

10-1999

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Walsh, Patrick J. (1999) "Living on the Edge of the Neutral Zone: Varieties of Identity in Nacogdoches, Texas, 1773-1810," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 37: Iss. 2, Article 6.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol37/iss2/6>

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**LIVING ON THE EDGE OF THE NEUTRAL ZONE:
VARIETIES OF IDENTITY IN
NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS 1773-1810**

by Patrick J. Walsh

In the half-century following its founding in 1779, the village of Nacogdoches, Texas, never boasted as many as 1,000 inhabitants. Still, it held enormous strategic importance to the security of New Spain. Located on the northern fringe of Spain's empire, it was both an oft-forgotten rural outpost and a highly political entrepot for foreign influence and subversion. This paper will explore the dramatic events that took place in Nacogdoches between 1779 and 1813, as well as the constructions of ethnicity, race, gender, and nationality that shaped the community's social structure. It will examine how these formations were employed, consciously or not, as "political designations," markers which defined a person's status and role within society as described in governmental documents.¹ This paper is an analysis of how the language of such documents shaped and described the history of a frontier town. It is commonly held that life on the frontier often lent a good deal of malleability to one's persona; many moved to the outskirts of settlement specifically for the opportunity to re-invent themselves. Just how the quest for this freedom operated within the constraints of Spanish military control, perhaps altering the inherited system of racial and gender hierarchy, is also a central focus of this essay.

Examination of early Nacogdoches is important because of its unique nature, namely its proximity to the United States after Louisiana was purchased from France in 1803. No longer a town simply bordered by unexplored, sparsely-populated "wilderness," Nacogdoches became a chief port of entry for American goods, ideas, and citizens. When a "Neutral Zone" was created by the United States and New Spanish governments to accommodate the disputed Texas-Louisiana border, Nacogdoches was pushed even further into a murky allegiance. Far from calming East Texas officials' fears of attack or invasion, the Neutral Zone filled with bandits, smugglers, and *filibusteros*, some of whom were quite successful in commandeering the allegiance of the local citizenry. This fact distinguishes the political situation of Nacogdoches from that of other towns on the northern frontier of New Spain, such as Monterey and Santa Fe, and justifies a thorough examination of its founding population.

Carving out a life on the frontier, the land infested with insects and ill-equipped for farming, must have been unceasingly grueling. Still, life on the New Spain-United States border did offer a unique variety of freedoms, many unavailable in the cities of central Mexico. Away from their confining, more strictly codified social-structure, some citizens – meaning primarily adult, free men—found freedom to "whiten" themselves, rising within the ethno-racial hierarchy. Others discovered freedom to better their economic status through sometimes illicit trade with Indians and Louisiana. This situation did not

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escape the attention of the colonial government: because of Nacogdoches' geographical position and its origin as a civil settlement, the citizens of Nacogdoches may have been nearly as suspect to the officials stationed there as did the Indians and *desperados* hidden under the cover of East Texas' piney woods. It is likely that in the eyes of Spanish officials, the national loyalty to the Spanish Crown of anyone who chose to live on the edge of settlement – unless migrating to engage in military or missionary activities – was to be regarded with apprehension, if not downright suspicion. Many of those who migrated east from Bexar to found Nacogdoches did indeed seek self-determination, and when their ability to trade with Americans and Indians was infringed upon by Spanish governmental officials, allegiance may have been further shaken. Although in different ways, both the blurring of social and racial categories and involvement in illegal commerce tended to undermine the authority of the Spanish government. It may be that racial mutability indirectly led to seditious behavior; deviating from accepted, inherited beliefs regarding ethnicity, race, social rank, and gender betrayed the carefully constructed aura legitimating the rule of “pure-blooded” Europeans over Native Americans and those of mixed ancestry. Thus the malleability of race, nationality, and perhaps gender, detailed below, both reflected and influenced Nacogdoches' fragile faithfulness to the Spanish flag.

Late in the eighteenth century, Eastern Texas lay at the edge of the settled Spanish possessions, an outpost of its American empire. Texas was but a largely undefended borderland between New Spain and the Indian Nations, as well as the holdings of rival European powers to the north. In 1777, for example, the entire area contained only 3,103 residents, including those Indians living in the missions.² Spain was forced to bargain for the favor of the Indians, competing with English and especially French agents. The creation of the United States of America at the close of the decade increased Spanish fears regarding alien intrusion onto lands claimed on behalf of His Royal Majesty. As part of the overall Spanish strategy for Texas, a mission, *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches*, was founded at the site of an Indian village in 1716. Across the Sabine River, in present-day Louisiana, stood another mission, *Los Adaes*, whose citizens later founded the civilian village of Nacogdoches. Creation of these missions served two purposes: they were vehicles for the sincere efforts at Christianization of the “heathen” tribes of North America; and they were an important part of Spain's line of defense. Just to the east of Nacogdoches lay Louisiana, after 1803 a possession of the United States, and making peace with surrounding Indian tribes served to secure the region from infiltration by foreign nationals, especially those from New Orleans.

In 1763, as part of the settlement following the Seven Years War, ownership of Louisiana was transferred from France to Spain. The colony had been an economic burden for France, and Spain's King Carlos III accepted the territory only with reluctance.³ To the people of East Texas, these unimaginable negotiations between monarchs and ministers, carried out in faraway

Texas was no longer the borderland between empires, so it was decided that the missions there, which lay in shambles, would be abandoned. In 1773, the residents of *Los Adaes* received the order to pack what they could carry and move to Bexar. From *Los Adaes*, 167 families suffered a three-month trek to Bexar, some dying en route, thirty more within three months of arrival.⁴

The *Adaesños* found life in Bexar unbearable; promises of land for each citizen made by the government were not met, and perhaps those families from East Texas bristled under the heavier and more visible royal authority that surrounded them in Bexar. Almost immediately after their arrival, a number of the migrants petitioned for the right to return to East Texas. Led by Antonio Gil Ybarbo, who had been compelled to quit a ranch in *Los Adaes* – which suggests the abandonment of some wealth – the *Adaesños* won governmental approval and soon seventy families moved back to the east, but not to their original settlement.⁵

It is worth noting that unlike customary Spanish settlements of the period, Ybarbo's was neither military nor religious in orientation. Instead, he and his fellow travelers created village life on their own behalf, in Ybarbo's words, "in the midst of the Savage Nations of the North."⁶ A site for settlement had been chosen for the migrants on a fertile plain at a mid-point between "Bexar, Natchitoches, and the Northern Nations."⁷ But the town they created, known as Bucareli, was ill-fated: the suffering brought on by Indian attacks, floods, and swarms of insects out-weighed good harvests, and in 1779 the group moved again.

The decision to abandon Bucareli was made without approval from Bexar; in 1780 Governor Domingo Cabello noted that Ybarbo's band "may have consulted rather their own security and convenience than the benefit of the Province ...". Cabello was unhappy with the group's decision to wander "scattered among the heathens, offering them clothing for food, and exchanging hunger for nakedness." The governor appeared to have mixed feelings for the families, and had considered moving them back to Bexar soon after the group's arrival in the abandoned Nacogdoches.⁸ But Ybarbo and his "wandering settlement of Bucareli" had decided: they would not return to Bexar and they were uninterested in any other site chosen for them by officials in the capital.⁹ This manifestation of the group's desire to construct their own society, with or without the official blessing of the government, is perhaps a first clue of their desire for self-determination and of the shaky allegiance to the Spanish crown they later exhibited in Nacogdoches.

