

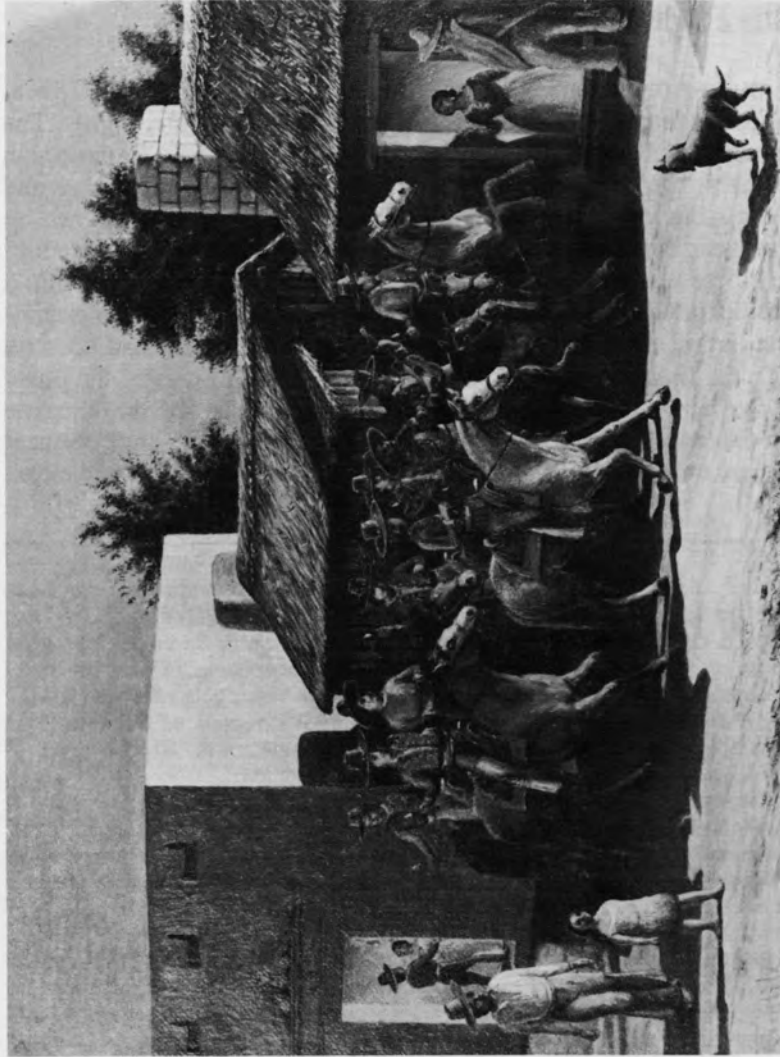
DISCOVERING THE TEJANO COMMUNITY IN “EARLY” TEXAS

Jesús F. de la Teja

Most Anglo-American writers refer to the Texas of the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s as early Texas, and in one sense they are right. The transformation of Texas into a member state of the American Union began in those years. Most of the country that the Anglo-American colonies and later the republic occupied was wilderness, as that term was defined by Euro-American concepts of wilderness and civilization. Unquestionably, however, there was an even earlier Texas—a Texas that existed within a Hispanic historical context and responded to Spanish-Mexican social, economic, political, and religious norms. Before that, there had been no Texas. To the Indian peoples who inhabited the coastal prairies, the piney woods, the high plains, and the mountains and basins of the extreme southern Rockies, there were very different economic and political geographies, most of which remain a mystery to us today.¹ Nevertheless,

Jesús F. de la Teja is associate professor of history at Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas. He is the author of a number of works on colonial and Mexican-period Texas and the Southwest, including *San Antonio de Béxar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier* (1995) and *A Revolution Remembered: The Memoirs and Selected Correspondence of Juan N. Seguín* (1991). He is also managing editor of *Catholic Southwest: A Journal of History and Culture*. An earlier version of this essay was presented in 1994 at the University of Texas at Arlington conference, “The Challenge of Statehood: A Sesquicentennial Symposium on Texas Annexation.”

¹ In this essay, the geographic extent of Texas is defined according to colonial (1716-1821) and Mexican era (1821-36) boundaries, which coincide with that area over which the Republic exercised effective control. The historiography of Texas is extensive. The following works are listed as examples of the most recent scholarship in their particular fields, which form a good starting place for study of early Texas history. A historiographical essay covering early Texas's place in relation to United States history is Gerald E. Poyo and Gilberto M. Hinojosa, “Spanish Texas and Borderlands Historiography in Transition: Implications for United States History,” *Journal of American History*, 75 (Sept. 1988), 393-416. The best narrative survey of Spanish-colonial Texas history is Donald Chipman, *Spanish Texas, 1519-1821* (Austin, 1992); the best monograph on socio-economic history during that period is Jesús F. de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier* (Albuquerque, 1995); a recent study of Tejanos during the Mexican period (1821-35) is Andrés Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836* (College Station, 1994); the best single volume on the Indian peoples of Texas remains W.W. Newcomb, Jr., *The Indians of Texas: From Prehistoric to Modern Times* (Austin, 1961); a thorough study of relations among the various Indian



"El convite para el baile," ["Invitation to the dance"] Theodore Gentilz (1819-1906), oil on canvas, Yanaguana Society Collection, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio. The horse culture of the Tejanos, perfectly suited to the vast semi-arid expanses of the Mexican north and Texas, served as the wellspring for America's cowboy culture of the latter nineteenth century.

in this essay "Early Texas," denotes the span between the 1820s and 1850s, during which Texas in its modern form came into being.

The foundations of this work are based on what other scholars have had to say about everyday life in nineteenth-century Texas. Fifty years ago, William Ransom Hogan published *The Texas Republic: A Social and Economic History*, a path-breaking work that remains unsurpassed in breadth of scope and depth of understanding. Not surprisingly for his time, Hogan was primarily interested in the immigrant white population, not the preexisting Hispanic one. His references to the Tejanos (Texans of Spanish-Mexican heritage) are few and most often incidental. For instance, in six pages devoted to Republic-period housing, there is only one paragraph on Tejano architecture. In the six pages devoted to clothing there is one paragraph on how slaves were dressed, but not one line on Tejano fashions. This coverage is generous by comparison with Joseph Schmitz's earlier social history of the Republic of Texas, *Thus They Lived*. Schmitz explicitly limited attention to the Anglo-Americans "since they constituted the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants." For him the black population was beneath attention, and the Mexicans could be dismissed in the following terms: "These people were not assimilated, but neither did they in the least retard the progressive Americans."²

About a dozen years ago another important book on Texas social history appeared, Arnaldo De León's *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900*. Although encompassing a much broader time span than *The Texas Republic*, De León's work dealt with many of the same issues. He looked at how Mexican Texans, the Tejanos, went about constructing and reconstructing their communities to meet the exigencies of the environment, both physical and social. De León's most important contribution was his description of a complex economic, political, and social life among people usually dismissed simply as Mexicans.³

and European groups in the region during the eighteenth century, with significant coverage of Texas, is Elizabeth A.H. John, *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795* (College Station, 1975). Also very useful for background information is Ronnie C. Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols., Austin, 1996).

² Joseph W. Schmitz, *Thus They Lived: Social Life in the Republic of Texas* (San Antonio, 1935), 1; William Ransom Hogan, *The Texas Republic: A Social and Economic History* (1946; rep., Austin, 1969).

³ Arnaldo De León, *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900* (Albuquerque, 1982). In 1968 a brief note on society in Hispanic San Antonio by Caroline Remy, "Hispanic-Mexican San Antonio, 1836-1861," appeared in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 71 (Apr. 1968), 564-83, including twelve pages of plates from period paintings.

