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Stories From the Camino Real: Cultural Transmission Among Hispanic Communities in Northwest Louisiana and Northwest Texas

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Stories From the Camino Real: Cultural Transmission Among Hispanic
Communities in Northwest Louisiana and Northeast Texas

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Most of all I want to thank the members of the communities of Robeline and Zwolle, Louisiana and Moral and Nacogdoches, Texas. Wonderful conversations took place there and they have some truly good food.

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Abstract

Material and oral culture are mechanisms for the transmission, maintenance, and change of culture. By looking at everyday objects and listening to people interact in their familial settings, complex dynamics of a community emanate. The areas of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas share more in common than Toledo Bend park, pine trees, and rolling hills. They share mixed Native-American, Spanish, Mexican, French, and African-American heritages. They share family names, the Catholic religion, and some of the same Hispanic-Indian foods. Spanish lexicon is spread across the areas, and old and folk remedies are still used today to treat colds and cuts. The lumber and railroad industries played critical roles in the trade, income, and populating of the communities I studied of Moral and Nacogdoches, Texas and of Robeline, Zwolle, and Natchitoches, Louisiana.

The people with whom I conducted fieldwork since the spring of 1999 live in the areas of Robeline, Louisiana (located in Natchitoches Parish), Zwolle, Louisiana (located in Sabine Parish), and in Moral and Nacogdoches, Texas (both in the county of Nacogdoches). These communities lie on what once was the Camino Real, the first great highway system in North America decreed in 1691 by the Spanish Crown. The Camino Real was eventually incorporated into Texas State Highway 21 and connects into Highway 6 of Louisiana. Robeline, Zwolle, Moral, and Nacogdoches all have roots in the soils of Native-American and Spanish ancestry and in Catholicism.

In northeast Texas there is presently an increasing Mexican and Mexican-American population. While driving around Nacogdoches, one can see grocery stores that cater to foods imported from Mexico for the new expanding Hispanic community. Street signs, office signs are in both English and Spanish and the public library even hosts Saturday morning reading sessions in Spanish. People whose family members came from Mexico several generations ago feel a sense

of discomfort at the newly arrived immigrants, yet share variants of the same language, religion, and some foods.

In northwest Louisiana, the lumber and railroad industries had brought waves of Mexican and Mexican-American workers. The Native-American history of the Louisiana side is however more publicly displayed and accepted than in the communities of northeast Texas. Just as in Moral and Nacogdoches, there are many northwest Louisianians who have attached a negative stigma to Mexicans. As a sort of contradiction, they choose to embrace the far-off “Mother-country” of Spain and yet they associate Spain with Mexicanisms. The connections, interactions, and mixed attitudes between Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana continue today.

With both the new highways and the first highway, the Camino Real, as a region of interest, cultural transmission can be seen as a journey. People, horses, carriages, trains, and cars make their way through the areas of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas, but stories also do. Stories are present in the speech, actions, and creations (both material and cognitive) of people. Some themes that may develop in the stories of the communities’ members are: history, identity and ethnicity, generational similarities and differences, nostalgia, progress, and change. Tools for story-telling include legends, food, festival and special-event posters, religion, last names, and even the sign inviting parents and children to attend Spanish reading sessions at the public library in Nacogdoches.

The word “story” shouldn’t imply fabrication entirely. Stories are used to explain reality and quite often that reality is complex in meaning and understanding. The elements of the stories are not deterministic in nature. In other words, one must not imply that because someone has a rosary on their bedpost that they are Catholic and therefore Hispanic and therefore from either northwest Louisiana or northeast Texas, and so on. This senior thesis is a record of some of those stories written down as they are told today by the members of the Hispanic communities

along four places on Highway 21 and Highway 6. Of the chapters' sections, each is a different way in which the communities express themselves. The Camino Real has changed hands, meanings, and names. But the communities also share several things that reveal how they view themselves. As noted throughout the thesis, some of the major markers of identity are religion (Catholicism), foods, surnames, and the fact that many of the Spanish and even Hispanicized surnames have become Anglicized.