The few hundred who survived the grueling, six-year trek from *Los Adaes* to Bexar to Bucareli to Nacogdoches were able to create a home at the site of the abandoned mission. The bonds that undoubtedly grew between the migrants during their travels must have served them well as they cleared land, planted corn, and built houses for their isolated village. But despite the initiative and autonomy they had displayed, the residents of Nacogdoches could not escape the broader political and strategic demands brought upon them by their proximity to Louisiana. Over the years, soldiers were rushed to

and from Nacogdoches as the military commanders sought to counter seditious movements and illicit trade between Spaniards, Indians, and foreign nationals.

At times the commanders seemed almost ludicrously frightened of the vulnerability of their eastern border. For instance, upon hearing that Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* had been translated and published in Spanish (as *Desengane del Hombre*), a shaken Commanding General Pedro de Nava dispatched twenty-three additional soldiers, including one who could read, to guard against the book's introduction in Nacogdoches. It also spurred another in a long series of background checks on foreign traders in East Texas, as well as plans for checking on the attitudes of the region's Indians towards the Spanish with provisions for additional gifts to be given those that might be seduced by French or Anglo colonists. Perhaps the general himself was curious about the celebrated book's contents, for he bade Governor Muñoz to send him the first copy seized before sending any others to the Comisario of the Holy Office, required because the book had been banned by the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition.¹⁰

Spanish fears were not wholly unfounded. Beginning in 1800, foreigners, usually Anglo-Americans, began leading filibusters into East Texas. Philip Nolan, leader of what was perhaps the first expedition, entered Spanish territory "ostensibly to catch wild horses but more plausibly to survey the possibilities of trade and to appraise the strength of imperial defenses."¹¹ Nolan was tracked down and killed by a combination of soldiers and Nacogdoches residents. The prominent, hispanicized trader Guillermo Barr rode into town, bearing Nolan's ears in triumph. Barr had, in the words of the governor, "by his well-known love [for] the King, volunteered to be the bearer of the welcome tidings."¹² Despite success in thwarting Nolan, the fact that several citizens of Nacogdoches, including a priest, were implicated in the conspiracy must have increased the local officials' paranoia regarding the ability of outsiders to destabilize Spanish rule.

Xenophobia swelled further when the United States purchased Louisiana in 1803. In a letter to the governor of Texas, the commanding officer in Concordia wailed, "The United States have purchased Louisiana from France; and if they succeed in establishing themselves on the limits of Texas, God keep us from their hands!"¹³ Again, Spanish fears were not unwarranted. In fact, President Thomas Jefferson claimed that Louisiana included all lands from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, Texas included, and sent explorers, including Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, to win the friendship of strategically valuable Indian tribes. Tensions mounted, and in 1806, both Jefferson and Texas Governor Manuel Salcedo sent troops to the Texas-Louisiana border area. Although the crisis passed without military engagement, a heightened fear of foreign incursion reigned in Spain's northern provinces, in East Texas in particular. The border dispute was settled in November 1806 by the creation of a neutral territory between the two countries, bordered on the west by the Sabine River and Arroyo Hondo on the east. Unfortunately,

Neutral Ground, as it came to be called, served as a haven for smugglers and bandits.¹⁴

When Nacogdoches was resettled in 1779 the United States' purchase of Louisiana and the resulting creation of the Neutral Ground were unforeseeable. As Ybarbo and his fellow settlers arrived from Bucareli, they probably imagined themselves happily removed from the world of politics and international trade; but, after 1803, Nacogdoches became caught up in both the nascent Mexican independence movement and the ever-expanding territorial claims of the United States. It is likely that the creation of the Neutral Ground and the village's expanding number of military administrators alienated some of Nacogdoches' residents. Because of the provisions of the agreement which created the Neutral Ground, Texans, with rare exceptions, were prohibited from trading in Louisiana. This undoubtedly sent some previously legitimate business people afoul of the law, with the Neutral Ground serving as an "ideal base" for their illicit activities.¹⁵

Despite the threats from the Neutral Ground and beyond, life for the majority of Nacogdoches' residents was centered upon matters more fundamental. The majority of men were listed in the census as farmers, even those who lived in the village. Except for Ybarbo, the residents of Nacogdoches lived in simple log houses.

Settlers cut and sharpened trees into palisades, hammered them into the ground in a square or rectangular pattern, interlaced them with vines for strength and covered them with red mud for insulation. A hipped roof composed of shingles extended well beyond the walls to protect them from rain. On one end, a stick-and-mud chimney provided warmth, illumination, and a place to cook the family's food.¹⁶

Ybarbo's business, which came to be called "The Old Stone Fort," faced the *Plaza Principal*, or town square. From the plaza *El Camino Real* led west to Bexar and east to Natchitoches in Louisiana.¹⁷

In town it was common to have a small garden, and often a few hogs or sheep as well. One settler, petitioning the government for a plot in the village, asked for a patch of land for "the advantage of planting corn, beans for the maintenance of family."¹⁸ As noted by Governor Elguezabal, this small-scale farming was complemented with meat provided by the surrounding wilderness: "[Nacogdoches'] settlers are engaged in hunting bear, deer, and buffalo, and in planting, at great expenditure of labor, what is absolutely necessary for their food."¹⁹ This statement reflects the difficulty experienced by the town's first generation in making ends meet; as they had in Bucareli, floods occasionally destroyed crops upon which poor families depended.²⁰

Outside of town in the piney woods and along the "caney creeks" lay the *ranchos* of Nacogdoches' wealthier citizens.²¹ These outlying areas were described as possessing "permanent water for stock, a great many insects, pasture for the summer, but for the winter very scarce."²² Guillermo Barr's land was characterized as holding "little use for sowing or planting on account

of the quantity of wood on it." Many descriptions note the mosquitoes, the hornets, the ticks, and the horse flies.²³ To their advantage, those raising horses and cattle around Nacogdoches were, unlike many ranching in other regions of Texas, "far enough to the east that the plains raiders [Indians] were unlikely to disturb them."²⁴

One of the remarkable features of late eighteenth- and early-nineteenth century Nacogdoches was the increasingly heterogeneous make-up of its population. Far from being a city of "Spanish settlers," the citizenry of Nacogdoches was made up of many races, ethnicities, and nationalities.²⁵ Some used their position away from centers of population and power to rise, through wealth or status, into higher ethno-racial categories. Also, Nacogdoches was a city of families and thus held a substantial minority of women; this also presented inter-marriage as a avenue of "whitening." An examination of the town's demographic patterns as well as its leaders' remarks on race, gender, and nationality allow speculation on how these social structures were blurred, subverted, and sometimes recast in early Nacogdoches.

The population of Nacogdoches doubled in size between 1778 and 1810, largely due to the steady influx of immigrants from the east. It is unlikely that the growth was produced by "natural" expansion through births; in Texas, demographic expansion did not occur until 1790, and much of that was centered in Bexar where the infant mortality rate and the threat of Indian violence was much lower. Alicia Tjarks points out that during this period in Texas, "practically no family failed to lose at least one child during its first year of life."²⁶

Racially, Nacogdoches was impressively heterogeneous. Not only were people of different races in constant social contact on the plaza and in the fields, but they truly became a "melting pot" in which inter-racial marriage was commonplace and apparently considered respectable. Although the Spanish government applied an intricate system to determine the race of each of its colonial citizens, and although a person's race and ethnicity contributed greatly to their status and economic and social opportunity, on the northern frontier the system of racial characterization and stratification was often confused or altogether ignored.²⁷

It appears that those at the top of the hierarchy, Europeans, Spaniards, Anglos, and so on, were designated in census overseen by the local military commander by nationality while those placed in the "castes" below were racialized. The racial categorizations appearing in the census of 1792, roughly in their accepted ranking, include: *Espanole/a, de Nacion Francesa, de la Canada, de Irlanda, Indiola, Mestizo/a*, C. (whether standing for *Castizo, Color Quebrado* or *Coyote*, is unclear), *Color Quebrado* (literally, "broken color"); *Mulatto/a, Lobo*, and *Negro/a* (both enslaved and free).²⁸ On the frontier, some of these designations appear somewhat mutable; Alicia Tjarks, whose demographic study centers on Bexar, records the identifiers *mestizo, mulatto, coyote, lobo*, and *Negro* as sub-sets of *color quebrado*, but in terms of the Nacogdoches census such an arrangement is unlikely.²⁹ *Color quebrado*

existed alongside other designations and was sometimes used to refer to a person whose racial background was mixed, uncertain, and clearly not Spanish or European.