Curiously, many of Hogan's descriptions of republic-era customs, practices, and material culture among Anglo-American settlers bear considerable resemblance to ones described by De León for the Tejano community.

The purpose of this essay is to make some of these connections. Focusing primarily on Tejanos, it points out how the two "early Texas," one largely descended from southern United States colonial and early national experiences, the other from Mexican colonial culture, compared, The evidence demonstrates that despite suspicions, and sometimes overt racism and antipathy, there existed between early Texans and Tejanos much common ground. In what they ate, how they lived, what they enjoyed, and what they suffered, Tejanos and Texians had more in common than they realized. How the two groups drifted increasingly apart is another story, however, and comment on the political and legal status of Tejanos is beyond the scope of the present work.⁴

Corn—*maiz* to the Spanish world—was easy to grow under a variety of conditions; could be consumed before ripening; and was the most important gift of the New World to the Old. It was already being grown

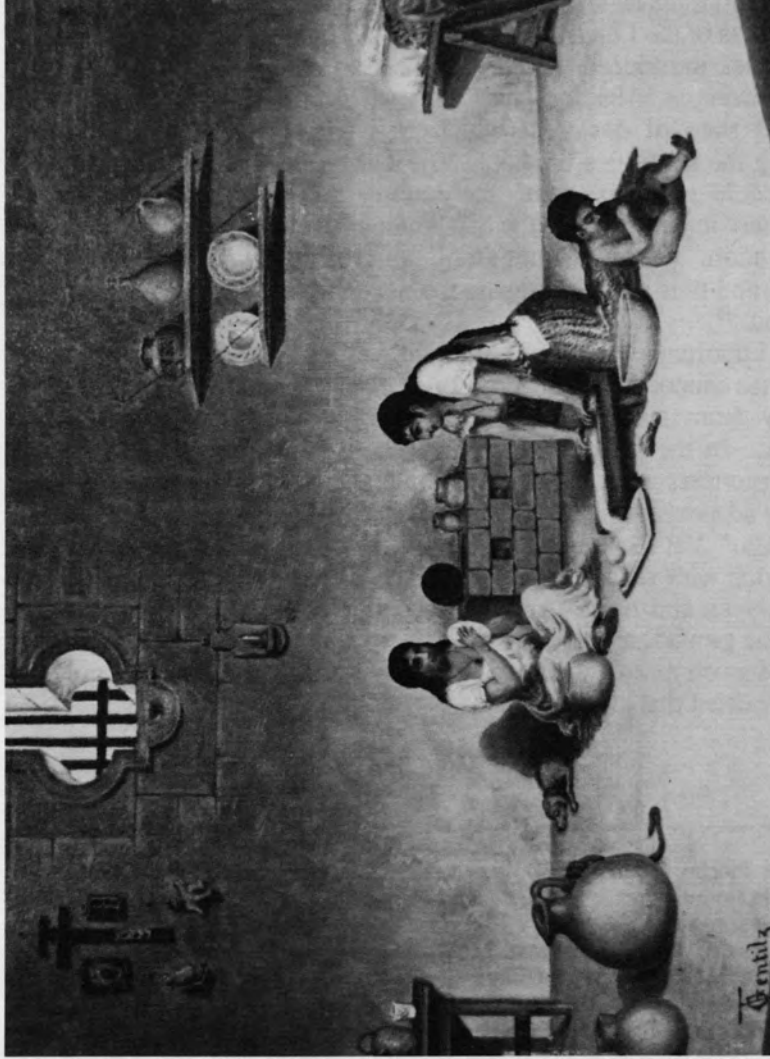
⁴ Along with De León's work cited above, see David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin, 1987), for discussion of political and economic issues affecting the Tejano population. This study is grounded in an important body of sources on which Hogan also relied. Despite its remote location well into the nineteenth century, Texas got its share of travelers, immigrants, and artists who documented their adventures and observations. The men (and a few women) who wrote about Texas normally did so with their own prejudices in mind. There is in these writings, for instance, very little differentiation between "Mexicans" and Tejanos, except to point out that the latter were a particularly low subset of the former. Fortunately, many of these writers spent considerable time describing some of the basic elements of Tejano life: food, clothing, shelter, livelihood, and pastimes. On the breadth of traveler accounts see Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *Travelers in Texas, 1761-1860* (Austin, 1967). The question of Anglo-American prejudice toward Tejanos has been carefully, if controversially, studied by Arnaldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin, 1983). An excellent brief essay covering the same issue on a borderlands-wide basis is David J. Weber, "'Scarce More than Apes': Historical Roots of Anglo-American Stereotypes of Mexicans in the Border Region," in *New Spain's Far Northern Frontier: Essays on Spain in the American West, 1540-1821*, ed. David J. Weber (Albuquerque, 1979), 293-307. A small number of artists also visited antebellum Texas and painted their impressions of the places, people, and wildlife of the region. Among these, Theodore Gentilz left the most extensive record of Tejano everyday life, and his renditions of these activities bear out the testimony of informants. The small number of his canvases included in this essay, attest to this immigrant artist's sympathy for his new home on the Mexican-American frontier. The best survey of nineteenth-century Texas painting is Sam DeShong Ratcliffe, *Painting Texas History to 1900* (Austin, 1992). Also useful is

in Texas when the first Hispanic settlers arrived in the early eighteenth century to establish permanent residence. For hundreds of years the Caddoan people of East Texas, part of the Mississippian culture group, had raised corn, as had the Jumanos of the trans-Pecos and, perhaps, even the ancestors of the Lipan Apaches. What the Spanish colonial settlers and missionaries introduced was the application of Spanish technologies—plowing, *acequia* irrigation, and new varieties of the staple. Even in the advanced state of decay in which Hispanic agriculture found itself following the hostilities of the 1830s, Thomas W. Bell, a Texas army recruit could recognize that “the country around this place or rather immediately in the valley of the San Antonio river has been in a high state of cultivation. . . . By ditches from the river the whole valley has been irrigated and thus entirely obviate the necessity of rain in the cultivation of the soil.”⁵

The importance of corn to both the Anglo-American population and the Tejanos cannot be overstated. Boiled ears of corn and mush kept many a family from starving on both the Anglo-American and Mexican frontiers. In the *Texas Republic*, William Hogan writes that “newly arrived pioneers always hastened to plant patches of corn, a grain distinctly adapted to its role as a fundamental factor in the conquest of the wilderness.” Yet Hogan does not draw the connection between Tejanos and Anglos with regard to this fundamental aspect of frontier life. For both Mexican and Anglo-American frontier farmers, corn was the first crop in the ground, and its hardiness, versatility, and quick consumability making it much more popular than wheat. An 1840 immigrants’ guide to Texas reported that

Pauline A. Pinckney, *Painting in Texas: The Nineteenth Century* (Austin, 1967). On Gentilz, see Dorothy Steinbomer Kendall and Carmen Perry, eds., *Gentilz: Artist of the Old Southwest* (Austin, 1974).

⁵ Thomas W. Bell to father, Mar. 31, 1842, quoted in Llerena Friend, ed., “Thomas W. Bell Letters,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 63 (Apr. 1960), 590. On Texas Indian agriculture, see Newcomb, *The Indians of Texas*, 113-14, 238, 292-93; Spanish colonial agriculture is covered in de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, 75-96. A monographic study of the Texas missions as an economic system awaits publication. Two brief syntheses of missionary activities at the San Antonio, including development of agricultural skills among the neophytes, are Gilberto M. Hinojosa, “The Religious-Indian Communities: The Goals of the Friars,” *Tejano Origins in Eighteenth-Century San Antonio*, ed. Gerald E. Poyo and Gilberto M. Hinojosa (Austin, 1991), 61-83; and Mardith K. Schuetz, “The Spanish Missions, Part II: The Mission Indians,” in *San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century*, San Antonio Bicentennial Heritage Committee (San Antonio, 1976), 35-46.



