently, Pacheco travelled to Europe on a secret mission.[302] Between January and April 1822, the friar also known as *Pedro el Americano*, was in Rome trying to deliver a report of Rio de la Plata's situation to the Pope.[303]

Until then, the relationship between the independent government and Rome could be summarized by the phrase "yes, to the communion with Rome; no, to being subjects to Rome"[304] In 1816, the representatives in Río de la Plata thought of sending a commissioner to the Holy See to arrange ecclesiastic problems.

The setting changed in 1820, when the liberal revolution in Spain forced King Ferdinand VII to accept new conditions, including the restoration of the Cádiz Constitution of 1812. This situation alienated the Spanish government, now under control of the liberals, from Rome and made space for the latter to negotiate with Spanish

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[301] Gregorio Funes, *Breve discurso sobre la Provisión de obispados en las Iglesia vacantes de América; escrito por el ciudadano Dr. Gregorio Funes a solicitud del excmo. Señor D. Martín Rodríguez, gobernador y capitán general de esta provincia. Imprenta de la Independencia*, February, 1821. Pacheco answered Funes in Pedro Pacheco, *Contestación al breve discurso del muy honorable deán de Córdoba, doctor don Gregorio Funes, formada provisionalmente y con reservas para lo sucesivo por el defensor mendicante. Buenos Aires: Imprenta de los expósitos*, February, 10, 1821. Funes commented the answer to Pacheco in a letter to his brother Ambrosio. *Carta del Deán Funes a su hermano D. Ambrosio*, Buenos Aires, February 19, 1821. In *Atlántida*, Buenos Aires, March 1911, 115. Everything cited in Avelino Gómez Ferreyra, *Pedro el Americano y una misión diplomática argentina.* Buenos Aires: Huarpes, 1946, 12-18.

[302] Rómulo Carbia, *La revolución de Mayo y la Iglesia*, particularly chapter "La incomunicación con Roma y la creación del Vicariato Apostólico."

[303] Romulo Carbia mentions a letter from Pope Pius VII to Pacheco pointing out that "In the meantime, we have given you many powers that you can delegate to others." We have not found another reference to this letter. *Ibidem*.

[304] Álvaro López, *Gregorio XVI y la Reorganización de la Iglesia Hispanoamericana*: *El Paso de Régimen de Patronato a la Misión Como Responsabilidad Directa de la Santa Sede*. Gregorian Biblical, 2004.

America.[305] Hence, in 1820, Franciscans Fray Francisco Ferreyra de la Cruz and Fray Francisco Álvarez, obtained their secularization from the Pope, something that would previously been impossible.[306]

In 1822, the Holy See decided, due to the influence of Cardinal Ercole Consalvi, to play a neutral role in politics. Consalvi decided not to receive any Spanish American diplomats, but he was willing to accept private individuals. Before meeting with anyone, Consalvi received reports from different parts of Spanish America. Descriptions of bishoprics reached Rome: from Caracas, from Lima and also from Córdoba, the last one was written by Rodrigo Orellana.[307]

It was then that Pacheco arrived in Rome. Once there, Fray Pedro delivered two memorials to different officials hoping they would pass them on to Pope Pius VII. The friar described the religious condition of Río de la Plata.[308] The writings of Orellana and Pacheco were probably the first reports about Río de la Plata directly read by a Pope.

Pacheco's second memorial reached Rafael Mazio, the Secretary of the Consistorial Congregation. His report, together with Orellana's, was aimed at showing the alarming situation in the region which described the "miserable state of those churches".[309]

Pacheco requested "an appointment of an apostolic Vicar in Río de la Plata vested

[305] Jean Baptiste Duroselle, *Europa, de 1815 a nuestros días. Vida política y relaciones internacionales*. Barcelona, Labor, 1991, 12-21.
[306] Fray Francisco Ferreyra de la Cruz entered the Franciscan order in 1802 and Francisco Álvarez in 1809. Both of them were Creoles. AHPBA, 1810, 7.5.12.23. To become a secular, the candidate should go through a series of steps. First he should have the agreement of the bishop and then, he had to demonstrate that his income was enough to support himself. See Valentina Ayrolo, "La estela de la ley de Obispados de 1813 en la administración diocesana". *Anuario de Historia Argentina Fernando Barba*, 13 (2013) and Rómulo Carbia, *La Revolución de Mayo y la Iglesia*
[307] Andrés Bello wrote the description of Caracas. Pedro de Leturia, Giovanni Muzi, and Miguel Batllori, *La primera misión pontificia a Hispanoamérica, 1823-1825.* Roma: Biblioteca Apostólica Vaticana, 1963.
[308] Avelino Gómez Ferreyra, *Pedro el Americano*, 24-25.
[309] "Memorial de Fray Pedro Pacheco a Monseñor Mazio", 2 de abril de 1822 en Pedro Leturia, *La primera misión pontificia a Hispanoamérica* 12-17. Pacheco llamaba a Orellana "amicísimo mío".

with an archbishop's honor and divinity".[310] He also requested that Apostolic Visitors personally visit the Franciscan Order. Lastly, he assisted for the validation of "Chapters that had been celebrated with substantial defects".[311]

In the following weeks, several Spanish American regulars tried to contact Rome. From Chile, the Dominic Fray Ramón Arce arrived in Europe with special powers from Santiago. Arce was followed by Presbyter José Ignacio Cienfuegos, whom O'Higgins had named Extraordinary Envoy of the Republic of Chile for the Holy See.[312] They sent reports from their bishoprics to the Holy See. Seculars and regulars from different regions were united by a common cause.

The two memorials by Pacheco together with the reports of Arce and Cienfuegos, plus those sent by the bishops from the Americas to Rome formed a general vision of the situation that would lead to the official approval of the famous appointment of Monsignor Muzi to Chile.[313]

Pacheco failed obtaining an official envoy from Rome coming to the Río de la Plata. Muzi passed through Río de la Plata almost unnoticed. However, Pacheco did establish the first bridge between Rome and the independent Church of Río de la Plata, and thus opened the road for others.

In an atmosphere of liberal ideas, the Porteño government started thinking about how they would reorganize the Catholic orders. In 1822, Bernardino Rivadavia --a minister under Governor of Buenos Aires Martín Rodríguez-- promulgated a law for the reform of the religious orders of the province. The Reform was issued ignoring Rome's

[310] *Ibidem*, 13.
[311] *Ibidem*, 14.
[312] Ricardo Montaner y Bello, *Historia diplomática de la independencia de Chile*. Santiago, Andrés Bello, 1961, 157-164.
[313] Avelino Gómez Ferreyra, *Pedro el Americano*, 29-30.

authority.[314]

The new law did not recognize the provincial's authority. Instead it placed regular priests under government protection and under ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It also established a minimum age of 25 to take vows and forced each convent to house no more than 30 individuals.[315]

Although the jurisdiction of Córdoba was outside the application of the reform, it indirectly affected the Franciscans. In 1823, the government of Cuyo issued a Reform similar to the one instituted in the Province of Buenos Aires, seriously limiting the autonomy of the regular clergy.