At the top of the heap in social status were those bestowed with the title of "Don." The census for 1792 lists only four men with such a rank: a sixty-one year-old whose occupation is not listed and who may have been retired; a judge; a lieutenant; and a farmer. The farmer is referred to simply as a "*labrador*," and may have achieved his high status through birth or some other value to his community. Although the reason is unknown, the fact that a farmer could be listed as one of the foremost men of Nacogdoches suggests a class structure not built entirely on wealth or occupation. Thus, their comparative wealth and their value to the economic well-being of Nacogdoches elevated both Irish-born Guillermo Barr and American Samuel Davenport, traders with the local Indians, to the rank of "Don" in the census of January 1, 1804.

The census of 1792 was conducted by Gil Ybarbo, the man who had led the petition for re-admission into East Texas. The fluidity of at least some of the categories of race is perhaps evident in the racial labels he chose for members of the lower castes. In the latter pages of the census, the abbreviated designation "C.," (possibly "*Castizo*," "*Coyote*," or "*color quevrado*"), disappears. *Color quevrado*, which does not appear in the first half of the census, shows up frequently towards the list's end. To Ybarbo, the terms *Coyote* and *Color Quevrado* may have been interchangeable or indistinguishable.

Some estimation of late eighteenth-century Nacogdoches' racial make-up is offered by tallying the identifications offered in the census. It should be remembered that the numbers do not reflect the residents' inherited racial rank but rather stand for their perceived racial status in the eyes of the political and military leadership. The ranks of the Spanish undoubtedly are swollen by town leaders who managed to be identified with the highest racial appellation in recognition of their social ranking.³⁰ With that caveat in mind, in 1790, of the 258 adults over fourteen years of age in Nacogdoches, roughly fifty percent were Spanish, twenty-two percent were Indian, fourteen percent were Mestizo, eleven percent were Mulatto and other colored designations, and three percent were Negro. It is worth noting that Nacogdoches' black population, while only three percent of its total, was about twice as high as that of Bexar. This is likely due to Nacogdoches' proximity to Louisiana, from which blacks traveled either as free men, fugitive slaves, or as the slaves of both legal and illegal European immigrants.

Soldiers at the garrison were without exception identified as Spaniards on Nacogdoches' census. It would be unlikely that they were all of "pure" Spanish descent, and their passing into the highest racial rank signifies the social value their occupation, as well as their protection of the settlers, had to the society at large. David Weber notes that, "In sparsely populated lands of nearly chronic war, with primitive economies and little economic differentiation, the military served as the chief vehicle for upward mobility."³¹ This mobility apparently could be affected in both economic and racial terms.

Perhaps the clearest and most significant case of racial passing in frontier Nacogdoches was that of the town's "father," Antonio Gil Ybarbo. As Nacogdoches' founder, its political leader, and its richest citizen, Ybarbo was always called "Don" Antonio Gil Ybarbo in official documents, and appears in the census, some of which he put together, as a Spaniard, despite the fact that he was clearly of mixed race and that "everybody knew him as a mulatto, and his enemies used this circumstance to revile him."³² Weber notes that "in the heat of argument 'mulatto,' 'mestizo,' and 'Indian' might be hurled as insulting epithets and be considered grounds for slander."³³ Late in the eighteenth century, the Spanish frontier boasted high levels of childbirth out of wedlock, "because of the sexual exploitation of female slaves and [Indians]." A serious offense in the eyes of the church, these sinfully-conceived "half-breeds" were stigmatized by the suspected "illegitimacy" of their birth.³⁴

The fate of Ybarbo illustrates how closely, if unconsciously, categories of race, wealth, and status were linked in the minds of Spanish Texans. Although he long remained in power, Ybarbo had been suspected of smuggling by his superiors "ever since the reoccupation of Nacogdoches." When charges were brought against this "enterprising pioneer" in 1790, he was accused of incompetence, illicit trade in livestock, of having "relations with unauthorized French and English traders," and "lastly, that he was a mulatto." The prosecuting official thus impugned Ybarbo's qualifications, his character, and his claims of "whiteness" at one time.³⁵ Although these charges against Ybarbo were dropped eventually, later he was removed from his post due to illegal trading activity.³⁶

Not surprisingly, in the census Ybarbo compiled for the governor in Bexar, he sometimes blurred the distinction between nationality and race. For example, Juan Juarez, a single, thirty-nine year-old servant, was listed in the census of 1792 both as a *mestizo* and a native of Louisiana ("*Juan Juarez Mestizo sirviente N. della Luciana edad 39 a solteno.*"). At thirty-nine years of age, he was born in Louisiana before it was transferred to Spanish rule. Usually, those not born under the Spanish flag were described only by land of nativity or nationality. That Juarez was listed by birthplace and race hints that his occupational status as a servant lowered his societal rank and caused him to be racialized in the eyes of the census taker. Farmer Juan Jose Sanchez was listed as being both a *mestizo* and a Spaniard ("*Juan Jose Sanchez, Mestizo su oficio Labrador Espanole del Precidio...*"). This is odd since both terms supposedly connote race. Again, perhaps Sanchez's social status or wealth allowed him to be seen as a Spaniard despite his skin color. Or, Sanchez could have been regarded as one or the other depending on the social context. It is possible that Ybarbo's own passing from mulatto to Spaniard caused him to be sympathetic to the aspirations of others trying to better themselves.³⁷

Intermarriage was another conduit for whitening and racial passing. In the Nacogdoches Census for 1792, sixty of ninety-five marriages, roughly sixty-three percent, were "interracial." The actual percentage may have been even higher as the wives of "Spanish" men of high status were likely lifted, in

racial plateau. It is possible that an entire family's ethno-racial status could have risen by a few advantageous marriages; a *mestizo* father, for example, whose son married the daughter of a wealthy Spaniard, might himself have racially benefited from the union. Inter-marriage, as much as it allowed for racial passing, also further blurred the already complex racial make-up to Nacogdoches' population. In the ninety-five marriages recorded in the 1792 census, twenty different kinds of racial pairing appear.³⁸

The "Spanish" people of Nacogdoches likely possessed a two-tiered view of Indians. On the higher rung were those who had been hispanicized, had converted to Christianity, and had taken to living in town. Many Indians, both men and women, intermarried with others of races spanning the entire hierarchy. In sharp contrast to the assimilated Indians were those who remained "wild," living a semi-nomadic life in the woods outside the village. The Indians who eased into Spanish society appear infrequently in the military correspondence between Nacogdoches and Bexar. They were mostly subsistence farmers or servants who struggled at the bottom end of the village's economic spectrum. Of course, most residents of Nacogdoches were probably of mixed Indian descent, but a generation or two in Spanish society "whitened" them, setting them apart from those baptized as adults by Father Garza as well as the heathens recently arriving from the woods.³⁹