"Tortilleras (La cocina)," ["Tortilla makers (The kitchen)"] Theodore Gentilz (1819-1906), oil on canvas, Yanaguana Society Collection, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio, The *metate* (mortar) and *mano* (pestle), an Indian device, produced the tortillas and tamale dough that Anglo Americans found so appetizing.

at present but little else than corn and rye, and very little of the latter grain, are cultivated in any part of the country. This crop gives bread to the family, fattens their pork, feeds their working horses and oxen, and furnishes corn blades, usually called fodder, which serve here all the purposes of hay in the northern states. Thus this one single article, comprises nearly all the products of field husbandry throughout the republic.

As a matter of fact, from Spanish-colonial times until the last days of the republic wheat remained an imported luxury.⁶

If the Republic-era Tejana used a *metate* and *mano* while the Anglo-American frontierswoman used an Armstrong mill, the result was the same: a coarse meal that could be used in numerous ways. In the absence of American grinding tools, some Anglo women adopted Mexican methods, as Mrs. Dilue Harris reminisced: "Mrs. Roark had a Mexican utensil for grinding corn, called a *metate*. It was a large rock which had a place scooped out of the center that would hold a peck of corn. It had a stone roller. It was hard work to grind corn on it, but the meal made good bread." The *tortilla* may have had its counterpart in cornbread, but the tamale stood alone as the one Mexican item that appears to have won universal approval (other than silver) from Anglo-Americans otherwise quick to disparage everything Hispanic. J. C. Duval, gave an unqualified endorsement: "I have often 'worried them down' . . . without being fatigued, and I can recommend them as an excellent dish." So did Captain W. S. Henry, United States Army, who had the opportunity to try tamales while in Corpus Christi in August 1845. "This afternoon, at Mrs. B.'s, I ate a Mexican preparation called *themales*," he wrote. "It is made of corn-meal, chopped meat, and Cayenne pepper, nicely wrapped in a piece of corn-husk, and boiled. I know of nothing more palatable."⁷

Livestock provided food, clothing, transportation, and entertainment not only for Tejanos, but Indians and Anglos as well. From an early date Texas acquired a reputation as prime ranching country, and Tejanos as

⁶ Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 32-33, 36; A.B. Lawrence, *Texas in 1840, or the Emigrant's Guide to the New Republic* . . . (1840; rep., New York, 1973), 114; de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, 91, 93.

⁷ Dilue Harris, "Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris, I," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 4 (Oct. 1900), 109; J.C. Duval, *Early Times in Texas* (2 vols., Austin, 1892), II, 68; W.S. Henry, *Campaign Sketches of the War with Mexico* (New York, 1848), 27.

natural pastoralists. Hogan, however, finds almost nothing to say about Tejanos and ranching. Yet with only minimal editing, William Bollaert's description of Tejano *vaqueros* in 1843 could easily be applied to later cowboys: "*Rancheros* . . . [are] a rude uncultivated race of beings, who pass the greater part of their lives in the saddle. . . . Unused to comfort, and regardless alike of ease and danger, they have a hardy, brigand sun-burnt appearance, especially when seen with a slouched hat, leather hunting shirt, leggings and Indian mocassins, armed with a large knife, musket, or rifle, and sometimes pistols." Somewhat later, Frederick Law Olmstead, who was quite condescending in his remarks about Tejanos, described them as "excellent drovers and shepherds." The anonymous informant of *Texas in 1837* asserted that the landscape drew people and livestock together: "Almost all of them have given their attention to the growth of stock and have bestowed no more labor upon agriculture than was necessary to supply their own limited wants." A decade later an old Texas settler put it more bluntly commenting, "The most profitable business which a person can follow in this country is stock-raising; especially if he has but a small force."⁸ No wonder that the oft-described "indolent" Tejanos had been raising stock as their principal profit-making business for generations.

Tejanos, moreover, had learned to make as much use of cattle as Comanches did of buffalo. One Anglo-American observer was struck by the variety of uses to which Tejanos subjected rawhide.

Some say Texas is made of rawhides & Spanish horses. Bless me, they apply rawhides to more uses than we can conceive of. Rawhides constitute the carpets, chairbottoms, cots, beds, shelves, partitions,

⁸ W. Eugene Hollon and Ruth Lapham Butler, eds., *William Bollaert's Texas* (Norman, OK, 1956), 217 (this is a controversial work, the full authenticity of which has recently come into question); Frederick Law Olmstead, *A Journey Through Texas, Or, a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier* (1857; rep., Austin, 1978), 162; Andrew Forest Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837: An Anonymous, Contemporary Narrative* (1958; rep., Austin, 1986), 120; W.B. Dewees, *Letters from an Early Settler of Texas* (1852; rep., Waco, 1968), 300; Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 21. Unlike the subject of Tejano agriculture, which has received scant scholarly attention, early ranching continues to attract significant work. For a general explanation of ranching in the San Antonio River valley during the colonial era see de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, 97-117. Among the debates in the field is the extent and significance of Hispanic influences. See, for example, Ray August, "Cowboys v. Rancheros: The Origins of Western American Livestock Law," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 96 (Apr. 1993), 457-88; Jack Jackson, *Los Mesteños: Spanish Ranching in Texas, 1721-1821* (College Station, 1986); and Terry G. Jordan, *Trails to Texas: Southern Roots of Western Cattle Ranching* (Lincoln, 1981).

wagon beds, packs, withers, ropes, saddle-trumpery in part, and numberless other contrivances of the Mexicans. The lariat for noosing wilde horses, or stacking [*sic.*] horses out to grass, is braided rope of rawhide strands.

He might well have added that Tejanos made soap and candles from the tallow and jerky from the dried beef, just as did Anglo-American frontier folk. Yet, Tejanos did draw the line at certain uses, as the French visitor Auguste Fréteillièr remarked in 1843: "sweetbreads, calves' flesh and head not being appreciated by the Mexicans, they gave them to us for nothing."⁹

The first commercial cattle drives from Texas took place by the early 1770s. From that time forward, what little export earnings—legal and illegal—Tejanos experienced came from the livestock trade. Cattle drives to Coahuila, while legal, were not as lucrative as drives to Louisiana, where the booming frontier market created a steady demand. Picking up on Tejano tradition, Texan stockmen continued to take their herds into Louisiana, more often than not breaking the same kinds of laws that had been passed in colonial Texas for similar reasons. "Before the Revolution," one contemporary observed, "the Texian found a market for his cattle at New Orleans, where they were driven in large droves, and at the island of Cuba. . . . Cattle are still driven across the Sabine, notwithstanding the great exertions of the authorities to prevent it."¹⁰

One of the more careful and observant visitors to the western frontier, a German by the name of W. Steinert, distinguished among various classes of horse and mule stock. American and "Spanish" horses were the best and most valuable, costing \$100 or more. More common was the "Mexican" horse, "which is very hardy and makes out on ordinary feed," and which could be had for between \$10 and \$30. Below this was the mustang, to which the author of *Texas in 1840* referred: "the mustangs cannot be used much because they rarely become entirely tame. You can buy them for five to ten dollars, but as a rule they run off if they have not been thoroughly tamed. Catching and taming them is breakneck work, and it is performed mostly by Mexicans." As for mules, the American variety cost between \$70 and \$100, while Mexican mules went for no

⁹ James O. Breeden, ed., *A Long Ride in Texas: The Explorations of John Leonard Riddell* (College Station, 1994), 55-56; Auguste Fréteillièr, "Adventures of a Castrovillian," in *Castro-Ville and Henry Castro, Empresario*, ed. Julia N. Waugh (San Antonio, 1934), 91.