Faced with the reform from Cuyo which was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Córdoba, García could only submit. One year after Pacheco had returned from Rome, the situation was more serious than in previous decades. Pacheco had hoped that the situation would improve when he went to Rome. After that failure the only option for García was to accept. There was no more room for negotiation.

At the same time, the belief that traditional ideas were compatible with revolutionary ones started to fade. The liberal ideas of French and Anglo-Saxon philosophers were now available and directly read.[316] The thought that these ideas could coexist changed from compatible to antagonistic. The gap between traditional and liberal ideas was wide enough that it did not allow any confusion. This gap led only to confrontations.

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[314] The literature on Rivadavia's ecclesiastical reform is abundant. Among others, Nancy Calvo, "Cuando se trata de la civilización del clero. Principios y motivaciones del debate sobre la reforma eclesiástica porteña", *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana Dr. Emilio Ravignani*, 24 (2001), 65-87; Roberto Di Stefano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia argentina*, 158-175 and Miranda Lida, "Fragmentación política y fragmentación eclesiástica. La Revolución de independencia y las Iglesias rioplatenses (1810-1830). *Revista de Indias*, 64:231 (2004): 383-404.
[315] AAC, Legajo 3, Document 14.
[316] Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos*, 226-269.

The existence of these two antagonistic worldviews acquired an increasingly regional character. The tithe, for example, was abolished in Buenos Aires in 1821 but continued in Córdoba up to 1854.[317] In Córdoba, the reforms of Buenos Aires were not replicated. The reform of the regulars never took place in the interior province although it created deep anxiety. Córdoba's political differentiation was parallel to its religious one.

Franciscans were deeply affected by this polarization. Some friars, who supported revolutionary governments in the 1810s, opposed them by the 1820s. For example, Cayetano Rodríguez, speaker of the *Asamblea del año 13*, returned to his religious responsibilities in Buenos Aires. When Rivadavia's reform was published, Rodríguez founded the opposition journal *El oficial del día* which was opposed to the new airs. Fray Cayetano started a controversy between those who defended old ecclesiastic prerogatives and those who defended the reform. That controversy lasted throughout the decade.[318]

In the antipodes, inside the Catholic Church, several voices favored the religious reformist spirit of the 1820s. The head of that group was Deán Funes, who supported the Rivadavian ecclesiastic reform through his writing in different newspapers.[319]

Religious tolerance was a controversial issue in Spanish America since Independence. Having an economic model depended on opening towards the exterior, new nations could not avoid welcoming merchants and European immigrants who professed other religions. The discussion of this issue generated strong disputes.[320] New

[317] Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República*, 125.
[318] Ideas in favor of the reform were divulged by *El Centinela* ,written by Florencio y Juan Cruz Varela. Néstor Auza, "Periodismo, polemistas y apologetas en la Argentina del siglo XIX". Rodriguez died shortly after, in January 1823 in the Franciscan Convent of Buenos Aires, at the age of 62. Celina Lértora Mendoza, *La enseñanza de la filosofía en tiempos de la colonia*, 208-209.
[319] Newspapers like the *Argos de Buenos Aires* (1821-1825), *El Centinela* (1822-1823) and *La Abeja Argentina* (1822-1823). Josep Ignasi Saranyana and Carmen José Alejos Grau, *Teología en América Latina,* 210-211.
[320] In a region where once indigenous religions were stifled, people were not used to the coexistence of

nations, with weak stable forms of organization, discovered that religious tolerance was a potential threat to social cohesion.

The debate started in the 1810's and continued throughout the continent for half a century. During the first decades of this polemic, far from consolidating the model of free exchange of ideas, people defended their one's own truth and attacked others' mistakes.[321]

In the Río de la Plata, the *Asamblea* of 1813 had already proposed that no man should be pursued due to his private opinions on religion. Other mentions to tolerance were repeated in the 1816 Congress in Tucumán. In 1819, it was acknowledged that no foreigner should be disturbed for religious matters, as long as it was limited to private confession.[322]

Funes was one of the first ideologists who raised the question of tolerance in Spanish America.[323] In 1822, he translated an essay on individual guarantees from the French which pointed out the need for a policy of religious tolerance. In some of his notes he wrote that "ancient times agree that faith should be free and voluntary".[324] Three years later, he resumed the question in other of his writings.[325] With a visible immigration in

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different religions. See Roberto Di Stefano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia argentina.*

[321] There was still a long way to a mature conception of religious tolerance as an individual right. For a discussion on this issue, see José Ignacio Saranyana and Carmen José Alejos-Grau, *Teología en América Latina*, 53.

[322] Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista".

[323] There are several studies on Deán Funes ideas about religious tolerance. Among the classics, we can mention Américo A. Tonda, "El Deán Funes y la tolerancia de cultos," in *Archivum, Junta de Historia Eclesiástica Argentina*, 1-2, 1943; and, from the same author, *El pensamiento teológico del Deán Funes*, Santa Fe, Universidad Nacional del Litoral, 1984, volume 2, 143-188. Guillermo Furlong, *Bio-biografía del deán Funes*. Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1939. More recently, Valentina Ayrolo, "Funes y su discurso de 1821," *Estudios, Revista del Centro de Estudios Avanzados*, 11-12 (1999): 199-212 and Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista".

[324] Pierre Danou, *Ensayo sobre las garantías individuales que reclama el estado actual de la sociedad*. Translated from French to Spanish by Deán Funes. Buenos Aires: Imprenta de la Independencia, 1822.

[325] "Examen crítico de los Discursos sobre una Constitución religiosa". Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista," 210.

Buenos Aires, Funes appealed to natural right in contemplating the possibility of non catholic minority living together in a catholic country.[326]

Rioplatense elites were fully informed about the challenging new concepts of state power and citizens' rights emanating from Europe and the United States. Based on that knowledge, two factions from the elite struggled for the hearts and minds of people caught between traditional and innovative views.

The control that the Church exerted over religious institutions threatened freedom of thought. The opposition of Church to religious tolerance prevented non-catholic European immigration of people whose skill and capital were urgently needed to construct a modern economy.

In order to oppose the liberal attempts to undermine their power and limit their privileges, the Church recruited several allies. It could mobilize the urban classes against religious tolerance. They also counted with the support of the military and of the upper classes that saw the power of clergy as an indispensable tool of social control.[327] The clergy were the first to oppose liberal ideas and the Córdoba region would emerge as a leader of this movement.

Finally, the increasing presence of English interests in the Rio de la Plata agitated the traditional Catholic uniformity in the region. In 1825, the *Asamblea de las Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata* signed a treaty with England which authorized British subjects to practice their religion at home or in their own churches.

As a result of the treaty of religious tolerance, the Buenos Aires newspapers that supported the government published favorable viewpoints on the issue. Funes and his

[326] Josep Ignasi Saranyana and Carmen José Alejos Grau, *Teología en América Latina,* 210-211.
[327] See Frank Safford, "Política, ideología y sociedad." En Leslie Bethell, ed., *Historia de América Latina*, Barcelona, Crítica, 1991, v. 6, 42-104.

group began to publish several journals supporting the idea of tolerance and proposing a renewal of the Catholic Church.[328] By the 1820s, they produced an immediate response in several Córdoba papers creating the first press debate that went across provincial boundaries.