In the yearly census, Indians were tabulated without editorial comment. Indian men were identified as being married to Spanish, Indian, *mestiza*, *mulatto*, and *color quevrado* women. One Indian man, who was married to a *Mulatta*, had an Indian servant. Two Indian women arrived in Nacogdoches from Louisiana married to Frenchmen; other Indians were wed to men of all the racial categories listed above. Most of the Indians in Nacogdoches appear in the census as *Indio* or *India*, although several are noted by their tribe. Several Apaches, most likely Lipan Apaches from West Texas, lived in Nacogdoches and apparently blended in with the Indians Christianized at *Los Adaes*.⁴⁰

In 1809 the *commandante* at Nacogdoches was ordered to take oaths of allegiance from all aliens living in and around the town. This procedure took place every few years, especially after a change in the governorship or after the arrest of a foreigner involved in illegal trade. In this survey only one Indian, "Louis of the Caddo Nation," was compelled to come forward and declare his faithfulness before the state. He professed to be Catholic, that he was married to Madeline Christi, a French woman, and that the couple and their six children "follow[ed] the Spanish flag" to Nacogdoches when Madeline's native Louisiana became American. Why he was ordered to testify is unclear, but he was born into, and was still recognized as a citizen of, the band of Indians living closest to town. This may have made him suspicious in the eyes of the *commandante*; perhaps it was feared that he still paid allegiance to his old tribe, or maybe it was hoped that he could help stabilize Caddo-Spanish relations. Whatever the *commandante's* motivation, it is understandable why he would be perceived as more of a threat to security than Apaches so far from their fellow tribesmen.⁴¹

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Native Americans in central and East Texas apparently shared many, if not all, legal rights enjoyed by the other townsmen. In Bexar, the governor instructed that a subordinate should "[e]nter suit immediately with the necessary formality against Thomas Liendro and his associates for the murders of the Comanche man and woman."⁴² Whether these victims had been Christianized or not is not recorded, and such a distinction may perhaps have had an effect on the governor's response to the murders. It is also notable that in the governor's proclamation he failed to include the names of the murdered Comanches; surely if he were interested in the prosecution of justice such a fundamental exclusion would be odd. It leads one to wonder whether the Comanche's history of war with the Spanish inspired Governor Elguezabal to pursue the killers only grudgingly and the omission was a residue of his dislike for the Comanches.

Some Indians managed to sell their lands to the Spanish rather than having them appropriated. A record exists of the transaction between "the Indian known as the son of the ... Indian Surdo of the Bidis Nations, the Captain of the Ays Nations, named Negrito," and the Italian Don Vicente Michelli. For the acreage given up to the rancher, Negrito received goods much like those given friendly tribes such as gifts, including a gun and powder, a white shirt, ribbon, and eight bracelets.⁴³

Indians living outside Nacogdoches appeared in governmental communications often. Contact between the Caddo and the Spanish town appears to have been relatively peaceful, although diseases contracted from the European settlers swept through the area's Indian population with deadly effect.⁴⁴ The number of "Friendly Tribes" seems to have varied, in the years examined here, between eleven and twenty-five. It appears to have been customary for a group of men, women, and children from a friendly tribe, sometimes over 100 in number, to walk or ride into town in expectation of gifts and supplies. Apparently these operations were formalized and usually occurred on an annual basis. Of one small group *Commandante* Guadiana reported that, "They asked for and were supplied with provisions of the value of eighteen reales."⁴⁵ Things given to the Indians included guns, knives, axes, beads, wire, mirrors, belts, shirts, and, in one account, dresses "adorned with imitation lace."⁴⁶ Not every appearance was greeted with nonchalance, however. On one occasion the *Commandante* was highly suspicious, "having learned ... that last night Indians came into this village afoot and without blankets... ." What made the *Commandante* nervous is unclear. Perhaps the Indians had entered Nacogdoches unexpected, their lack of blankets might have given the appearance of a war party, or maybe the Indians failed to follow the usual protocol for the ritual of trading and gift giving. Whatever the reason for his discomfort, no account of violence or theft followed in Guadiana's report.⁴⁷

Indian societies, as they appear in the Spanish documents, were organized along European lines: their bands were described as "nations" and their leaders were bestowed with titles such as captain.⁴⁸ The Spanish sought peace and trade with nearby Indians, and also attempted to restrain tribes from

Spanish attempted a strategy of diplomacy most aptly described as “divide and conquer” but were not always successful in maintaining local hegemony. During the Nolan affair, a resident of Natchitoches, Pablo Lafitte, was imprisoned in Nacogdoches. He had strong ties to the Caddo, who raised tension in Nacogdoches by threatening to attack unless Lafitte was released.⁴⁹ Without irony, Spanish officials referred to Native Americans who bested them in the chess game of allegiance and power as “fickle, inconsistent, and ambitious.”⁵⁰

Both enslaved and free blacks lived in Nacogdoches. At the bottom of Nacogdoches’ racial hierarchy, blacks were much less likely to inter-marry than those of other races. There did exist, however, an opportunity to better one’s position through one’s occupation or by the accumulation of wealth. Such opportunities were not possible for those enslaved; being both black and unfree mitigated any “whitening” or chance for a rising status within Nacogdoches. Slaves, when their families had not been broken by the sale of spouses, appear in the census married only to other black slaves; in general, when blacks did marry people of other racial castes, they tended to wed mulattos or those described as *color quevrado*.⁵¹ It is likely that the children of these mixed marriages would have a racial status higher than their parents, but their somewhat lighter skin could become the first step in a multi-generational “whitening” process.

Free blacks tended to be employed as subsistence farmers or as servants. Francisco Gonsales, a forty-nine year-old native of Guatemala, appears in the census of 1792 as “*Negro oficio Panadero Sirviente*” – both as a servant and as a baker.⁵² Constituting such a small percentage of Nacogdoches’ population and mired at the lowest end of the social-racial scale, free blacks rarely appear in the surviving official correspondence.

Slaves, on the other hand, as valuable property, were mentioned regularly. Although counted by the census takers, slaves were usually not listed individually or by name. In the census of 1804, when a slave was counted, his age and marital status were noted but his name was not recorded.⁵³ Not all slaves living and working in Nacogdoches were of pure African descent. To be a slave was to be a member of a social class, albeit the lowest one. Members of other races are mentioned in official documents as property.⁵⁴ Also, Indians from time to time sold captured members of rival tribes as slaves. Still, a vast majority of those whose occupation was listed as “slave” were identified as Negro or Negra.