¹⁰ Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 67; Nettie Lee Benson, "Bishop Marín de Porras and Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 51 (July 1947), 33.

more than \$60, and could "also be bought very cheaply from the Indians." Thomas Bell lamented that the Indians made the horse-mule trade unacceptably risky, for "it would be a fine business to bring fine horses here and sell them and then take a drove of mules back to the states of Miss. & La. Mules can be bought low from the Mexicans about San Antonio and the rivers west of this."¹¹

Not surprisingly, Tejanos and Texans shared the concept of utility in their fashions. Once again, the frontier environment dictated the choices that people made. That the results could be strikingly dissimilar in outward appearance has obscured the underlying similarity of function. In the absence of an efficient commercial network and a stable and sufficient money supply, people made do with few garments and created their own fashion trends. Hogan makes clear that homespun, home-tanned and home-sewn, were the order of the day for most people in the republic era. Furthermore, a considerable number of people went barefoot or made use of home-constructed shoes.¹²

Aside from the "style," there is little to distinguish the Anglo-Texan from the Tejano. As a matter of fact, from the Mexican perspective, Tejanos had already abandoned their cultural heritage in this regard. Two members of General Manuel de Mier y Terán's boundary commission to Texas in 1828 found Tejanos to have come under foreign influence in their customs. Jean Louis Berlandier, the expedition botanist, noted that "in their gatherings, the women prefer to dress in the fashion of Louisiana, and by so doing they participate both in the customs of the neighboring nation and of their own." The commission's artist, Lieutenant José María Sánchez, was even more critical of Nacogdoches Tejanos: "Accustomed to continuous commerce with the North Americans, they have imitated their customs, and so it may truthfully be said that they are Mexican only by birth, for even the Castilian language they speak with considerable ignorance." In 1846, William McClintock also noted that among Béxar women fashion seemed to favor that of the States: "the

¹¹ Gilbert J. Jordan, trans. and ed., "W. Steinert's View of Texas in 1849," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 81 (July 1977), 46-47; Friend, ed. "Thomas W. Bell Letters," 106.

¹² Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 45-47. Serious study of fashion in Spanish and Mexican Texas, as with most other aspects of material culture, has yet to be published. The one article on the subject for the republic era, Mary Reid, "Fashion of the Republic," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 45 (Jan. 1942), 244-54, does not contain a single reference to Mexican Texans. De León, *The Tejano Community*, 133-34, devotes less than two pages to the subject.

dress is purely American in style and material, some times rich and costly, but always plain and simple, white being the color most worn by both sexes."¹³

Women's dress got no simpler than when they went about their daily chores. Climate and custom conspired to create situations of which some observers could not fail but take inspirational note. The hot work of preparing tortillas, from the grinding of corn on metates to cooking the flat cakes on the round clay or iron griddles known as *comales*, often made comfort and modesty incompatible. So did doing the wash. Robert Brahan, who arrived in the San Antonio area in the 1850s, was pleasantly confronted by the way Tejanas went about that particular chore. "Our washing days fri. & saturday," he commented, "hundreds of Mexican females (styled Greasers) can be seen in the stream up to their knees scrubbing away with only one light garment on, without sleeves, low on the breast & very short."¹⁴

Certainly men's apparel was more typically Mexican, at least in the vicinity of San Antonio. As Bollaert's description of *ranchero* attire makes clear, however, field work demanded a style almost indistinguishable from Anglo-American frontier fashion. Typical evening wear included the short jacket, wide-brimmed hat, and colorful sash. Daily dress, at least for the laboring general population, was simple and functional. "The men mostly at this season dress in white, a crimson silk sash about the waist superseded the use of suspenders," William McClintock noted. "A linnen [*sic*] roundabout and sugar lofe hat complete their entire dress. When the weather is cool which is the case every few days, they throw a Mexican blanket of rich and varigated colors over the shoulders. These blankets are worth from fifty to seventy five dollars."¹⁵

Aside from tamales, the Mexican, or Saltillo blanket, seems to have left the most unequivocally positive impression on observers. Lieutenant George Mead of the United States Army, camped at Corpus Christi, noted the quality and colorfulness of the blankets. In her memoirs, Annie Harris

¹³ Quoted in Jesús F. de la Teja and John Wheat, "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 89 (July 1985), 9; Mauricio Molina, ed., *Crónica de Tejas: Diario de viaje de la comisión de límites* (Mexico, 1988), 71 (author's translation); William A. McClintock, "Journal of a Trip Through Texas and Northern Mexico in 1846-1847," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 34 (Oct. 1930), 142.

¹⁴ Robert Weakley Brahan, Jr., to John Donelson Coffee, Jr., Jan. 20, 1855, quoted in Aaron M. Boom, "Texas in the 1850's, As Viewed by a Recent Arrival," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 70 (Oct. 1966), 284.

¹⁵ McClintock, "Journal of a Trip," 143.

similarly recounted the impression left by a band of Karankawas returning the horses and goods taken from a group of Mexican traders they had assaulted near Matagorda: "The Indians presented a formidable array, riding into town on the gayly caparisoned horses of the Mexicans, made still more showy by the brilliantly colored Mexican blankets." Steinert complements this imagery, noting that the Mexicans "are excellent horsemen, and their saddles are often highly ornamented. While riding their horses they throw artistically woven blankets around their bodies in a becoming manner."¹⁶

Whether picket hut or *jacal*, the form and function of housing were similar—simple, labor-saving, inexpensive, easy to abandon and rebuild. In the absence of sawmills, or money with which to purchase dressed lumber, early Tejanos continued to employ the building techniques of their Mesoamerican forebears. The *jacal* may have been crude, but it served its purpose well from the time of the earliest Spanish colonial settlement in the region until the end of the nineteenth century. John Leonard Riddell, passing through San Antonio in September 1839, found the population at work throwing up a new subdivision, most probably what became known as La Villita, and described the *jacal* quite elegantly.

Four-fifths of the houses are thatched with a kind of reed, the cat tail flag (*Typha angustifolia*) it may be, but I think it is some kind of sedge or grass. Some are in progress of erection on the Alamo side of the river, and from them I gathered some idea of the Mexican mode of building. A trench is dug around in a square for about 1 foot deep for the foundation of the walls. Timbers unhewn 4 to 6 inches in diameter, and as high as the house is designed to be, are set in this trench, side by side and on end, and bound together some 5 or 8 feet above the ground with thongs of raw hide. A few poles are attached by rawhide horizontally for supporting the roof, which is thatched with reeds. The inside is plastered with mortar, except over head and under foot. The naked ground serves universally for floor.

This common structure in which the poor lived could be found masquerading behind a clapboard façade in Houston about the same time.

¹⁶ Ethel Mary Franklin, ed., "Memoirs of Mrs. Annie P. Harris," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 40 (Jan. 1937), 241; Jordan, "Steinert's View of Texas," 64. Saltillo blankets are a particular type of *serape* or *sarape*. A very brief history of the Saltillo variety, stressing technical aspects of its production, is Kathrin Colburn, "The Saltillo Serape: History and Conservation," *Hali: The International Magazine of Antique Carpet and Textile Art*, 17 (Feb.-Mar. 1995), 80-87.

And, according to Hogan, the "picket huts" abounded among the Anglo-American settlers of central Texas during the first decades of settlement.¹⁷

Only when one went up the social ladder to the few prominent families that made up a threadbare elite in every frontier town, could notice be taken of the divergence between Spanish-Mexican and Anglo-American forms. Construction in stone held the same symbolism for Tejanos as dressed-lumber construction held for Anglo Americans. Mary Maverick seems to have had no problem with the "Barrera place," a stone house at the northeast corner of Commerce and Soledad streets, which her husband bought in 1839 and which remained the family residence for a decade. Her description of the place is matter-of-fact and devoid of negative language. "The main house was of stone," she remembered, "and had three rooms . . . [and] a shed in the yard along the east wall of the house towards the north end."¹⁸ Other Anglo families also moved into the better homes surrounding the plazas, for some time sharing the space with the descendants of the people who had built them.