The 1820s Córdoba's and Buenos Aires' debate on religion went much further than the polemic on liberty of conscience. Through the debate on religion, their presses discussed several issues that would take decades to solve: the applicability of European ideas in Latin America, the colonial legacy, and the place of Church in society. Córdoba's elite took advantage of this context to reinforce its position as the alternative to the Buenos Aires socio economic model.

Although the question of tolerance was being debated in Buenos Aires, the Congress that met in 1824 focused on how to organize the provinces after the fractured of regional unity that had resulted from the battle of Cepeda. Representatives from Córdoba, acting under orders from Governor Bustos, proposed the establishment of a federal system. Nevertheless, because of the advances on liberal legislation experienced in Buenos Aires, Mendoza and San Juan, and their loyalty to Unitarian government, Córdoba became into the voice of federalism and religion.[329]

A year before, in 1823, a second printing press arrived in Córdoba. It was placed in the University in a workshop previously occupied by the first Jesuit printing press. The printer press was in the hands of a clergyman, Presbyter José María Bedoya until 1825.[330]

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[328] In addition to the newspapers written by Funes, Néstor Auza found *La crónica argentina* (1816-17) and *El Censor* (1817), by Vicente Pazos Silva; *El independiente*, by Pedro José Agrelo and *El patriota* (1821), by Pedro Feliciano Cavia. Néstor Auza, "Periodismo, polemistas y apologetas en la Argentina del siglo XIX."
[329] Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica".
[330] *Ibidem*, 20.

The presence of this press produced a frenzied rhythm of printing and explains the number of printed papers circulating in the province during the first half of the nineteenth century. Federalism and religion were the major topics discussed in print. On several occasions, papers that were rejected by the state-owned printing houses in Buenos Aires found a publisher at the University of Córdoba.[331] From then on, especially in the period between 1823 and 1826, Córdoba's newspapers engaged in a discussion on religious matters with Buenos Aires. (See Table 5.1).

TABLE 5.1. NEWSPAPERS. CÓRDOBA (1823-1829)

Period	Newspaper	Editor	Answer to:
1823-24	El Investigador	Hipólito Soler and.Estalislao Learte.	*El Republicano* (BA)
1823-24	El Montonero	Juan Antonio Saracha	
1824	*Exequias al Montonero de Córdoba*		
1824	*El Filantrópico*	Malde, Sierra y Francisco Bustos.	
1824	*El Teofilantrópico o El Amigo de Dios*	José María Bedoya and Father Castañeda	
1824	*El Observador Eclesiástico*	P.I de Castro Barros	*El Centinela* (BA), *Argos* (BA)
1825	*El Intolerante*	José Saturnino de Allende	*El Nacional* (BA)
1825	*El Desengañador*	Father Castañeda	
1825	*El Imparcial*	P.I de Castro Barros	
1825	*El Grito de un Solitaro*	Bernabé Aguilar	*El Nacional* (BA), *Eco Andes (*M*)*
1825-26	*El Cristiano Viejo*	Juan Justo Rodríguez.	*El Nacional (*BA*), El Piloto (*BA*)*
1826	*El terno del Sud*	Eugenio Portillo	
1826	*El Federal*		
1826	*Congreso Argentino*		
1826	*La Verdad sin Rodeos*	Ramón Beaudot and.P.I de Castro Barros	*El Investigador (*BA*)*
1826	*El consejero argentine*	Francisco Ignacio Bustos and Serrano	*El Nacional (*BA*)*
1826	*El Cordobés*		
1827	*De la necesidad virtud*	Gavino Blanco	
1827	*El Federal sin rodeos*		
1829 -30	*Córdoba Libre*	J. M.a Bedoya y Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield	
1829	*El Republicano*	José María Cires	
1829	*La Aurora Nacional*	J. M. Bedoya and Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield	
1829-30	*El Argentino*	Elias Bedoya and José Rojo	
1829	*El Monitor de la Campaña*	Estanislao Learte	

BA: Buenos Aires; M: Mendoza
Source: Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica" and Antonio Zinny, *Efemiridografía argireparquiótica.*

Córdoba's elite edited their own newspapers and worked to establish multiple relations with the papers in Buenos Aires. An environment of debate was born and a

[331] Antonio Zinny, *Efemiridografía argireparquiótica o sea de las Provincias Argentinas*, Buenos Aires, 1868.

supra-provincial identity was strengthened.[332] Little by little, a regional space of debate was being formed.[333] Nonetheless, Buenos Aires set the agenda, and the issues to be discussed in the province.[334]

The first newspapers, though trying to control the circulation of ideas, ended up, eventually undermining the principles on which the *Ancien* Regime was founded.[335] For example, when Córdoba's conservative newspapers reacted to Buenos Aires' laws on religious tolerance, without realizing, they were informing the public about tolerance, and giving birth to public opinion.

A great number of Cordoba's responses to *Porteño* opinions, were the work of the rector of the University, Pedro Ignacio de Castro Barros. Castro Barros was born in La Rioja, in 1777. He was a member of the *Asamblea* in 1813 and of the Congress, in 1816. In 1822, he was named rector of the university.[336] Together with Pacheco, Castro Barros was trying to draw up a concordat with Rome.[337]

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[332] Eugenia Molina, "Opinión pública y libertad de imprenta durante los años de consolidación de las estructuras provinciales y el Congreso de 1824. Entre la libertad, la tolerancia y la censura". In *Revista de Historia del Derecho*, 33, 2005, 173-217.

[333] Joelle Chassin in her analysis of *El Mercurio* and of *El satélite* finds a situation similar in Peru to that of the Rio de la Plata where a space gradually intellectual homogenate was built. Joëlle Chassin, "Lima, sus élites y la opinión durante los últimos tiempos de la colonia", in François-Xavier Guerra and Annick Lempérière (eds.), *Los espacios públicos en Iberoamérica, Ambigüedades y problemas, Siglos XVIII-XIX.* México: FCE, 1998.

[334] This process could be included into the agenda-setting theory that describes the "ability to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda." The concept of agenda setting was issued by McCombs and Shaw in the early 1970s. M McCombs, M and D. Shaw, "The agenda-setting function of mass media". *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2), 1972.

[335] Annick Lempériére, "Los hombres de letras hispanoamericanos y el proceso de secularización, 1800-1850" in Jorge Myers and Carlos Altamirano, *Historia de los intelectuales en América Latina,* 242-265.

[336] Castro Baroos lived in Uruguay since 1833 and then in Chile, where he died in 1849. See Guillermo Furlong, *Castro Barros. Su actuación.* Buenos Aires: Academia del Plata, 1961; Américo A. Tonda, *Castro Barros. Sus ideas, Academia del Plata*, Buenos Aires, 1961 and Alberto Caturelli, *Historia de la filosofía en Córdoba, 1600-2000.* Buenos Aires: Universidad del Salvador, 2001, 98-108. Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista", 211. See also Ayrolo who argues that Castro Barros balanced new and old ideas seeking to reunite fatherhood and Catholicism. Valentina Ayrolo, "Pedro Ignacio de Castro Barros. Publicista de Dios y de la Patria". En Klaus Gallo, Nancy Calvo and Roberto Di Stefano (ed.) *Los curas de la revolución.* Buenos Aires: Emece, 2002, 265-278.