When black slaves were mentioned, they were usually referred to only by their race and by the enslaved condition. When Jose Vidal, the commanding officer at Concordia, prepared for a leave of absence, he wrote the governor asking for “some land where I may send my negroes, and find a home when I return... .”⁵⁵ In *Commandante Guadiana*’s monthly reports of operations in Nacogdoches, race was constructed in a similar way. An escaped “negro” was unnamed, as was a “fugitive mulatto.” This despite the fact that with Nacogdoches’ population numbered only a few hundred residents and the *Commandante* would be acquainted with most everyone in town.⁵⁶ One may assume

that the way in which black slaves were presented in the documents reflects the extent to which blacks were stripped of their status as citizens or individuals. When a number of prisoners held after the Nolan affair broke out of jail, Governor Elguezabal alerted *Commandante* de Nava that "the Americans Robert Ashley, Michael Mahon, Joe Harris, and a negro succeeded in effecting their escape from prison... ." De Nava apparently assumed that, unless otherwise noted, the Negro would be male.⁵⁷

In the census for 1809, slaves belonging to the traders Barr and Davenport were identified by name, age, and place of origin, and this allows a peek into their situation and status. The group of slaves, all identified as black, with one exception, was:

- a married couple from Carolina, Asique and Mary
- a single man, Bill, 28, from Virginia
- James, 14, from Natchez
- Silve, from Pennsylvania, 33, "single," with two sons
- Amos from Natchez, 26, and his son Graviel
- Juliana from Ouachita, 19
- Anna from Natchez, and
- mulatto Jose Maria from Boca de Leon, 20, single.⁵⁸

This is a diverse group in terms of gender, age, and origin. It is likely that there existed a language barrier between some of the slaves because most of the arrivees from the United States had been in Texas a only few years and perhaps their Spanish was not fluent. James apparently had been removed from his families, while others have been allowed to immigrate to Texas as husband and wife or as a single parent and child. With the exception of Asique and Mary, if their marriage had produced no children, none of Barr and Davenports' slaves lived within a "complete" nuclear family. Another slave, a fifty-two year-old female native of Guinea named Maria Isabel, who belonged to a *ranchero* named Jose de la Bega, was noted as married but with her husband "absent." Such a designation usually referred to the wives of soldiers stationed outside Nacogdoches, but Maria Isabel may have been taken away from her family.⁵⁹

One incident reveals that while slaves did not own their freedom and did not enjoy the mobility available to the regular citizen, they did have some recourse before the law. In 1793, Jose Thomas Blas, a slave, was able to petition the governor of Texas for an order re-uniting him with his wife, Maria Luisa, and their two children. She, a slave of Nicholas Mora of Nacogdoches, or perhaps actually of Mora's father-in-law, Ybarbo, was kept from living with her husband or communicating with him. Blas' petition was for the governor to free Maria Luisa from Mora for her to find another master, one who would either let her see Blas or would buy him so they could cohabitate.⁶⁰

Blas was represented by Jose Toraya, a self-described "procurador for the poor." As Blas probably had little or no money, it is likely that Toraya's office was a governmental one. On behalf of Blas, Toraya avowed that Mora's actions were "absolutely contrary to liberty," an interesting phrase to use when

speaking of master/slave relations. Mora was warned that “at the lightest complaint ... he would be punished properly.” When the actions of his son-in-law were made known to him, Gil Ybarbo, who was apparently in Bexar by coincidence, appeared before the magistrates at Bexar and promised “to give a paper to Maria Luisa in order that she may seek a [new] master.” Pointing out that the “village of Nacogdoches being comprised of poor people and unable to purchase her,” Ybarbo offered to buy Jose Thomas himself.⁶¹

Neither the race of these slaves nor their place of birth appears anywhere in the documentation of their plight or their petition before the governor. It is worthy of note that the governor of Texas oversaw the proceedings and warned Mora to grant his slave a kind of liberty unknown to the type of slavery practiced in the United States during this period. The language used in the court proceedings appears more akin to that in a labor dispute than in a case regarding chattel slavery. This leads one to a conjecture that perhaps slavery in Texas' Spanish period was at times more akin to indentured servitude than the dehumanizing practice carried out in the Southern United States. Thus, while slaves often were objectified in the eyes of the state, they were also not without some basic civil rights.

Because of its origin as a civilian village, Nacogdoches had a relatively high percentage of female citizens. Even as early as 1790, Nacogdoches' population was remarkably balanced in terms of gender. Ybarbo's census for that year features the following totals:

Total	- 524
Men	- 198
Women	- 142
Boys	- 102
Girls	- 82

This includes the handful of soldiers stationed in Nacogdoches garrison.⁶² In the census for 1792 both sexes are represented almost completely equally in every race except for that of *Espanole(a)*. Sixty-one men were listed as being Spanish while only thirty-five women were listed as such. This leads one to wonder whether it was easier for a man to pass into a higher racial category than for a woman. Since women were all but excluded from the military and artisanry, the economic avenue to social rising, and its accompanying whitening, was perhaps blocked.⁶³

Although the census tended to name men as head of the household, doing so even in the case of a widow living with her twenty-year-old son, some women, usually widows, lived without men and so were recorded thus in the census. One widow, Juana Maria Palacios, petitioned the governor for ownership of land she and her family had cultivated, as was the custom. Her testimony speaks to her independence: “That having made a field and fabricated a house for my support, on the bank of the Creek La Nana, on the other side thereof, it becomes necessary for me to beg your Excellency to be pleased to decree that I may be put in possession of said house and field ... for me, my children, heirs and successors...”⁶⁴ Palacios was granted the land and

apparently raised her family there, never remarrying. After her death in 1810, her son was compelled to seek government approval to inheriting the land. He cited himself, his absent brother, and two sisters as Palacios' heirs. At the end of this document he signed his name and his sisters gave their marks; although her son could write, Juana Maria Palacios and her daughters were illiterate.⁶⁵

In a brief biography of James "Santiago" Dill, an Anglo citizen of Nacogdoches who was granted a town lot in 1800, archivist Robert Bruce Blake claimed that a woman in Spanish Texas had the option of taking her husband's surname or keeping her own. This was especially common in the case of a woman who "happened to be active in the trading world." So it was with Dill's wife, Helen Kimble. She did not take Dill's name despite the fact that he was a citizen of some status; although an illiterate farmer, he became Nacogdoches' first *alcalde* in the Mexican period. While there is a danger in viewing this practice ahistorically, the fact that women, especially those of higher economic status, were not legally bound to adopt their husbands' surname suggests that some women were considered to be more than merely their husbands' servant or property.⁶⁶

Women's occupations, never included in the census, were suggested in passing remarks during formal testimonials of allegiance made by foreigners in 1809. Customarily, only men were required to come forth. In 1809, however, three women, one a widow, the others with husbands who were absent from Nacogdoches, made testimonials before the *commandante*. Widow Marie Rambin had her sons at work in her field while her daughters were "making candles and weaving." Maria Madeline Prudhomme stated that her husband was a farmer and she was a seamstress. Anna Alsop, who apparently was left to fend for herself, "maintain[ed] herself with her labor." These examples show that although official documentation almost always ignored the labor women contributed to society, they were occupied in many activities, several of which demanded high amounts of skill.⁶⁷

Customs such as retaining one's maiden name and stories such as that of Juana Maria Palacios, although pointing to a modicum of women's independence, did not limit the authors of the Nacogdoches-Bexar correspondence, as well as those of the annual census, from portraying women as passive, servile, and at times invisible. On the first day of each month the *commandante* at Nacogdoches compiled a journal of the previous month's events and sent it to Bexar. Events described in the journal concerned military matters, the comings and goings of citizens and Indians, and so forth. Even a cursory reading of these lists reveals the paranoia of the Spanish military officers about the security of their northern border. Representations of village women are scarce, and those to Indian women are almost always in passing; women of the Friendly Tribes do not seem to have been perceived as any threat to the security of Nacogdoches.

It is their omission from so many documents that is remarkable when searching for traces of the women of early Nacogdoches. The petition submitted in 1773 by the people of *Los Adaes* asking to return to East Texas began

with Ybarbo's name, followed by a long list of men "with whose families make the number one hundred twenty-seven, [ask] that we form a new village." On this paper not a single woman's name appears. Apparently, only men were perceived to have the qualities necessary to function as the "head of the household."⁶⁸ The history of early Nacogdoches is rife with such exclusions. In some census, especially those noting foreigners present in Nacogdoches, women were not counted, let alone named.