Though some of the Tejanos' architecture performed its function suitably for Anglo immigrants, it nevertheless remained distinct. The exotic nature of this more durable architecture was noted by many a traveler through San Antonio. According to J.C. Duval, "at that time there were but few Americans in the place, and as all the houses were built in the Spanish or Morisco style, it presented a novel appearance to us." A different Old World comparison was made by J.W. Benedict, who also visited Béxar in the late 1830s: "San Antonio de Bexar is a somber looking town," he observed. "The original town is built from hewn stone

¹⁷ Breeden, ed., *A Long Ride in Texas*, 53-54; Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 28, 30. Spanish colonial and Mexican architectural forms in Texas have received some attention in scholarly publications, although mostly with regard to the Rio Grande valley area of settlement, where a great deal of it survives. See Joe S. Graham, "The Jacal in South Texas: The Origins and Form of a Folk House," in *Hecho en Tejas: Texas-Mexican Folk Arts and Crafts*, ed. Joe S. Graham (Denton, TX, 1991), 293-308; Joe C. Freeman, "Regional Architecture and Associated Crafts," *A Shared Experience: The History, Architecture and Historic Designation of the Lower Rio Grande Heritage Corridor*, ed. Mario Sánchez (1992, 2d ed., Austin, 1994), 137-97; and Willard B. Robinson, "Colonial Ranch Architecture in the Spanish-Mexican Tradition," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 83 (Oct. 1979), 123-50. Charles Ramsdell and Carmen Perry, *San Antonio: A Historical and Pictorial Guide* (1959; 2d rev. ed., Austin, 1985), contains useful descriptions of the remaining Hispanic architectural heritage of San Antonio.

¹⁸ Rena Maverick Green, ed., *Samuel Maverick, Texan: 1803-1870* (San Antonio, 1952), 85.

and from its antiquity presents a very Gothic appearance being built about a century since."¹⁹

Everyday life Republic-era San Antonio was also marked by the visible reminders of warfare. Travelers commented on the evidence that San Antonio continued to be a hostile frontier, a boundary between contending forces—Indian, Mexican, and Anglo-American. Edward Stiff, author of an immigrant's guide, summed up the appearance of the town center thus: "Every thing denotes a system of defence; the houses are built of stone, nearly all of only one story, with flat roofs, and a parapet or strong wall above the covering, which is pierced for fire arms as well as the walls below." Writing in a bit more detail, William Bollaert observed, "San Antonio has been the theatre of so many revolutionary scenes and skirmishes, that not a house has escaped the evidences of strife. The walls and houses on all sides are perforated by balls, and even the steeple of the church bears evidence of rough usage from cannon shot."²⁰

Gonzales and Harrisburg, burned to the ground during the war for independence, experienced brief moments of tragedy compared with San Antonio. As gateways between the interior of Texas and Mexico, they had been invaded numerous times and almost constantly harassed by Indian raiders. John Holland Jenkins, reflecting in his memoirs on an 1842 visit to Béxar was somewhat more poetic. "What a city of devastation and bloodshed has San Antonio been!" he gushed. "Whatever trouble ever visited Texas, this little town seemed to be heart and center of her suffering, so that she has been well-termed as a 'Slaughter Pen.'"²¹

Aside from the destruction occasioned by warfare, both to the built environment and the human population, Texans were exposed to continuous violence from other quarters. Considering the abundance of evidence and the influence that Indian hostilities had on westward settlement, there is scant attention paid to the subject in Hogan's *The Republic of Texas*. Hogan spends more time on violence within white society, and has almost nothing to say about Tejanos and violence. He made it clear that the law in Texas was often taken into private hands.

¹⁹ Duval, *Early Times in Texas*, II, 64; J. W. Benedict, "Diary of a Campaign Against the Comanches," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 32 (Apr. 1929), 304-05.

²⁰ Edward Stiff, *The Texan Emigrant: Being a Narration of the Adventures of the Author in Texas . . .* (1840; rep., Waco, 1968), 29; Hollon and Butler, eds., *William Bollaert's Texas*, 219.

²¹ John Holmes Jenkins III, ed., *Recollections of Early Texas: The Memoirs of John Holland Jenkins* (1958; rep., Austin, 1987), 95-96.

"Texans commonly settled differences by personal encounters," Hogan contended. Juries, when they were employed, seemed partial to pleas of self-defense and extenuating circumstances. The German visitor Steinert sums it up well: "In your dealings with Texans of American extraction you must be very careful not to provoke them. Your reward might be a bullet in your head, and nobody would take any notice of it."²²

Indian hostilities constituted the single most important factor in the development of Texas until the 1870s. From its permanent settlement in the early eighteenth century, Spanish Texas was a magnet for Lipan Apaches, Comanches, and other Plains peoples who, rather than breed their own horse stock, participated in elaborate round-robin forays of expropriations. One Indian group took from the Spanish, and promptly lost their equine booty to a second group, which would then ride into a Spanish settlement to barter the animals back to the frontiersmen for trade goods. One episode described by John Riddell in 1839 was an all too familiar part of everyday life to Tejanos. "The daring Comanches then were and now are known to be prowling in the neighborhood," Riddle commented. "Two nights previous . . . they murdered a man on the same road and took his wife and two horses off as booty." Matters had not improved four years later, according to John A. King, who reported that "the Indians & perhaps some white men steal horses on all occasions."²³

Despite numerous references to the superiority of Anglos to Mexicans and Indians, the former group was not immune from the same kinds of losses experienced by the Tejanos. Mary Maverick's brief account of her family's efforts to farm in the area just north of the Alamo is instructive. "This year our negro men plowed and planted one labor above the Alamo and were attacked by Indians," she wrote. "Griffin and Wiley ran into the river and saved themselves. The Indians cut the traces and took off the work animals and we did not farm there again." The following passage from J. W. Benedict's journal of a campaign against the Comanches west of San Antonio makes clear that despite the vaunted Indian-fighting skills of the Anglo-Americans, they were often victimized by the lords of the

²² Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 260; Jordan, trans. and ed., "Steinert's View of Texas," 62. Various aspects of violence directed at, or occasioned by, Tejanos are treated in Gerald E. Poyo, ed., *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850*, (Austin, 1996). The best of the recent studies on Texas war of independence, both of which give considerable attention to Tejano participation, are Stephen L. Hardin, *Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution* (Austin, 1994); and Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835-1836* (College Station, 1992).

²³ Breeden, ed., *A Long Ride in Texas*, 55; John A. King to William A. Bell, Feb. 10, 1843, quoted in Friend, ed. "Thomas W. Bell Letters," 592.

Plains just like Tejanos. "Our first night of encampment here we had three horses stolen by the Indians," Benedict lamented. "The horses were all tied or staked within the Guard but from the stealthiness of the Indians and the darkness of the night they succeeded in taking three horses and escaping with them about 2 hours before daybreak[.] I myself being on the guard at the time they were taken."²⁴

Consistent with the marginal inclusion of Tejanos in regard to general violence in the rest of his text, Hogan presents them only in passing as victims of a gang of rustlers known as the "Band of Brothers." Yet Tejanos were affected by the lawlessness endemic to the republic. Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, who was in Texas in the mid-1840s, noted that homicides were common in the republic. He singled out the relationship of Tejanos to violence, not as perpetrators, but rather as its victims. "Burglary and violent theft are rare occurrences and happen mostly to the unfortunate Mexicans," he declared, "and then they are always connected with murder."²⁵

That Tejanos became subject to bullying at the hands of Texans during this period of time is clear from other sources as well. A visitor to San Antonio in 1837 described his arrival with some friends at a dance as initially tense. He remembered, "Our presence excited [*sic*] no agreeable sensations, as great prejudice usually prevails in the minds of the Mexicans against all Americans. It is a matter of no surprise that such is the case, as the appearance of such persons is the signal for riots and disturbances. It has happened that strangers form themselves into a company and . . . put the male part to flight and take possession of the house."²⁶ All of this is not to say that Tejanos were not violent, only that it was not as obvious as among Texians.