[337] Miranda Lida, "Fragmentación política y fragmentación eclesiástica", footnote 38.

Castro Barros felt he had to defend himself from the critics of the Porteño press. With this in mind, he edited a pastoral written by the Pope's envoy, Juan Muzi, trying to oppose the liberal Buenos Aires.[338]

Castro Barros republished the Dominican Fray Tadeo Silva's *El Observador Eclesiástico de Chile.* In this newspaper, ostensibly about Muzi's travel, Silva established a solid defense of regular orders, highlighting their contribution to education.[339] As a result, Silva was involved in many polemics with liberal thinkers.[340] He wrote under the pseudonym "Bitter Philosopher" an alias taken from Fray Francisco Alvarado, an antiliberal Spanish philosopher of the time.[341]

Conservatism entered the arena of debate using the same tools as its opponent: the press. It used modern means with reactionary aims. And, as the liberals, conservatism also used models from Europe. The traditional Spanish doctrine became a referent for the Catholic ideology of the 1820's in Chile and Córdoba. Conservative networks crossed oceans and mountains.

Castro Barros published the Chilean newspaper and consolidated a platform that was different from the Porteño reformers and their supporting clergy.[342] Castro Barros

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[338] Celina Lértora, "Las ideas políticas del clero independentista". *Pastoral del Excelentísimo e Ilustrísimo Sr. D. Juan Muzi, Vicario Apostólico en el Estado de Chile*, reimpreso en Córdoba a solicitud y expensas del doctor D. D. P. I. C., Imprenta de la Universidad, 1824 and *Carta apologética del Ilustrísimo y Reverendísimo Señor D. Juan Muzi por la gracia de Dios y de la Santa Sede, Arzobispo filipense Vicario Apostólico en su egreso del Estado de Chile*, Córdoba, Imprenta de la universidad, 1825, with many quotes from Castro, althought his name never appears.

[339] "El Observador Eclesiástico" in Santiago Feliú Cruz, *Colección de Antiguos Periódicos Chilenos.* Santiago: Ediciones de la Biblioteca Nacional, 1963, 270-372. In issue 10, the newspaper began a study on the usefulness of regular clergy. *Ibidem*, p. 297-298.

[340] Francisco Betancourt Castillo, "Ilustración, Monaquismo y pensamiento político durante la Independencia. Fray Tadeo Silva, polemista dominico". In Eugenio Torres Torres (ed.), *Los dominicos insurgentes y realistas, de México al Río de la Plata*, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2011, 547-579.

[341] Ver Fray José Tadeo Silva Lazo, O. P., "Aviso que da al pueblo de Chile un filósofo rancio", en Guillermo Feliú Cruz, *Colección de antiguos periódicos chilenos*, Santiago, Ediciones de la Biblioteca nacional, 1963, p. 438-454.

[342] *Observador Eclesiástico*, Reprinted in Córdoba by D. Pedro Ignacio de Castro. Imprenta de la

also criticized the new ideas emanating from the recently opened University of Buenos Aires: "if we look at the university we will notice that clergyman Sans and clergyman Agüero are teaching Lutheranism".[343] In 1825, opposed to the reform and, above all, to the religious tolerance, Castro Barros reedited another Chilean newspaper, *El Pensador Político Religioso de Chile*.[344]

Another example of conservative networks is *El Cristiano Viejo.* This newspaper attacked *El Nacional* and devoted several numbers to the question of religious tolerance.[345] The publishers, the Rodriguez brothers, supported the concept of "passive reason": "God has imprinted in the soul of any rational being a determined amount of general principles that theologists called *passive reason*".[346] Passive reason was a principle that believed that, prior to the formation of any society, God imbued men with religion. It was an idea taken from Rafael de Vélez, one of the principal ideologists of the Spanish restoration. His work *Preservativo contra la irreligión* was an editorial success and was published all throughout the old Spanish empire, including Europe, America and

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Universidad, 1824, 295-296.

[343] *Ibidem.*

[344] *El Pensador Político Religioso de Chile*. Reimpreso en Córdoba con notas a solicitud del Doctor en Sagrada Teología y Bachiller en Jurisprudencia Don Pedro Ignacio de Castro Barros..., Imprenta de la Universidad, 1825. Dominican Fray Justo Pastor Donoso edited originally the newspaper, on the other side of the Andes. Antonio Zinny, *Efemiridografía argireparquiótica*, 142-5. More than 100 newspapers were printed in Chile between 1823 and 1830. See Simon Collier and William Sater, *Historia de Chile 1808-1994*. Madrid: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 53.

[345] *El Nacional* (1824-1826) was a *Porteño* journal that supported the Unitarian government. Its editors were, among others, Ignacio Núñez, Julian S. Agüero, Valentín Alsina and Pedro Cavia. It was printed by the Imprenta de la Independencia. It was attacked by el *Intolerable*, el *Cristiano Viejo* and *El Grito de un Solitario*, all from Córdoba. Miguel Navarro Viola and Vicente Gregorio Quesada, *Revista de Buenos Aires: historia americana, literatura y derecho*, 45-48, 1867, 260-261.

[346] *El Cristiano Viejo número 2 contesta al periódico Nacional de Buenos Aires sobre la tolerancia de culto.* Córdoba, Imprenta de la Universidad, 17 de mayo de 1825, 12. *El Cristiano Viejo* was written by Juan Justo and Victorino Rodríguez, sons of an elite family of Córdoba related to the Allendes. They were members of the antijesuita faction, a group that sought to erase from Córdoba the strokes of the Jesuit past. Neither Justo nor Rodríguez ever reached an important position. *El Cristiano Viejo* advocates strict adherence to Roman Catholicism and total rejection of freedom of religion. Valentina Ayrolo, *Funcionarios de Dios y de la República*, 179-181.

the Philippines.[347]

If someone benefitted from the printing boom of the 1820s, it was Fray Francisco de Paula Castañeda. While Franciscans such as Pantaleón García followed the winds of changes, Castañeda took an opposite path. Fray Francisco was, by far, the most active press editor of his time. He published up to eight journals, two of them in Córdoba, during the 1820s.

A wayward spirit, detached from convent discipline, Castañeda went from city to city searching for printing presses that could make his writings public. He received continuous censorship from the government of Buenos Aires and was exiled to Catamarca, Kaquel Huincul, Montevideo and Santa Fe.[348]

His personality made him defiant and creative. Castañeda wrote articles specially aimed to women, accentuating feminine virtue, and the role of women in religion and regional identity. To subscribe to *El Desengañador* –one of his journals--, the reader had to be a "mother".[349] Castañeda used in his famous paper *Doña María Retazos*, the alias Doña María. Women were important to Fray Francisco in two different ways: they were crucial in keeping religion alive and they were also the chosen audience of his articles. The liberal authorities of Buenos Aires excluded women from politics while

[347] Manuel José Anguita Tellez was a Spanish clergyman who wrote under the alias of Rafael de Vélez. Living in the Capuchin Convent of Córdoba, Spain, he sought shelter in Cádiz by cause of the war. While there, he wrote *Preservativo contra la irreligión*. Fray Rafael Vélez, *Preservativo contra la Irreligión, o los planes de la Filosofía contra la Religión y el Estado, realizados por la Francia para subyugar la Europa, seguidos por Napoleón en la conquista de España, y dados a luz por algunos de nuestros sabios en perjuicio de nuestra patria.* Madrid: Imprenta de Repullés, 1813. There were ten reprints of the book, all made in cities under Spanish rule: Cádiz, 1812; Palma, 1812; Granada, 1813; La Habana, 1813; Madrid, 1813; Manila, 1813; México, 1813; Santiago, 1813; Valencia; 1813; Méjico 1814. *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americana*, Madrid, Espasa,1929, tomo 67, 702-704.