A document in which telling representations of women and men were featured was Father Josef Francisco Mariano de la Garza's tale of the town's founding, given as part of a statement on the character of Gil Ybarbo. His statement reveals his ideology of gender and offers insight into the ingredients of masculinity and femininity on the Texas frontier. The men of Nacogdoches, explained Garza, could "tell of the trail of tears with which their wives, and their children sprinkled the roads," as the families wandered from Bexar to Bucareli to Nacogdoches. But Ybarbo, whom "the settlers until this day ... recognize as their father," was "very bold-faced," and sought "to dry the tears of his countrymen." To Garza, Ybarbo was a patriarch of almost biblical proportions. When the new town struggled, he not only "was the first that offered hastily his servants, his children and even his own person for building [the] church, but the heroic Ybarbo also clothed some widows and girls that were poor, throwing to them at night through the window, some petticoats, a piece of cloth or a blanket, without these [women knowing] who was giving them that assistance; [he also saw] to shrouding some dead bodies, giving [them] the clothing of his son... ." ⁶⁹ In his narrative, Garza paints Ybarbo as the dominant figure of a struggling town and as a great father who dispensed goods and psychological support to a needy community of helpless women. Without irony Father Garza commented on Ybarbo's readiness to lend his servants for labor, his son's clothes for the dead, or even "taking away [food] from the mouth of his wife and children, reserving these for ministering sustenance to me... ." ⁷⁰

Female Indians are all but invisible in the governmental documents. When a scouting party encountered a group of Indians in the territory outside the town, the *commandante* noted that the scouts "overtook eight Comanche Indians and four women."⁷¹ The men were identified by their race, the women by their gender. Later in the same document, the *commandante*, relating the appearance of a group of Indians in Nacogdoches, reported on "the said Nacachichitos, their wives, and children... ." ⁷² In this instance women are identified strictly by their gender; further, while the men are named as members of a tribe, the women are specified as the possessions of the men and thus linked with the accompanying children. This linkage of women and children is also evident in Father Garza's statements above.

These representations of women were rendered by men, usually military officials. The fact that women owned property and sometimes did not take their husbands' name seems to contradict their high degree of invisibility. Perhaps this teases out a contradiction between the standards of womanhood held by *commandantes*, governors, and priests and the actual nature of gender

roles and relations in the borderlands. Women's agency appears to seep through in a body of official documentation designed to keep them silent. This discrepancy may further point to tensions, not specific to gender but rather within the society as a whole, between natives of East Texas and the governmental administrators sent to watch over them.

When the words of various governors, *commandantes*, and other citizens of Nacogdoches are taken in total, a clearer view of the structures of race, class, and gender on the pre-revolution Texas frontier emerges. The caste system, more rigidly enforced in the population centers in interior Mexico, was somewhat relaxed and malleable on the fringe of empire. This mutability of race and status did not extend to all; those introduced to Texas as slaves could only hope for release by a benevolent master. Blacks had little or no chance to improve their status, although intermarriage with a member of a group higher in the hierarchy was a possible conduit for racial passing by their children. Women, although sharing with their husbands, brothers, and sons every aspect of the hardship and danger of life in the wilderness, were perceived by those in power as needy and childlike and were neither granted positions of official authority nor recognized in the census as holding any skill or occupation. These attitudes towards race, class, and gender held by the administrators of Spanish Texans were exhibited in a single list of gifts made to a small band of Indians in Bexar: "Notice of the gifts made to Captain Travino of the Tahucanas, 8 vagrant chiefs, 14 Indians, and a woman of the said tribe who leave this capitol today:

1 gun
1 ramrod
1 large knife
2 pounds of Vermilion."

As with those enumerated in the Nacogdoches census, men of higher rank are identified by their nationality, while those of the middling and lower sorts are marked by their ethnicity or race. Political and economic power apparently tended to lift men out of race and into authority. In the case of the lone woman, no attempt was made to determine her status within the tribe. To be the only woman in a group of twenty-four may well indicate that she was a person of high rank within her people, but whether this was so was unimportant to the Spanish official recording the transaction.⁷³

Finally, one other component of a person's social status, joining their race and class and gender, complicated the Spanish system of rule when implemented on the outskirts of settlement. Nacogdoches' geographical position, after 1803 just a few days' ride from American-controlled soil, obliged Spanish leaders to become concerned about nationality and allegiance. Of course, as the examination of race above suggests, race and nationality were closely linked in New Spain.

In the wake of the Nolan affair, the commander at Nacogdoches remarked to the governor that "The suspicion against Nolan's religious principals ought

hoped to settle in Texas, Nolan had professed Catholicism, which many in the military government saw as one fundamental difference between themselves and immigrants from the United States. The feigning of the Catholic faith was not such a consideration, however, when non-American immigrants were concerned; other foreigners congregating in Nacogdoches tended to be "Gaelic" Irish or French from French-controlled Louisiana. Further, peace with the British and France's decision to unload their possessions in the New World shifted the threat to Spanish sovereignty to the United States. The risk that the political rhetoric of "Americans" such as Thomas Paine might be adopted by the nascent Mexican independence movement further aggravated the perceived danger in allowing citizens of the United States into Spanish territory.

By 1803, in the first Jefferson Administration, Americans already had earned a reputation with their Southern neighbors, one which sounds familiar today. The United States government, according to Jose Vidal, a commanding officer in Concordia, "is the most ambitious, restless, unsteady, caviling and meddlesome government on earth." He also noted that "they are the most industrious people in existence... ." Preparing to leave the area, Vidal expressed thanks at no longer having to live near the United States and "the rabble which predominates in that country."⁷⁵ A few years later, General Bernardo Bonavia, writing in Bexar, vilified the American nation as "that people amongst whom the scum of all nations is found."⁷⁶

The list of foreign men present in Nacogdoches in 1804 totaled sixty-seven. Undoubtedly a far greater number of interlopers and transient aliens lurked in the region around Nacogdoches and the Neutral Ground. Those aliens willing to live among the Spanish and be counted in the *commandante's* census likely were perceived as less of a threat than those stealing horses and illegally trading with the Indians in East Texas.⁷⁷ To the average resident of Nacogdoches, the rising tide of anxiety concerning American filibusters was probably visible. When decisions were made to restrict travel, or, as was the case in 1808, to forbid any communication with Louisiana, men and women with business interests, friends, or family in Natchitoches and beyond doubtless found reason to resent the pronouncements of the military officials.⁷⁸

With the outbreak of the Hidalgo Revolt in 1810, Spanish administrators began "diverting troops and money to meet the crisis, [weakening] the northern defenses."⁷⁹ This opened up opportunities for illicit trade with the Indians and aliens in the Neutral Ground and Louisiana. In Bexar, retired Captain Juan Bautista de la Casas and a handful of "disgruntled sergeants" under his command executed a successful *coup d'etat*, placing the governor and the other governmental officers under arrest. When some men under Las Casas' rule swept into Nacogdoches on the first day of February 1811, they encountered little or no resistance as "[n]either the troops nor the people were loyal" to the crown. This insurrection was put down and Las Casas' severed head was exhibited atop a pole on the plaza in Bexar.⁸⁰

Only nominal stability returned to Nacogdoches. Indian attack and

banditry in the Neutral Ground increased, while the troops in Nacogdoches, charged with protecting the road to Natchitoches, "were without cavalry mounts and many of them lacked shoes."⁸¹ It became common knowledge that armed men were assembling in the Neutral Ground. Calling themselves "The Republican Army of the North" and led by Bernardo Gutierrez de Lara and Irish-American Augustus William Magee, the militia trained openly for an invasion of Texas.⁸²