A rough and dangerous frontier life could hardly be expected to be the medium in which "high" culture would develop. As in other aspects of life, a great deal of similarity can be found in the pastime pursuits of Tejanos and Texians. Hogan writes that "dancing and horse racing were among the most common amusements." And, as for games of chance: "A fever for gambling ran in the blood of the age. It was a chronic social ailment in the South and reached even higher virulence in Texas." He also mentions that theater was popular wherever the resources made it possible. Yet, as in most other areas of life during the republic, he has

²⁴ Green, ed., *Samuel Maverick*, 87; Benedict, *Diary of a Campaign*, 305.

²⁵ Carl, Prince of Solms-Braunfels, *Texas, 1844-1845* (Houston, 1936), 57.

²⁶ Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 105.

little to say about Tejano pursuits in this regard. In fact, his only comment regarding Tejanos and amusements is almost an aside: "In the period of the Republic, most of the small Texas towns, including the few predominantly Spanish, had race courses."²⁷

Tejanos had as rich a social life as Texans, however. Their vices were the same, and their entertainments were similar in form and often in function. Perhaps it was the town-centered living pattern of Tejanos that appeared to Anglo observers to indicate a more desultory and dissolute way of life. Anglo-Americans often became converted to the new ways they discovered among the Tejanos, however, which suggests that Mexican behavior may not have been as strange as some of the writings might indicate.

The daily siesta and regular bathing were features of Tejano life that, according to some writers, symbolized the population's "unconcerned indolence and ease." William Bollaert made quick work of the Tejano's work-day, stressing the portion of leisure over strenuous activities among Béxar's town population. "Early in the morning they go to mass, work a little on the *labores*, dine, sleep the *siesta*, and in the evening amuse themselves with tinkling the guitar to their *dulcinea*, gaming, or dancing," he scorned. J.W. Benedict did not even give Tejanos the credit of working in the morning: "People here are very indolent[,] scarcely any person stirring in fore part of the day."²⁸

In the Tejano's way of life, however, "loafing" seemed to some to be a good adaptation to the environment. W. Steinert, the meticulous German observer, had the following advice for would-be settlers: "you should never ride horseback during the noon hours; from eleven to three o'clock you should look for a shady place." Mary Maverick's memoirs make equally clear that the Tejanos' behavior was rational. "During this summer [1841], the American ladies led a lazy life of ease," she remembered. "We fell into the fashion of the climate, dined at twelve, then followed a siesta, until three, when we took a cup of coffee and a bath." And some Anglo observers seem to have quickly accepted this

²⁷ Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 112, 128, 131. There are no published studies of colonial and Mexican-Texan folklore. A general study of the customs and social practices of Mexican Americans in general is John O. West, comp. and ed., *Mexican-American Folklore: Legends, Songs, Festivals, Proverbs, Crafts, Tales of Saints, of Revolutionaries, and More* (Little Rock, 1988). The educational environment in Spanish and Mexican Texas is treated in Max Berger, "Education in Texas During the Spanish and Mexican Periods," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 51 (July 1947), 41-53.

²⁸ Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 105; Hollon and Butler, eds., *William Bollaert's Texas*, 218; Benedict, "Diary of a Campaign," 305.

particular daily ritual. "From early evening until the soft hour of twilight the inhabitants flock to the river to bathe," William Bollaert noted; "and then the bronze-like forms of southern nymphs may be seen joyfully gamboling in the limpid stream, with their arch looks and their dark hair floating over their shoulders."²⁹

After the bath, dances and gambling were the norm. Superficially, these events proved for Anglos the indolence of the Tejano population. Immediately following his description of the lazy characteristics of Tejanos, for example, the unnamed traveler who visited San Antonio in 1837 commented, "The evening is spent by a large portion of the population at the fandango, a kind of Spanish waltz. There are seldom less than three or four of this description of dances during the night in different portions of the city."³⁰ Fretéllièr has left us one of the better descriptions of such an occasion:

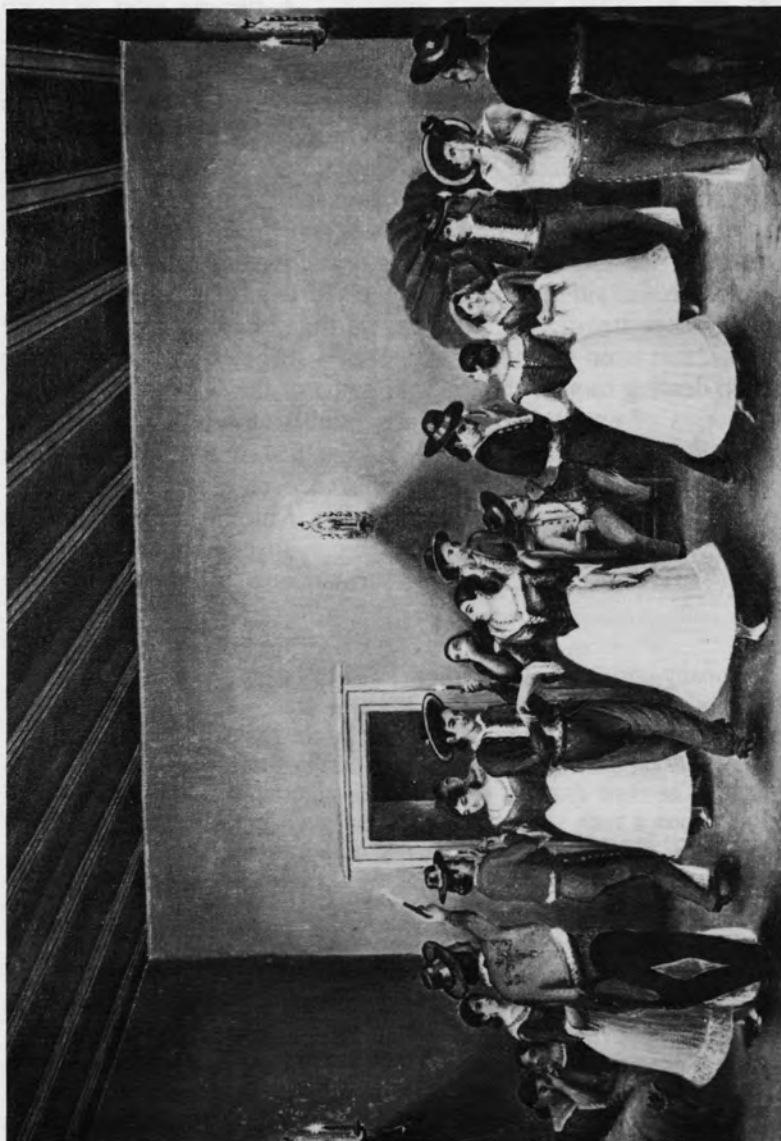
The sound of the violin drew us to the spot where the *fête* was in full swing. It was in a rather large room of an adobe house, earthen floored, lighted by six-tallow candles placed at equal distances from each other. At the back a great chimney in which a fire of dry wood served to reheat the *café*, the *tamales* and *enchiladas*: opposite, some planks resting on frames and covered with a cloth, formed a table on which cups and saucers were set out. . . . At the upper end of the room, seated on a chair which had been placed on an empty box, was the musician, which was a violin. . . . The airs, for the most part Mexican, were new to me. The women were seated on benches placed on each side of the room. . . . The dance which I liked best was called the quadrille. It is a waltz in four-time with a step crossed on [e]very slow measure. . . . When the quadrille is finished, the cavalier accompanies his partner to the buffet, where they are served a cup of coffee and cakes. Then he conducts the young lady to her mother or to her chaperon to whom the girl delivers the cakes that she has taken care to reap at the buffet. The mother puts them in her handkerchief, and if the girl is pretty and has not missed a quadrille, the mama carries away an assortment of cakes to last the family more than a week.³¹

Fandangos were typically associated with gambling, a pastime that seems to have captivated the attention of all manner of people. William

²⁹ Jordan, ed., "Steinert's View of Texas," 192; Green, ed., *Samuel Maverick*, 142; Hollon and Butler, eds., *William Bollaert's Texas*, 217.

