



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Damián Massanet. Then, answer questions about it.

Damián Massanet

In 1683, Franciscan priest Damián Massanet left Barcelona to serve as a missionary in the New World. He lived the rest of his life in Mexico, and died in obscurity, but holds an important place in the history of Spanish settlement in Texas.

Massanet spent several years building missions in Mexico. Then, in 1690, he accompanied General Alonso De León, governor of the state of Coahuila, to establish a Spanish presence in Texas. In that year, Mission San Francisco de los Tejas was founded near the Neches River.

The defense of that mission led to sharp disagreements between Massanet and De León. When De León wanted to post fifty soldiers there to control the local Nabadache peoples, Massanet would accept only five. The priest insisted, "There was no necessity at all to leave a large military force in the district since the people were so peaceable and friendly."

However in 1693, after continued disputes with the Caddo peoples, Massanet chose to burn the mission and return to Mexico. Discouraged by his experience in East Texas, he declined later requests to found other missions.

Massanet's Tejas mission lasted for only three years, but it marked the first step in Spain's efforts to bring the lands of Texas under the Spanish flag.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Damián Massanet. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Why did Damián Massanet build a mission in Texas?
2. Why did Massanet refuse De León's attempts to establish a large military presence at the mission?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Creating Connections.** What were Spain's three motivations for colonizing the New World? How did building missions in North America help the Spanish accomplish that goal?