



Mission and Pueblo of
Santa Catalina de Guale
St. Catherines Island, Georgia

A Comparative Zooarchaeological Analysis

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ON THE COVER: Aerial photograph of St. Catherines Island shows the relationship of its geomorphic structures. The Pleistocene core is the large, tree-covered main mass of the island; docked to this core are the late Holocene accretionary beach terrains (at the bottom right). The extensive estuarine marsh system (far left) was created by rising global sea level during the middle Holocene. The small, tan square at the exact center of the photo is a one-hectare clear-cut around Mission Santa Catalina de Guale. [Photograph by Digital Globe, March 8, 2008].



cover design by Jennifer Steffey

THIS VOLUME PRESENTS THE zooarchaeological evidence for animal use during the First Spanish period on St. Catherines Island, Georgia. For many years the rich Spanish heritage in the American Southeast has been neglected as a field of study. To the extent that Spanish Florida received any scholarly attention, it was characterized as a place of poverty, neglect, and ruin.

Over the past 30 years, archaeologists have demonstrated that this concept of Spanish Florida cannot be accurate. Instead of a poverty-stricken colony dependent upon imported goods and institutions, archaeologists have discovered a complex, multiethnic community in which pre-Hispanic and Hispanic traditions merged to form a new relationship to their cultural and natural environments.

The study of animal remains from missions and towns in Spanish Florida highlights the dynamic interchange between indigenous and immigrant peoples. That interchange resulted in new, blended diets, exploitation strategies, and economies that were as diverse as the colonial settings in which they emerged. Instead of a single, inept, transient Spanish government dominating an invisible indigenous population, we must now think of Spanish Florida as an enterprising colony

in which Native Americans exchanged ideas and developed new patterns of animal use as did immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Africa.

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