³⁰ Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 104.

³¹ Fretéllièr, "Adventures of a Castrovillian," 93.



"Fandangos," Theodore Gentilz (1819-1906), oil on canvas, Yanaguana Society Collection, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio. These dances, held in the living rooms of larger homes, were the activity most frequently described by Anglo-American visitors to San Antonio in the antebellum period.

Kennedy described games of chance as “one of the prominent vices of the South.” He went on to add that “among all ranks and classes in Mexico, the mania for gambling ruinously prevails.” A decade later William McClintock made similar observations. Gamblers had by then descended on San Antonio in order to profit off of the United States Army personnel stationed there, and “day and night, with unremitting zeal and application they ply their infamous trade.” Apparently, the Mexican population was also consumed in this gaming frenzy. So much so, McClintock added, that “yesterday saw, (and the like may be seen on any Sabbath) many Mexicans leave chapel even before mass was concluded, and repair to the gaming table; where they spent the remainder of the day, and perhaps the whole night.” To this sin may be added the sacrilege observed sometime earlier by another traveler. “So strong is this passion,” this outsider commented, “that even the priests sometimes forget their sacred office and are seen dealing monte, the favorite game of the Mexicans.”³²

Other forms of entertainment, some familiar to Anglo-Americans, were also evident among the Tejanos. In these activities, at least some Anglos perceived a kind of cultural resistance on the Tejanos’ part. William Bollaert asserted that “although San Antonio is governed by Texan laws, Mexican customs prevail; rope dancing, tumbling, and plays on Sunday.” He described one performance of “maromeros” he witnessed:

The company consisted of a comical Payaso, or clown, three young men and one female. The performance was *al fresco* in the court yard of a house in a public square. At the foot of the tight rope was made two large fires, this being the only illumination for actors and audience. The rope dancing over, tumbling commenced, this being finished, upon a rude stage, a comedy and two farces followed, the three pieces occupying about twenty minutes. I cannot speak favourably of the polite composition of the dramas represented; it was indeed very *low comedy*.³³

In the mid-1850s Anglo-American and Mexican cultures were still coexisting. Frederick Law Olmstead noted critically that a not very good theater company provided tragedies to the local American population, while Tejanos enjoyed an amusement of a different order. “There is a

³² William Kennedy, *Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*, (1925; rep., Clifton, NJ, 1974), 767; McClintock, “Journal of a Trip,” 144; Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 106.

³³ Hollon and Butler, eds., *William Bollaert’s Texas*, 230, 228.

permanent company of Mexican mountebanks," Olmstead observed, "who give performances of agility and buffoonery two or three times a week, parading, before night, in their spangled tights with drum and trombone through the principal streets."³⁴

Horse racing was one activity that Anglos, Indians, and Tejanos shared in common. Although Mexican frontier horse racing differed in form from the Anglo-American pastime, it served similar functions. Races meant opportunities for social interactions, for showing off of personal skills and mastery of good horse flesh, and for gambling. J.C. Duval's description of a meet in San Antonio around 1840 may in part be a fanciful old-age reminiscence, but it is an example of the ameliorative powers of such events.

It was indeed a strange and novel scene that presented itself to our view. Drawn up in line on one side of the arena, and sitting like statues upon their horses, were the Comanche warriors, decked out in their savage finery of paints, feathers and beads, and looking with Indian stoicism upon all that was going on around them. Opposite to them, drawn up in single file also, were their old enemies upon many a bloody field, the Texas Rangers, and a few Mexican rancheros, dressed in their steeple crown, broad brim sombreros, showy scarfs and "slashed" trowsers, holding gracefully in check, the fiery mustangs on which they were mounted.³⁵

The competition itself consisted of various skill events, including picking up objects on the ground, target practice while riding at a full gallop, and breaking in wild horses. In other words, the spectators were witnessing a kind of proto-rodeo, complete with exotic costumes, Indians, vaqueros, trick riders, and bronco busters.

Secular and religious events of various kinds are used by people, consciously and subconsciously, to celebrate their common bonds. The calendar of holidays in early Texas was somewhat fuller than Hogan described it. Although he mentions the anniversaries of the battle of San Jacinto, the Texas declaration of independence, the Fourth of July, and Christmas as those holidays generally celebrated, he neglects

³⁴ Olmstead, *A Journey Through Texas*, 159.

³⁵ Duval, *Early Times in Texas*, II, 70-71.

commemorations important to Tejanos.³⁶ Yet, in the 1840s Mexican Texans continued to celebrate feasts, some old and some recent, analogous to Anglo-American holidays.

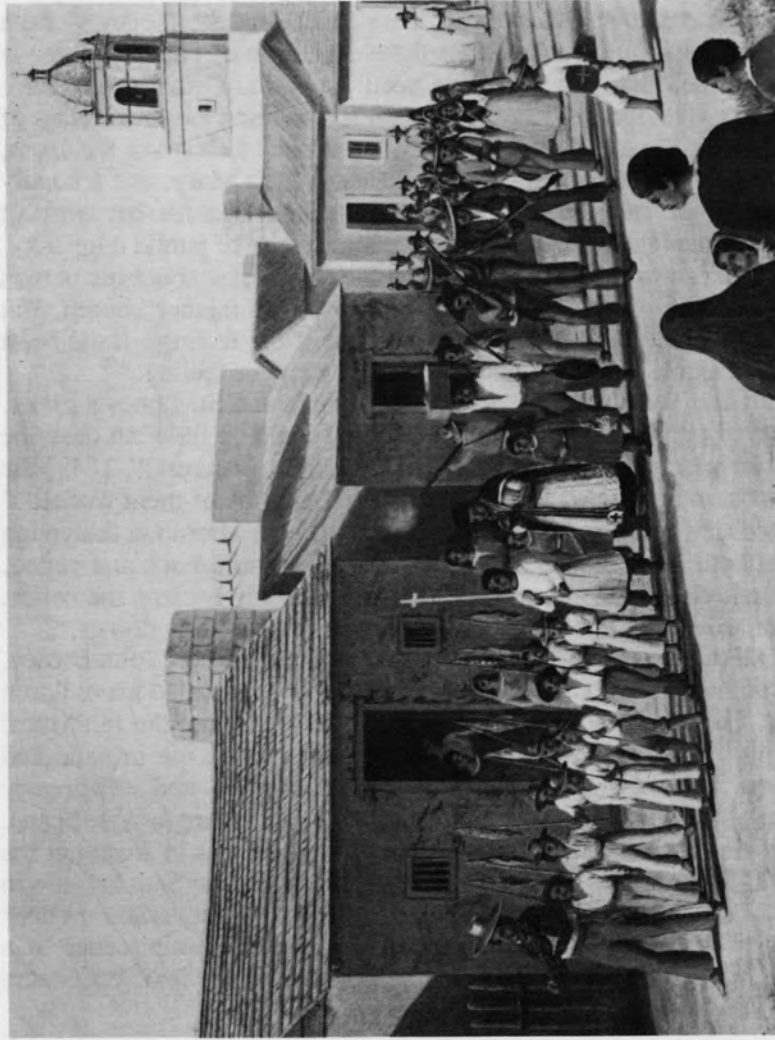
In the early 1840s Tejanos still commemorated Mexican independence on September 16, according to Mary Maverick. As early as the 1820s, the celebration in San Antonio included processions, speeches, Catholic Mass, and dancing—a ball for the town's prominent families and dances for the general population. At La Bahía, the event's symbolism was so obvious that it did not escape comment by Mrs. Teal.