[348] Néstor Auza, *Doña María Retazos*, 9-39.

[349] All the data about newspapers in Biblioteca Dardo Rocha Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Colección Especial, "Periódicos 1820/1829."

paradoxically conservative priests included them in the public sphere.[350]

FIGURE 5.1: THE *PORTEÑO* REFORMS SEEN BY THE *DESENGAÑADOR*.

Source: *Desengañador Gauchi-Politico* 5, 1822.

During the 1820s, priests such as Pacheco, Rodríguez, Castañeda and Castro Barros revitalized Catholicism. And in July 1825, an association with political ends and modern characteristics emerged.[351] Fifteen clergymen and twenty one seculars formed an association convened by *El Intolerante*. Eight members of the society were women.[352]

Its leader, José Saturnino Allende, made no reference to a discussion of principles

[350] It is interesting to mention that on eighteenth-century Europe, women were also a large part of the reading public but were as well excluded from the realm of political participation. In the long run, however, their entry in the literary public sphere gave them the means of challenging the prevailing ideals of femininity. See James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, particularly chapter 4.
[351] *El Intolerante* 3, Córdoba, Imprenta de la Universidad, 5 de julio de 1825, 35. I am thankful to Valentina Ayrolo for calling my attention to this information. See Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica", 16-18.
[352] *El Intolerante* 3 and 4, Córdoba, Imprenta de la Universidad, 5 de julio de 1825 and 12 de julio de 1825.

but rather spoke of the promotion, distribution and defense of religious values much resembling a new "missionary crusade".[353] Nevertheless, this creation of the association reflects knowledge of the new forms of sociability the western world was experiencing. The society foreshadowed the beginning of the conservative parties. Although the society did not survive beyond August 1825, it offered a preview of what would come, by suggesting a modern struggle against modernity.[354]

Even with limited social penetration, in a disarticulated, inorganic and uneven form, the 1820s witnessed novel practices by Catholic groups' political debate of ideas, the use of the press and associative experiences. In a certain sense, these groups became modern.

Did the efforts of these men and women have any real impact on Cordoba's society? Did their ideas ever become public?

According to Habermas, two different phenomena help to form the public sphere. On one hand, the extension of the press contributed to form and promote a different posture in the face of the events and, on the other hand, the social milieu, such as cafes or salons, where articles that had appeared in the press were debated and reinforced.[355] These two environments existed in Córdoba in the 1820s but according to one scholar both the press and new types of social milieu were fostered from above. Popular sectors barely participated in the debates.[356]

The high level of illiteracy and outdated technology that limited the capacity of distribution impeded the development of a public sphere as the one developed in

[353] Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica", 16-18.
[354] The last data about the society appeared in *El Intolerante* 3, 47.
[355] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation Of The Public Sphere*.
[356] Valentina Ayrolo, "Noticias sobre la opinión y la prensa periódica."

countries where a network of institutions and practices were already firmly consolidated.[357]

Both in Córdoba and in Buenos Aires, the distribution of newspapers was not massive and reached only the elite. The journal *El Tribuno* of Buenos Aires, written by Feliciano de Cavia, had 83 subscribers and published 300 copies, twice a week, in 1826. It later reached 306 copies and 133 subscribers including 100 from the government; 25 from the *Cabildo* and 5 from the Court of Appeals.[358] From these figures, we could conclude that print media had minimal impact. However, there were multiple modes of reading even among illiterates.[359] For example, the religious society led by Allende was a perfect reading space for the illiterate.

With Rivadavia's reforms in Buenos Aires, the Franciscans from Córdoba gained control over all actions of the Order in Río de la Plata. In 1825, the new provincial Chapter was held in that city, and from then almost all the chapters would be held there.[360]

Another issue of the 1820s was the situation in the convent of Montevideo, still under the leadership of the Franciscan Province of Asunción. The city was under Brazil's control, during the conflict between that country and the *Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata*.[361] Elections were suspended indefinitely in the Franciscan Convent of San

[357] Jorge Myers, "Las paradojas de la opinión. El discurso político rivadaviano y sus dos polos: el "gobierno de las luces", in Hilda Sábato and Alberto Lettieri (eds.), *La vida política en la Argentina del siglo XIX. Armas, votos y voces*, Buenos Aires, FCE., 2003, 75-95.
[358] Antonio Zinny, *Efemiridografía argireparquiótica*, 297-298.
[359] Iona Macintyre, *Women and Print Culture in Post-Independence Buenos Aires*. Woodridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2010.
[360] The Chapter of 1825 was in April in the Convent of Córdoba. Córdoba 18.4.1825. "Al Gobernador del Provincial Tarriba". AHCba. Caja 88. Carpeta 1. Legajo 4.
[361] It was the conflict between the Empire of Brazil and the United Provinces of Río de la Plata, known as War with Brazil (1825-1828) in the latter region. Noemí Goldman, "Los orígenes del federalismo rioplatense (1820-1831)" in Noemí Goldman (ed.), *Revolución, República, Confederación (1806-1852), Nueva Historia Argentina*, III. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, 1995, 103-124.

Bernardo in Montevideo, but the Franciscans of Córdoba were asked to provide spiritual assistance to the *Porteño* army anyway.

First the governor and then the bishop of Córdoba, asked Provincial Tarriba to send Fray Martín Esperati to Banda Oriental.[362] Tarriba responded that this priest had serious problems to face a war situation as "he is affected by fits of hysteria which make him so pusillanimous that he cannot help any dying person.[363]" Then, the Provincial alluded to the situation that seemed generalized in the region:

> "Last, I have to add to Your Highness that there is such *scarcity of priests* and so many the needs inside and outside the convent, that they cannot even fulfill their duties: that is why, even if there were not said motifs, it would be almost impossible that the convent could help either with this priest or any other"[364]

Despite Tarriba's statement, Esperati was sent as chaplain to Banda Oriental in October 1825.[365] The shortage of Franciscans was the result of a steep decrease in vocations that had started two decades before.

