

— THE — MISSION

Setting:

Between 1756 and 1758 there was a transfer of South American land (present day Peru) from the Spanish to the Portuguese in accordance to a treaty that was drawn up between the two countries. This became of consequence to the native people in those transferring lands. The Catholic church had sent Jesuit (order of Jesus) priests to start missions in the new world and convert the people to Christianity. The Jesuits had been fairly successful in their task. The Spanish saw the missions as sacred and would therefore not allow the business of slave trading to occur therein. However, the Portuguese did not follow this same policy, they allowed slave trading in all parts of their lands. The church sent a cardinal to decide the fate of the missions in the lands that were trading hands between the countries. The movie will begin and end with his dictation of a letter to the pope about his experiences. The film you are about to watch is an accounting of those events.

Main Characters:

Father Gabriel – head priest in the Jesuit order in the new world (played by Jeremy Irons)

Captain Rodrigo Mendoza – slave trader (played by Robert DeNiro)

His Eminence – the Catholic Cardinal sent to decide the fate of the missions

The Guatanee – the native people of Peru

Please answer the following questions as you watch:

1. The man that the Indians (Guatanee) put on the cross is a priest – why do you think they do this?
2. Where does the priest (Father Gabriel) have to go to get the people who killed the first priest?
3. What does the priest use to get the Guatanee to come to him?
4. Why is this a good idea?
5. Why must the Guatanee constantly fear for their lives?
6. How does this hinder the work of the priests?
7. What is Captain Mendoza's (Rodrigo) job?
8. What does Rodrigo's girlfriend tell him about Philippe (Rodrigo's brother)?

9. What does Rodrigo do to his brother?
10. The next scene shows Rodrigo in solitary, who put him there?
11. Penance is another word for repentance or to seek forgiveness. What is the physical representation of Rodrigo's penance?
12. Where is Rodrigo taking his penance?
13. What does the priest (John) do to Rodrigo's penance?
14. What does Rodrigo do in reaction to this?
15. Why does he do this?
16. How do the Guatanee react when the priests arrive?
17. The Guatanee cutting the ropes of the penance show that they
18. Why does Rodrigo accept it this time?
19. Why will Rodrigo not kill the pig?
20. What does Rodrigo want to become?
21. Portugal is seeking to increase their empire in South America. Wishing to rule and colonize more land is known as _____ (from notes).
22. Don Cabesa emphatically denies that _____ is taking place.
23. What is Rodrigo's reaction to this?
24. What is Rodrigo ordered to do?
25. How does Rodrigo find satisfaction and take a personal stand during his apology?

26. Where does his Eminence decide to go before he makes his decision about the missions?
27. List 2 things that his Eminence observes the Guatanee doing in the missions.
28. Why is there an assemblage of Guatanee outside the church where his Eminence is praying?
29. Describe in 3-4 sentences the exchange between his Eminence and the king of the Guatanee.
30. What are the priests ordered to do by his Eminence?
31. What does Father Gabriel say that he will do?
32. What do the Portuguese armies begin to do to the missions?
33. What do Rodrigo and the small band of Guatanee do to the Portuguese in the middle of the night?
34. What does this do to Rodrigo's penance (according to Father Gabriel)?
35. Describe the result of the battle between the Guatanee and the Portuguese.