It was Independence Day of the Indians of Mexico and was being celebrated on the 16th of September, 1832. Inside a gaily decorated carriage sat a little Indian girl, dressed in all the splendor of Indian royalty; long lines of white ribbons were fastened to the carriage and held by twelve elegantly dressed Spanish ladies who walked on either side, while the carriage was pushed forward by officers of high rank, and soldiers marched in front.³⁷

Tejanos also continued to commemorate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a holiday that since colonial days had marked the beginning of the Christmas season. Mary Maverick's description of the event in the early 1840s suggests that Tejano society continued to demonstrate internal cohesion, despite the Anglicizing forces at work. After a "grand" procession through the streets on December 12, "the more prominent families taking the Patroness along with them adjourned to Mr. José Flores' house on the west side of Military Plaza, where they danced most of the night. . . . It was all quite a novel and interesting scene to me." As a matter of fact, one of the problems encountered by the new European clergy, who took over the church in 1840, probably resulted from the continued devotion to Guadalupe. According to William Bollaert, "The Sacristan or vestry clerk was polite and communicative; he told me they were in a 'difficulty,' not knowing exactly to whom the church was dedicated, San Fernando, or Our Lady of Guadalupe, or San Antonio." There is other evidence that San Fernando church remained Mexican in practice to the end of the republic. For instance, William McClintock

³⁶ Hogan, *The Texas Republic*, 114-15. A recent study on the role of religion in Tejano efforts to preserve community in antebellum San Antonio is Timothy M. Matovina, *Tejano Religion and Ethnicity: San Antonio, 1821-1860* (Austin, 1995).

³⁷ de la Teja, "Bexar," 22; T. C. Allan, "Reminiscences of Mrs. Teal," *By the Way* (July 1897), 5.



"Entierro de un angel," ["Funeral for an angel,"] Theodore Gentilz (1819-1906), oil on canvas, Yanaguana Society Collection, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio. The Tejanos' public religious life seemed strange and superstitious to Anglo observers, but remained an important element in community unity throughout the Republic and early statehood periods.

commented that "there has been a few pews erected in the chapel, I suppose for the convenience and comfort of American citizens. But the Mexicans seat themselves on the floor. . . ." ³⁸

The public and communal character of Catholicism was certainly lost on most writers, even those who avoided calling the Tejanos' faith superstition. J.C. Duval, who escaped the execution of Fannin's force at Goliad, claimed that it would have been "very easy" for him to have "passed" for Catholic, as "Catholicism (at least among the lower class of Mexicans) consists mainly in knowing how to make the sign of the cross, together with unbound reverence first, for the Virgin Mary, and secondly for the saints generally—and the priests." The somewhat harsher terms of a 1837 informant nonetheless convey the same sense of public religiosity: "every Mexican professes to be a Catholic and carries about his person the crucifix, the rosary, and other symbols of the mother church. But religion with him, if one is permitted to judge of the feelings of the heart by outward signs, is more a habit than a principle or feeling." ³⁹

Minor religious holidays, such as St. John's and St. James's feasts, often proved perplexing to observers. Steinert could do little but describe in bewilderment one such celebration. "Yesterday [August 1, 1849] the local Mexicans celebrated Saint Peter's day, and none of them worked," he puzzled. "The ladies wore white dresses. In the afternoon the young people of both sexes dashed through the streets on horseback and yelled. Mud splashed up to their ears, and the muddier they became the better. I was not able to find out what sense there was to all these doings." ⁴⁰

Not all reactions to Tejano Catholicism were negative. John Brown, on moving his family to San Antonio in the early 1830s, had his children baptized. His son reminisced that "as a child I accepted the faith most cheerfully," until his Presbyterian grandmother "took me in hand and taught me to love the scriptures." The ceremonial and celebratory character actually became an attraction for Anglo-Americans. Nacogdoches businessman Adolphus Sterne, on business in Austin at the end of 1841, commented in his diary, "all hands gone to San Antonio to Spend Christmas." And for Irish immigrants, the Tejano variant on their own faith seemed not at all strange, as Mrs. Teal's reminiscence of a wedding at La Bahía shows. "After the ceremony the Mexicans fired a

³⁸ Green, ed., *Samuel Maverick*, 136; Hollon and Butler, eds., *William Bollaert's Texas*, 224; McClintock, "Journal of a Trip," 147.

³⁹ Duval, *Early Times in Texas*, 53; Muir, ed., *Texas in 1837*, 103.

⁴⁰ Jordan, "Steinert's View of Texas," 401.

salute of ten guns," she recalled. "The marriage services were concluded by a Mexican priest, before daylight, at the church in La Bahia."⁴¹

Everyday life in Republic-era Texas was rough and violent. For Tejanos, it was marked by uncertainty about the future and a great deal of disconnectedness from the past. The rapid improvement of the country largely bypassed them. Still, evidence exists that Mexican Texans did not necessarily view their position in society as inferior; nor did antagonism color all relations with Anglo Texans. Among the many negative depictions of Tejanos as a group, sympathetic comments appear. Mrs. Teal reminisced that in the Refugio County area southeast of San Antonio, the settlers, "surrounded by Mexicans and Indians, . . . learned to fear neither, as they were never harmed during all the long years they lived among them." Auguste Fretéllier, a Frenchman and friend of the artist Gentilz, was very positive about getting to know the Tejano population of San Antonio. He noted approvingly, "My mentor spoke Spanish very well, so I made rapid progress and in a little while I understood much better the Mexican character which pleased me infinitely—they were very polite, always gay and very obliging."⁴²

At the same time, Texans, in regarding Tejanos as "Mexicans," that is foreigners, were in the process of dissolving that uneasy partnership that had been created during the Mexican era. Promises that the laws would be published in Spanish went unfulfilled. Manipulation of the legal system led to land loss. Association with the enemy—Mexico and Indians—licensed indiscriminate violence against them. Identification with Catholicism made them the enemies of progress and enlightened thinking.

The history of Texan-Tejano relations in the second half of the nineteenth century is, therefore, one of increasing intolerance and segregation. Even as they accepted words into their vocabulary, livestock practices and equipment into their economy, legal principles into their system of law, and a number of dishes into their cuisines, Anglo-Texans increasingly excluded the Tejanos themselves. Even so, the work of a

⁴¹ Jno. Duff Brown, "Reminiscences of Jno. Duff Brown," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 12 (Apr. 1909), 300; Archie P. McDonald, ed., *Hurrah for Texas: The Diary of Adolphus Sterne, 1838-1851* (Waco, 1969), 75; Allan, "Reminiscences of Mrs. Teal," 5. If Hogan is correct on this issue, even the habitual and public form of religion practiced by Tejanos made them more spiritual than the majority of Anglo-Texans. According to him, "by the end of 1845 not more than one-eighth of the white population were either active or nominal members of Texas churches." Hogan, *The Republic of Texas*, 194.

⁴² Allan, "Reminiscences of Mrs. Teal," 4; Fretéllier, "Adventures of a Castrovillian," 92.

growing body of scholars of Mexican Texans makes clear, Tejanos managed to retain much of the culture they inherited from "early Texas," and continued to participate in Texas society, whether or not that participation was fully recognized and appreciated.

[Faint, illegible text, likely a footnote or reference list.]