Guardians of the convents of Córdoba frequently complained about the disobedience and the scarcity of individuals in the convents.[366] This situation was not new, but it became critical in the 1820s. The post-colonial state began to consider Franciscan priests as agents that could be used to its own advantage.[367] The new places for the Cordoban Franciscans were the rural churches. In the 1820s, various dispositions of the government of Córdoba in the 1820s ordered Franciscan Superiors to send priests

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[362] Martín Esperati was Creole. He entered the Order in 1798. He was a member of the *Definitorio* in Jujuy in 1817. AHPBA, (1810) 7.5.12.23; (1817) 7.2.105.12.
[363] "El Obispo solicita al Provincial envié a Esperati a la Banda Oriental". AHCba. Caja 88. Carpeta 1. Legajo 4.
[364] *Ibidem*. The italics are mine.
[365] *Ibidem*.
[366] AAC, Legajo 3, "Reclamo del Padre José Domínguez Ruiz", 1819; "Se niega permiso para franquear fuera de los conventos a los franciscanos", 1827 and "El Cura de V. Del Rosario pide un coadjutor", 1827".
[367] See María Elena Barral, *De sotanas por la Pampa*, 29-48. Ya los Borbones habían comenzado a considerar la "utilidad" del clero para el ejercicio de su poder. See Roberto Di Stéfano, *El púlpito y la plaza*, 88.

to those rural churches.[368]

The case of Fray Mariano Suarez y Polanco is further evidence that society also suffered the scarcity of clergy. In November 1819, Polanco had been suspected of murdering one of the Guardians of a convent in Rio de la Plata. As of January 1820, Polanco requested that the conditions of his reclusion that had him "strictly confined" were changed, though paradoxically, he was allowed to publish an article in the newspaper *El Americano.*[369]

As a consequence to this situation, Polanco was banished to the rural area of Córdoba and was prohibited from leaving the chapel that sheltered him. Nevertheless in 1828, because "the neighbors asked so", the priest of the Chañar Chapel, Tomás de Irigoyen, requested that governor Bustos allow the Franciscan to have missions in the rural areas.[370] The Franciscans needed all his men to do their duty, even those who had problems with justice. The request was granted and finally Polanco left his reclusion.[371]

The civil authorities controlled the Franciscans. The Governor of Córdoba sent the *Lector Jubilado* Fray Fernando Braco to the rural area of the province in 1823. Braco was a priest highly esteemed by the order. The Provincial Minister of the Order, Fray Dionisio Tarriba, asked Governor Bustos to free him from the duties in the countryside several

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[368] AAC, Legajo 3, "Franqueo del religioso Fray Gregorio Abrego", 1828. Paradoxically this was the original activity of the Order, at least, until the end of sixteenth century. See Francisco Morales, "Mexican Society and the Franciscan Order", 326.

[369] *El Americano* 42, 5, 14 de enero de 1820. Buenos Aires, Imprenta de Álvarez, 5. In another article of the same newspaper, Manuel de Arroyo, the Alcalde who put Polanco in prison, replied to the accusations of despot that he uttered the friar. *El Americano* 44, 5, 28 de enero de 1820. Buenos Aires, Imprenta de Álvarez, 1-5. *El Americano* was printed between April 1819 and February 1820. It had 46 issues and was written by Pedro Feliciano Cavia and Santiago Vázquez. It had Unitarian ideas. Antonio Zinny, *Efemiridografía argireparquiótica*, 6-7.

[370] "Mro Tomas de Echegoyen para Exmo Sor Dn Fran Bautista Bustos. Chanar y Agosto 27 de 1828". AHPCba. Gobierno. Tomo 100. Legajo 5. Folio 81.

[371] Some years later, he proved that he got on well with neighbors. In October 1832, he was accused of having a relationship with a woman See Mónica Ghirardi and Nora Siegrist , *Amores sacrílegos. Amancebamientos de clérigos en las diócesis del Tucumán y Buenos Aires. Siglos XVIII – XIX*, Buenos Aires, UNC, 2012.

times.[372] In 1825, the Governor finally accepted and Tarriba and the Secretary of the Province Fray Antonio Campana, promptly send another Franciscan to replace Braco.[373]

Towards the end of 1820s, politics penetrated the convents. National unity crumbled under the weight of a continuous round of civil wars, rebellions and coups. The Unitarian—Federal struggle brought perennial instability while caudillos fought for power. In December 1828, the Unitarian Juan Lavalle seized and executed the Governor of Buenos Aires, Manuel Dorrego. Lavalle appointed José María Paz, recently returned from Brazil as Minister of War. But Paz separated from Lavalle and joined the *Unitarios* into attacking Córdoba's Governor Bustos, the leader of the *Federales* in the countryside.[374]

With Dorrego gone, Juan Manuel de Rosas took over the vacant Federal leadership and rebelled against the Unitarians. Rosas had built a power base with his post of commandant general of the rural militias of the province of Buenos Aires, which increased his influence and power.[375] In April 1829, Rosas defeated Lavalle and in December, the House of Representatives of Buenos Aires elected Rosas governor and granted him extraordinary powers. This act marked the beginning of a regime that would last, with a brief interruption, until 1852.

Meanwhile, in Córdoba, Paz defeated Bustos in April, 1829 and became the new governor. In the meantime, Bustos requested help from Facundo Quiroga who was defeated by Paz.

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[372] By the end of the eighteenth century, his courses on logic and ethics were published Fernando Braco, *Curso de Ética. Segunda parte del curso de Filosofía-1795*. Buenos Aires, Fepai, 1995.
[373] AHCba. Caja 88. Carpeta 1. Legajo 4. 1825.
[374] José María Paz, *Memorias póstumas*. Buenos Aires, Emecé, 2000.
[375] John Lynch, *Argentine Caudillo: Juan Manuel de Rosas*. Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 2001, 12-26.

Political circumstances in Córdoba brought turmoil among Franciscans. Times were changing rapidly and priests could not avoid choosing one side or the other. In July 1829, Castro Barros, serving as ecclesiastic vicar of the government of Paz, stripped the Franciscan Alejo Ferreyra of his privileges so that he could appear before the court "due to his anti-politic behavior in the current circumstances". Paz himself had requested that measure.[376]

Paz continued to be interested in the clergy. In August, he had Castro Barros replacing the teacher Bacilio Cincunegui with the Franciscan Fray Juan Miguel Marco. The reason was the usual: anti-political behavior, in other words the lack of loyalty to the new regime.[377]

Paz, like Bustos, understood that the Franciscans were strong in the rural areas, far from the city, where control was less difficult to exert. Loyal officials and priests were needed in the deep countryside.

TABLE 5.2. ANNUAL INCOME OF THE ORDERS. CÓRDOBA (1829)

Order	Annual Income	Percentage of income of the Order over the total of the Orders
Dominicans	5,010	14.9%
Franciscans	24,942	74.4%
Mercedarians	3,560	10.7%
Total	**33,512**	**100%**

Source: "Estado de las Pías Memorias corrientes de este convento de San Francisco de Córdoba con expresión de sus censatarios, principales, réditos y plazos en que se cumplen". Apcba. Legajo 21. Subsidio Eclesiástico del Clero al Gobierno Civil. 1791-1854. Número 21. Empréstito semestral de conventos y monasterios. De la décima parte de los réditos de sus principales. Junio 6 1829 (Legajo 55 n 23. No 21. Subsidio).

[376] AHCba. Caja 88. Carpeta 1. Legajo 4. 1829.
[377] *Ibidem*.

To get funds to preserve his power, Paz decreed forceful contributions from his Federal enemies. The records of the subsidies that Paz collected, shows the economic power amassed by Franciscans in Córdoba in the late 1820s (See Table 5.2).