The invaders were supplied by Samuel Davenport, a man who had lived and prospered in Nacogdoches, co-directing, with Guillermo Barr, the trade between the Spanish and the Indians in East Texas. Once considered one of the leading citizens of East Texas, he now used his influence, from the safety of Natchitoches, to smooth the rebels' way through potentially hostile Indian territory. Just why Davenport betrayed the government he had so recently served is unclear; it appears he was warning the *commandante* at Nacogdoches of the United States' intention to provide supplies and weapons for the invasion for which he was serving as quartermaster.⁸³ Whatever Davenport's motivation, he served as yet another example of the legitimacy of the Spanish concern regarding the intentions of foreigners, especially Americans, in Texas.⁸⁴

When the invading army, led by "Colonel" Magee, swept into Nacogdoches, the Spanish garrison was deserted, its troops fleeing to Bexar. They had not traveled far when all but ten of the soldiers announced their decision to return to town. The officers and the ten faithful (and probably single) soldiers bounced down *El Camino Real* while "the rest joyously returned home." On August 12, 1812, Nacogdoches welcomed Magee and his army with open arms.⁸⁵ Royal authority was returned to East Texas the following autumn, and Spanish revenge was swift and brutal. The counter-attacking loyalist army, "in a bloody purge, executed tejanos suspected of republican tendencies. The poorly provisioned troops also pillaged Texas, doing nearly as much harm to loyalists as they had to rebels."⁸⁶ Eventually, over 1,000 "terrorized residents and Indians fled to the Neutral Ground and into Louisiana."⁸⁷ Much later, a long-time citizen of Nacogdoches remembered 1813 as the year "when all hands run away."⁸⁸ Nacogdoches was deserted.

It is worth wondering if the ethnic and racial mixing that occurred in Nacogdoches contributed to its inhabitants' decision to rebel against Spanish authority. The ability of some, such as Ybarbo, to side-step the social and economic roles that traditionally accompanied the color of their skin may have served as inspiration for further rebellion against traditional systems of hierarchy. Clearly, the distance between the racialized ideology coming out of the regional capitals and the actual experiences of those living on the heterogeneous frontier must have been noted by *Nacogdocheños*.

It should be kept in mind that those such as Ybarbo, who sought to pass into another racial category, did not reject the Spanish system of racialization outright, but rather endeavored to rise within it. Slaves, free blacks, Indians, and women still had firm checks on the elevation of their social status or

may seem, Spanish Texas appears to have been a better place to be enslaved than it would be under American rule. And the Indians of East Texas rarely felt pressure to assimilate, some enjoying quite profitable relations with the Spanish of Nacogdoches.

Texas, due to its intermediate position, served as a pipeline of both supplies and ideology from the United States to revolutionaries in Mexico and became a key in the struggle between revolutionists and their royalist adversaries. Their geographical position brought the people of Nacogdoches into direct contact with anti-monarchical Americans and perhaps the peculiar Yankee rhetoric of freedom was too seductive to be ignored.⁸⁹ It is also possible that the people were throwing off a government that, in their perception, had grown invasive. If ordinary citizens could live in peace with surrounding Indian tribes and make a healthy profit in trade with the United States, a paranoid royal presence, jealous of its possessions, was of little use to a people who had struck out from Bexar in order to form a society on their own terms. They had, it could be argued, more in common with their neighbors in Natchitoches, Louisiana, the town on the far side of the Neutral Ground, than they did with the Spanish officials sent to protect them.

NOTES

¹Antonia Castañeda, "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics, and Decolonization of History," *Pacific Historical Review*, 61 (November, 1992), p. 526.

²Alicia Tjarks, "Comparative Demographic Analysis of Texas, 1777-1793," in David J. Weber, ed., *New Spain's Far Northern Frontier* (Albuquerque, 1992), p. 142.

³David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven, 1979), p. 198.

⁴Odie B. Faulk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas, 1778-1821* (The Hague, 1964), pp. 44-45.

⁵Faulk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas*, p. 45.

⁶Ybarbo to Guerro, March 3, 1779. Translation and transcription by Robert Bruce Blake. Robert Bruce Blake Collection, Supplement: Volume I. Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin. Hereinafter, the Robert Bruce Blake Collection will be noted as RBB and its supplemental volumes as RBB Supplement. Because each volume's documents are arranged chronologically and because pagination is unclear, RBB documents will be referenced only by volume number. The title of each document, usually the surnames of the sender and recipient of an official communication, is Blake's own. This is also how the documents have been cited by most historians dealing with the Blake Collection.

⁷Cabelle to Navarro, January 17, 1780, RBB Supplement, II.

⁸Cabelle to Navarro, January 17, 1780, RBB Supplement, II.

⁹De Croix to Cabelle, June 19, 1780, RBB Supplement, II.

¹⁰De Nava to Muñoz, November 21, 1794, RBB Supplement, III.

¹¹Felix D. Almaraz, *Tragic Cavalier: Governor Manuel Salcedo of Texas, 1808-1813* (Austin, 1971), p. 5n.

¹²Governor de Elguezabal, April 1801, RBB X, pp. 27-8.

¹³Vidal to Governor of Texas, October 4, 1803, Historical Source Documents, Bexar Archive Material, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

¹⁴Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, pp. 291-96; J. Villasana Haggard, "The House of Barr and Davenport," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 40, (July, 1945), pp. 66-70. Haggard suggests that the confusion and disagreement of the location of the border was due to the

"several transfers of Louisiana between Spain and France and its purchase by the United States without there ever being a definite delineation of boundaries" (p. 66).

¹⁷Haggard, "The House of Barr and Davenport," p. 70.

¹⁸James McReynolds, "Spanish Nacogdoches," in Archie P. McDonald, ed., *Nacogdoches* (Burnet, Texas, 1980), p. 20.

¹⁹McReynolds, "Spanish Nacogdoches," p. 20.

²⁰Tomas Mansolo to Jose Maria Guadiana, April 1810, Robert Bruce Blake Papers, Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, 1792-1864, Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

²¹From a proclamation made June 20, 1803, by Governor Don Juan Bautista Elguezabal. Quoted in Mattie Austin Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement, 1801-1821* (Austin, 1927), p. 305.

²²Alvarez, *Tragic Cavalier*, p. 19.

²³Gregorio Mora to Governor, December 18, 1805, RBB XII.

²⁴Testament of de la Bega, June 6, 1810, Robert Bruce Blake Papers Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, 1792-1864 Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

²⁵See Governor Salcedo, April 5, 1810, Robert Bruce Blake Papers Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, 1792-1864 Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

²⁶Odie B. Faulk, quoted in Alvarez, *Tragic Cavalier*, p. 19.

²⁷Robert Bruce Blake, *Nacogdoches* (Nacogdoches, 1939), p. 5.

²⁸Tjarks, "Demographic Analysis of Texas," pp. 144-147. While Bexar's baptismal and burial records for this period have survived, those for Nacogdoches are no longer extant. In Bexar, priests recording baptisms and marriages would consistently mark down the race of each person involved in the ceremony.

²⁹Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, pp. 326-330.

³⁰Ramon Gutierrez suggests the Lobo and Coyote arc designations adopted from "Pueblo, Apache, and Navajo animal myths. . . ." See Ramon Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away* (Stanford, 1991), p. 197.

³¹Tjarks, "Demographic Analysis of Texas," p. 157.

³²It is interesting to note that those enumerated in 1792 whose birthplace was listed as *Los Adaes* had a suspicious tendency to be listed as completely "Spanish." Sixty-two of 133, almost half, of these people were described as Spaniards, quite a high percentage for an outpost dedicated to the conversion and assimilation of Indians. *Los Adaes* was, of course, Ybarbo's own birth-place. Census for Nacogdoches, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives, Box 2S70, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin. For the English translation of the census, see RBB XVIII, p. 1.