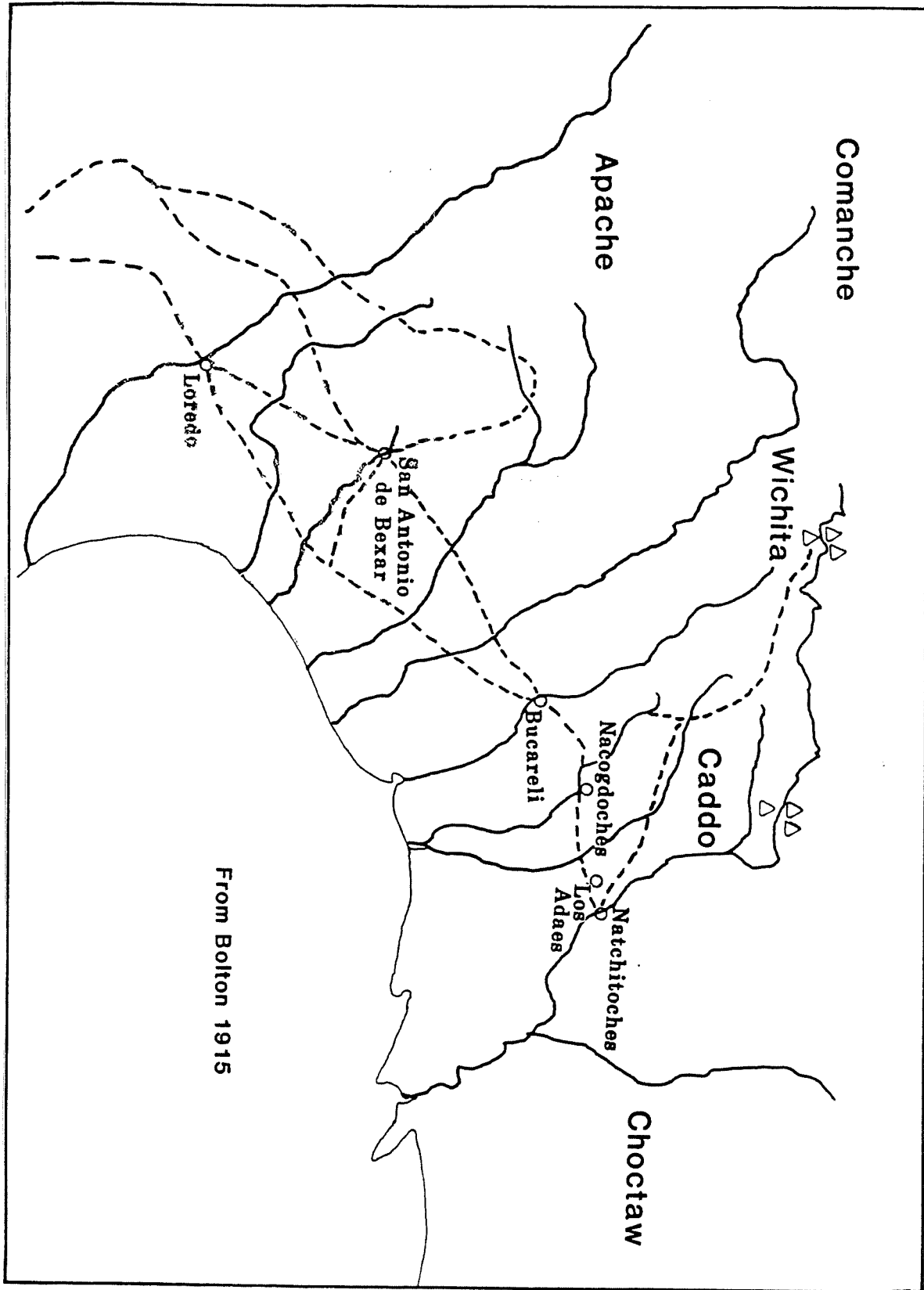
Camino Real, or E. Main Street in Nacogdoches, Texas

Chapter 1. The Camino Real

The areas of Northwest Louisiana and Northeast Texas comprise a region that reaches out and takes hold of people. This is a region that begs for poetry to be written about it. The rich alluvial lands and piney hills are witness to thousands of years of occupational patterns. Spanish missions, Spanish and French forts, and multi-national settlements developed and disappeared in this area. Among the oldest towns in this region are Natchitoches, Louisiana and Nacogdoches, Texas. They have connections that go back for hundreds of years. They were once part of the Camino Real

The “King’s Highway” spans a distance of more than 500 miles and is one of the oldest and most traveled overland routes in North America. In 1691, the first Spanish provincial Governor of Texas, Domingo Teran de los Ríos, ordered that a trail be blazed as a direct route from Monclova, then the capital of the province, to the Spanish missions established among the Indians of East Texas. The Camino Real was incorporated into State Highway 21 (Texas) and connects into Highway 6 (Louisiana). The activities that went on along that old route have changed, but today there are still links between Northeast Texas and Northwest Louisiana, and between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches. Past trails changed courses, hands, and meanings, yet they remain and continue to be traveled.