In April 1829, the government asked for a loan of two thousand three hundred and eighty five pesos to sustain war against Facundo Quiroga, the caudillo who fought under the banner "Religion or death!" The Convent of San Francisco, like the rest of the regular orders' convents, gave twenty five pesos. In addition, the Syndic of the Convent offered a room's rent.[378]

By the end of the 1820s, and despite all changes, the Franciscan Convent of Córdoba was still a source of funding for the city government. In the same way as other orders, the convent became a creditor to the provincial state which until then, had not found a more solid and constant source of resources to sustain itself.

Final Considerations

Contentious issues on religious tolerance reached Spanish America almost at the same time as revolutions, in particular in the port areas opened to the exchange of goods and ideas. Every port in the Atlantic experienced the same trends. On February 1811, for example, William Burke published an article in the *Gaceta* of Caracas called "Cult Tolerance." The article unleashed the first major polemic in Venezuelan journalism.[379]

[378] AHCba. Caja 88. Carpeta 1. Legajo 4. Número 21. "Empréstito semestral de conventos y monasterios. De la décima parte de los réditos de sus principales. Junio 6, 1829" (Legajo 55 n 23. No 21. Subsidio)
[379] Paulette Silva Beauregard, "Redactores, lectores y opinión pública en Venezuela a fines del período colonial e inicios de la independencia, 1808-1812", in Jorge Myers and Carlos Altamirano (eds.), *Historia de los intelectuales en América Latina I*, 162-163.

Burke was an Irishman who, using Catholicism as a shield, put the question of tolerance on the agenda of the new Venezuelan nation. As with Castañeda in Río de la Plata, Franciscans of Caracas were the first ones to respond. The Seraphic order of Valencia published writings like "*Apología de la intolerancia religiosa*", in a similar tone as the writings by Castañeda. In their role replacing the Jesuits as the intellectual arm of the Church, Franciscans were those most prepared to write and those with access to printing presses.

Rivadavia was a preview of the liberal thought that was coming. Castro Barros was his counterpart for conservatism. Both were defeated in the 1820s because they were never really able to discuss their ideas. The debates on the press were actually expositions of different stands where each of the participants understood they were on the side of truth and the other was on the wrong.

Because of the conservatives' acceptance of a modern weapon such as the press, the field where the game took place stopped being traditional. The debate on religious issues was a loss in itself for traditional sectors. Even discussing religious unanimity had a disrupting effect for social ties.

The similar paths taken in Chile, Venezuela, Peru, Río de la Plata and even Spain were part of general problems in the Spanish World, both in the Americas and Europe, after the fall of the empire. There was a network of ideas not only for the liberal ideology but also for the conservative ideology.

Liberals were trying to separate religion from the civil sphere in Buenos Aires, but the result was the opposite. Pacheco, Rodríguez, Castañeda, Castro Barros and Allende, were clergymen who became politicians to defend their religion. If in the 1810s, they had supported the independent government with sermons; in the next decade they felt

compelled to confront it.

Opposition also acquired regional character. The existence of Cordoba's printing press allowed Governor Bustos to foster, or at least allow, the existence of writings which undermined the dispositions of the *Porteño* government. The interior of the country found in religion a way of counteracting Buenos Aires economic power. Ideological ruptures became regional ruptures.

The Franciscan Order eroded after the 1820s. In the previous decade, Franciscans wrote and delivered most of the important patriotic sermons. In the 1820s, except for the exceptional personality of Fray Castañeda, the Seraphics only wrote a few journals, evidence of the decrease of importance of this sector as the intellectual *avant garde* of the Church.

In the 1810s, liberal advances on legislation were negotiated with the Franciscans. In the next decade, the *Porteño* liberal elite learned that they did not need to negotiate with the Franciscan to institute reforms. In this new situation, the Franciscan Order answered in two ways: integration or resistance.[380]

During the 1820s, new republican leaders started to realize that religion was still one of the main bonds that supported the legitimacy of the state and the order in society. Therefore, they asked the Franciscan authorities to send their friars to the rural areas. To fulfill the governmental requirement, the Guardians needed to send the few individuals they had in the urban convents out to the countryside.

I have mentioned in chapter 4 the profound vocational crisis of the Franciscan

[380] The idea comes from Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration. Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946–1976*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Order between 1810 and 1830. Surprisingly, the tendency changed by 1830.[381] During that decade, there were 22 aspirants to wear a frock, a number that had not been reached in Córdoba since 1750. And, even though, in 1840 that number decreased again, it was not substantial. Sixteen individuals entered the Franciscan Order in that decade.[382] The vocational Franciscan crisis stopped by the end of the 1820s.

The two Franciscan Orders emerged in the 1820s and followed different paths. One was dissolved by the conservative efforts of that time. The other continued the politics of negotiation and survived. The need of post-colonial governments to find loyal officials so strengthen their regime in far away regions revitalized the Franciscan Order.

[381] Barral argues that the increased presence of regulars matched the number of seculars in the early 1820s Buenos Aires. The rural parishes attracted the secular clergy between 1780 and 1810. With the Revolution, new opportunities for professional development discouraged potential candidates to join the secular clergy. María Elena Barral, *De sotanas por la Pampa*, 31.
[382] Archivo del Convento de San Jorge, Córdoba. Informaciones de "genere, vita et moribus" de aspirantes. Cajas 2, 3 y 4.

FINAL THOUGHTS

> "I believe that secularism is not a value acknowledged by the political culture. For some religious figures have been present at the origins of our national history"[383]

By the mid-eighteenth century, information networks and alliances circulating across the Atlantic and connected such distant points as Moquegua, Córdoba or Buenos Aires with the metropolis, became available to the Franciscan Order. Professional positioning and prestige were negotiated in exchange for control of the Chapters. Atlantic social networks were so powerful that they even managed to soften the effect of royal measures favoring Peninsulars. A cunning Creole with good connections could overcome the misfortune of having been born outside Spain and thus rise in the social scale of the Order. In Spain, after the Restoration of Ferdinand VII, Church and King joined forces to rebuild the collective imaginary and the values pertaining to the *Ancien* Regime. From 1814 to 1820, the Spanish clergy carried out a plan to keep traditional order through religion, using sermons and leaflets which praised the King and condemned liberal principles.[384] Liberal thinking was censored in Spain after the 1814 laws. During the rest of the decade, the Peninsular Church controlled thought as well as customs, in order to convey ideas which opposed liberal principles.

In Spanish America, such control never took place, and as a consequence, the supporters of religious thinking had to confront the Liberals and compete with them. In

[383] Juan Cruz Esquivel, "Oficialistas y opositores buscan legitimidad extrapolítica en el campo religioso". *La Nación*, 29 de diciembre de 2013, "Enfoques", 3.

[384] The use of political catechisms was already extended during the first liberal period throughout Spain. The liberals used them to disseminate the new political model; the conservatives, to preserve absolutism. For the Spanish liberal thought of early nineteenth century, see Antonio Moliner, "El antiliberalismo eclesiástico en la primera restauración absolutista (1814-1820)", *Hispania nova*, 3 (2003), 51-74.

this battle of ideas, Peninsular reactionary ideology served as an inspiration and an example for the crusade that the Spanish American defenders of religion would undertake in the next decade. Writings against liberal thought crossed the oceans and the mountains, and connected Santiago, Córdoba, Mendoza, Buenos Aires and Madrid, among other cities.