³³Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, p. 328.

³⁴Tjarks, "Demographic Analysis of Texas," p. 158.

³⁵Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, p. 328.

³⁶Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away*, p. 199. Although the baptismal records for Nacogdoches are no longer extant, the census offers a few examples of possible birth out of wedlock. For instance, the census of 1805 contains the following: "James McNulty, Irishman, a farmer, single, age 45. He has (*tiene*) a negro woman, age 30, and a little mulatto boy, age 3." Census of Nacogdoches, January 1, 1805, RBB VIII, p. 225.

³⁷Carlos Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936* (Austin, 1942), V, pp. 173-175.

³⁸Archie P. McDonald, "Personalities of Early Nacogdoches," in Archie P. McDonald, ed., *Nacogdoches*, p. 49.

³⁹Census for Nacogdoches, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives, Box 2S70, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

³⁸Census for Nacogdoches, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives, Box 2S70, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

³⁹In the census for 1792, Indians are registered as being married to a mulatta, Frenchmen, *color quevrado* men and women, mestiza/os, and both Spanish men and women. Census for Nacogdoches, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives, Box 2S70, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin. In none of the documents examined were Indian residents of Nacogdoches referred to in any way disparaging their racial status. The language employed to describe "wild" Indians is discussed below.

⁴⁰Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives, Box 2S70; Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1804, Bexar Archives, Box 2S96; Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1811, Bexar Archives, Box 2S137.

⁴¹"Life and Activities of Louis of the Caddo Nation," July 29, 1809, RBB Supplement VI, p. 393.

⁴²Elguezabal to Uranza, May 19, 1800, translated by Edward Hancock. RBB Collection, XL. Although not immediately carried out, official "judicial equity of Indians and Spaniards" was proclaimed in 1811. See, Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, p. 308.

⁴³Spanish Title, October 21, 1797. Robert Bruce Blake Historical Source Documents, Nacogdoches County, Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin. Castañeda reports that in 1810 Micheli lived on his Rancho de San Francisco with his wife and three "helpers." He also possessed "70 milch cows, 20 bulls, 5 horses, 7 mares, and 1 yoke of oxen." Carlos Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936* (Austin, 1942), V, p. 419.

⁴⁴James E. Corbin, "Indian Life in East Texas," in Archie P. McDonald, ed., *Nacogdoches*, p. 8.

⁴⁵Monthly Report of *Commandante* Gaudiana, January 31, 1802, RBB, XX, p. 10.

⁴⁶Elguezabal to Uranza, May 22, 1800, RBB, XL, p. 116.

⁴⁷Monthly Report of *Commandante* Gaudiana, January 31, 1802, RBB, XX, 8

⁴⁸See Cabello to de Croix, September 17, 1780, RBB Supplement, II; also see, October 21, 1791, Spanish Title, Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

⁴⁹Elguezabal to de Nava, June 25, 1801, RBB X, p. 32.

⁵⁰Cabello to de Croix, October 20, 1780, RBB Supplement, II.

⁵¹One such marriage is enumerated in the Census for 1792 as "*Francisco Alpando color quevrado oficio lavrador . . . casado con Gertrudis Rosules Negra. . .*" Gil Antonio Ybarbo, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives.

⁵²Gil Antonio Ybarbo, December 31, 1792, Bexar Archives; translation in Robert RBB, XVIII.

⁵³Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1804, Bexar Archives.

⁵⁴Ybarbo to Pacheco, 26 January 1788, RBB Supplement, II.

⁵⁵Vidal to Governor, October 4, 1803, RBB, X.

⁵⁶Monthly Report of *Commandante* Gaudiana, January 1802, RBB, XX, pp. 2, 8.

⁵⁷Elguezabal to de Nava, June 1801, RBB X, pp. 34-35.

⁵⁸Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1809, RBB XVIII. The slave named Silve, along with her sons Lewis and James, was granted her freedom in Barr's will. Barr died in 1810. See, Haggard, "The House of Barr and Davenport," p. 83. The quotation marks appear in the original document.

⁵⁹Census of Nacogdoches, December 31, 1809, RBB XVIII.

⁶⁰Documents dated September 5, through October 14, 1793, RBB Supplement III.

⁶¹Documents dated September 5, through October 14, 1793, RBB Supplement III.

⁶²Antonio Gil Ybarbo, December 31, 1790, Bexar Archives.

⁶³Antonio Gil Ybarbo, December 31, 1972, Bexar Archives.

⁴⁴Juana Maria Palacios to Governor, May 3, 1792. Robert Bruce Blake, Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, Box 3G296, The Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin. This highly deferential language employed by Palacios is used commonly by both men and women in their written communication with government officials.

⁴⁵Antonio to Governor, May 4, 1810. Robert Bruce Blake, Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, Box 3G296.

⁴⁶Robert Bruce Blake, "Biography of Santiago Dill," in RBB L, p. 48; Bexar Archives, July 19, 1809.

⁴⁷Blake Supplement VI, pp. 389, 396, 398.

⁴⁸Ybarbo, *et al*, to de Ripperda, October 4, 1773, RBB XLIV, p. 2.

⁴⁹Fr. Josef Francisco Mariano de la Garza, November 14, 1787, RBB Supplement, II.

⁵⁰Fr. Josef Francisco Mariano de la Garza, November 14, 1787, RBB Supplement, II.

⁵¹Monthly Report of *Commandante* Gaudiana, January 1802, RBB, XX, p. 3.

⁵²Monthly Report of *Commandante* Gaudiana, January 1802, RBB, XX, p. 12.

⁵³Juan Jose Curbelo, August 13, 1800, RBB XL.

⁵⁴De Nava to Elguebazal, February 4, 1801, RBB X

⁵⁵Vidal to Elguezabal, October 4, 1803, Blake X.

⁵⁶Bonavia, May 17, 1810, RBB X.

⁵⁷Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, V, p. 208.

⁵⁸Salcedo to Cordero, August 26, 1808, RBB XXXVIII.

⁵⁹Joseph Park. "Spanish Indian Policy in Northern Mexico, 1765-1810," in David J. Weber, ed., *New Spain's Northern Frontier*, p. 231.

⁶⁰Alvarez, *Tragic Cavalier*, pp. 118-124; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, p. 12.

⁶¹Alvarez, *Tragic Cavalier*, p. 133.

⁶²Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, pp. 77-78; Almaraz, *Tragic Cavalier*, pp. 151-52. Magee, a former lieutenant in the U. S. Army, was promoted to "colonel" by Gutierrez.

⁶³Haggard, "The House of Barr and Davenport," p. 85; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, pp. 79-80. The invaders used the war between Great Britain and the United States as partial pretext for their activities. During this period Spain was England's ally and rhetoric surrounding both conflicts centered around throwing off the shackles of European rule.

⁶⁴Perhaps Davenport was purposefully duping *Commandante* Montero. While Davenport alerted Montero that Gutierrez had returned to Natchitoches from the American East Coast, he claimed that "no one up to the present is able to fathom" Gutierrez's intentions. Meanwhile, Davenport was outfitting those Gutierrez would lead into Texas. See, Davenport to Montero, May 6, 1812, RBB Supplement VII.

⁶⁵Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, p. 83.

⁶⁶Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, p. 299.

⁶⁷Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, p. 120.

⁶⁸Mariano Mora, November 11, 1843. Jas. Smith v. Jesse Watkins. *et al.*, District Court of Nacogdoches County. Robert Bruce Blake Papers, Historical Source Documents: Deed Records, Nacogdoches County, 1792-1864, Box 3G296, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

⁶⁹Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, VI, p. 14.