Amidst the conflict, the defenders of religion made use of an instrument that had always served liberal purposes before: the press. The paradox is that, in order to defend their conservative ideals, traditional actors were the ones to welcome the new cultural forms in Córdoba. These sectors paved the way for changes in society, which in the long run would transform the same ideas they defended. Their acceptance to discuss religion eased the way for the arrival of the modern ideas they rejected.

In turn, this Cordoban opposition to Buenos Aires led to the construction of a new social space and a new discussion forum which transcended provincial cohesion and gravitated towards an interregional, if not a national, identity. Cordoban writers reproduced ideas from Spain or Chile, but they added their own comments, suited to the Buenos Aires-Córdoba axis.

This study of the religiosity of late colonial-post-independence Córdoba redirects the understanding of the development of Argentine Catholicism. The traditional perception of colonial Catholicism as effervescent is grounded in contemporary views that had little basis in historical reality. The most conservative of Catholic sentiments were not a legacy of colonialism but instead were engineered during the republican era offering a new chronology of Latin American Catholicism. Secular modernity created new traditional religiosity, as is evidenced by the religious identities appearing in the 1820s. This study argues that tradition is only created in contrast to the "new" and the

"modern." The most conservative old Catholicism in nineteenth-century Argentina, in fact, has modern roots.

In this struggle, the Franciscans who had strong discourse ability –the Colonial *letrados*—found themselves at a crossroads after the revolution: they had to decide whether to stay under the wing of the State or to embrace professional specialization.[385] Fray Pantaleón García chose the former, and Fray Francisco Castañeda, the latter.

Garcia´s sermons employed an almost medieval argumentation to justify the Revolution, something that was even clearer in Castañeda. If the Revolution had to resort to these priests to convey its message, then we should ask ourselves how this message was interpreted by the audience. The truth is that, especially with Garcia, who wrote pro-monarchy sermons, many priests reinvented themselves through the writing of patriotic sermons. The revolution needed them. Better than anybody else in the region, these priests could communicate effectively in churches and from pulpits. They were among those few intellectuals who had the ability to conceive a coherent discourse at the time. García or Castañeda were the Franciscan uncomfortable partners of the Revolution.

The Revolution created new rules, to which the priests accommodated themselves in a creative way. Pantaleón chose to integrate; Francisco, to resist. His irreverence made him a modern scholar, who, paradoxically, produced a conservative discourse that rejected modernity.[386]

And he was also irreverent because, in a highly innovative move, he integrated women into the public sphere, an idea rejected by the republican discourse. The priest genderized religion in the press. Castañeda understood that women were the appropriate

[385] On the concept of *letrado*, see Ángel Rama, *The Lettered City*.
[386] Rosalía Baltar, "Francisco de Paula Castañeda o breve tratado sobre la irreverencia," *Espéculo*, 34 (2006).

means to deliver the discourse on tradition. He quickly understood that motherhood allowed women to undertake more extreme political action, something which would never be tolerated in men. This is an idea still powerful in today's Argentina.

The accepted historiography maintains that the regular orders declined from the end of the eighteenth century, a decline based on the idea that priests were unable to fulfill either community life or the vow of poverty. While the regulars did not manage to adapt to the cultural and economic changes in society,[387] change outside the convent walls was also replicated inside. The Franciscans were not a homogeneous group. There was dissension among them because they themselves did not trust the characteristic *Ancien* Regime *esprit de corps*. Not everyone was against the reform. They exercised agency in external as well as internal matters.

At the same time, within their role of uncomfortable partners, some Franciscans acted as allies of the centralization undertaken by the Spanish Crown as well as the first independent governments. Indeed, the Franciscans were essential agents in the establishment of modernity in the Río de la Plata region.

Without ignoring social and economic structures, I believe in the central role that politics, and the actions of individuals, play in history. Life stories were the windows to analyze the effect of the Bourbon Reforms at a local level, the impact of the revolution inside and outside the convents, and the ideological transformation, the new attitudes of the Clergy towards the ecclesiastical reforms, and the dense religious networks across the Atlantic in the 1820s.

Why did the government want to make an alliance with the Franciscans rather than with another regular order? The key to the answer lies in three issues: the first and

[387] See Jaime Peire, *El taller de los espejos* and Roberto Di Stéfano, *El púlpito y la plaza.*

most obvious was that, due to the number of its members, the Franciscan Order was by far the most important order in the late Colonial period. The second issue has to do with their rules and their vow of poverty. Since they could not earn their living in traditional ways like the rest of the clergy (through the tithe or the management of ranches), the Franciscans went out to preach in order to earn their living. They knew well how to exert their influence not only on popular sectors, but also on the elite. Historians stress this trait when studying the Jesuits, but they underestimate it when it comes to the Franciscans.

Why did Córdoba's Franciscans take over the University when all other universities in the Spanish territories were either handed over to the secular clergy or just disappeared? What did Córdoba's Franciscans have that other Franciscans elsewhere did not? Córdoba was distant from the centers of Spanish control in 1767. Nonetheless, the Franciscans actively cultivated Crown representatives and convinced them that their Order was the only one that could help control the Cordoban locals.

The Crown therefore established a partnership with the Franciscans that continued during the revolution, even though the cast of characters might change. In addition, the administration of the University gave the Franciscans power, something that the new government needed.

The *Asamblea del año 13* undermined this pact, forcing the Franciscans to resort to skills as negotiators to maintain their *statu quo*. Fray Casimiro Ibarrola negotiated with the revolutionary government in 1813 and obtained control of the *Comisaría de Regulares*, in the same way that Fray Pedro Sulivan had negotiated with the Peninsular government in 1767 to obtain control of the University of Córdoba.

This agreement ended in the 1820s, but it was only a momentary interruption. When we examine the Franciscan Order during that decade, we understand some of the

reasons that led to the failure of Rivadavia´s liberal project. In 1820, the conditions were not favorable enough for the State to ignore the clergy. Rivadavia refused to negotiate with the regular orders and, as a result, he failed. His haste to impose liberal reforms delayed the consolidation of these ideas until the last third of the nineteenth century.

Internally, the great change the Franciscan Order experienced during that period was the transition from being urban-based to rural-based. As the Franciscans lost their ability to negotiate with the authorities, they resigned themselves to occupying rural spaces. Towards the end of the 1820s, a large number of Franciscans were living in these areas, almost the opposite of their pattern during the colonial period.

Paradoxically, this situation, which arose from the Franciscan resignation, made them necessary to the system again. The local leaders who fought to obtain power needed the friars; this explains Paz´ personal interest to place reliable Franciscans in border areas. With the rise of the *caudillos*, when power was displaced from the city to the countryside, Franciscans were already settled in rural areas.

In 1830, the Cordobans, who had been losing their religious fervor since the end of the colonial period, rediscovered an Order that could offer them a relevant place to educate their children. As a result, Franciscan vocations in Córdoba reached a level that had not been seen since 1750.

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