Such communities as Moral, Texas and Robeline and Zwolle, Louisiana have roots in the soils of Native American and Spanish ancestry and Catholicism. The pivotal, uniting roles of church and food among the communities are of great importance to their members. Links to the past are at times hidden, laying unnoticed in the red soil and pine trees. At other times, they emerge in the shape of festivals, daily speech, personal and public memorabilia, and expansive genealogical works.



Map showing the Camino Real (L'Herrison, 9)



Map showing Nacogdoches and Natchitoches
(L'Herrison, 67)

I. From Legends Onward: The Camino Real Past and Present Movements

The Camino Real, the great military road that began in the late 17th century under the king of Spain, was the first highway system in North America. French and Spanish explorers trekked across it. They traded with each other and with Native Americans along miles and miles of endless trails connecting village after village . This roadway running through New Spain was decreed by the Spanish crown in 1691 in order to keep the French from infiltrating the Province, and more importantly, from trading with the Indians and eventually conquering them (Norvell, 27). Connecting Louisiana to Texas, the Camino Real was formalized from pre-existing, Native American trails. The dirt, trees, and grass morphed into the well-driven roads of today.

Before the paving of the national highway and the military road, Indian trails marked the routes of exchanges. Before national flags were plunged into the ground and invisible state borders were established, groups like the Caddo and the Hasinai, a subdivision of the Caddo, surveyed and journeyed the country. Long-distance networks of trade had been formed in prehistoric times. Copper, stone, shell, salt, bows, and hides were trade items. The Nacogdoches-Neches Saline Road in East Texas, between the Neches and the Angelina rivers, led the Caddos from their villages to salt licks near the rivers.

An account read by Dr. C.E. Castaneda, Latin American Librarian of the University of Texas, at an El Camino Real celebration describes how “[t]ime steadily widened the road and increased the number of its users. Friendly Indians and savage foe, soldier and settler, missionary and priests all traveled over the Camino Real each upon his own errand of good or evil, of love and charity, of civilization and progress...” (Norville, 333).

Among the Caddo groups in the East Texas and Northwest region of Louisiana were the Hasinai that lived in the Neches and Angelina River valleys, and the Kadohadacho and Natchitoches groups on the Red River. The Louisiana Caddoan-speaking groups were the Adaes,

Doustioni, Natchitoches, Oachita, and Yatasi. These groups seemed to have been concentrated around the Natchitoches area (Gregory 1978, 18). Natchitoches and Adai tribes received livestock from their linguistic kinsmen, such as the Hasinai, in present-day Texas. In the 18th century, the Caddoan tribes became the middlemen in a horse and cattle trade toward the west. These items followed the ancient salt routes that led to east Texas and northwest Louisiana. The French diplomat Athanase de Mezieres had established peace between the Wichita and the Commanche. This gave Louisiana Indians greater access to horses, cattle, and Apache slaves who were taken from the Spanish in present-day Texas and Mexico (Gregory 1987, 211).

Cattle ranching made its mark on the Texan landscape in the 18th century. The trailing of cattle out of Texas to markets in Louisiana as well as those below the Rio Grande began on a systematic basis. This provided opportunities to many individual entrepreneurs and stimulated the flow of silver reales along the Camino (Jackson, 4-5). In the first half of the 18th century the missions of Texas operated most of the stock raising. During this period, the major techniques of open-stock handling were tried, tested, and proved for coming generations of ranchers from the Spanish borderlands northward to Canada (Jackson, 5; Alonzo). The cattlemen of Spanish Texas, which included western Louisiana, prospered amidst the expansion of people and livestock. The prospect of obtaining horses and cattle in Texas had, in fact, been among the initial purposes for the French to found Natchitoches (L'Herrison, 43).

Spanish expansion, in the 16th century, was primarily propelled by economic and missionary stimuli. Native American groups were converted, exploited, and placed on plantations, in mines, or on ranches. Spanish colonists made numerous expeditions to the coasts of the United States. By the end of the 17th century, they returned. Another agent entered New Spain that threatened the cities, churches, and land claims--the French. Defense became, in time, the main motive to further Spanish advances to new areas (Bannon, 43). In response to French

commercial activities and the establishment of a French post in Natchitoches, the Spaniards built missions and forts.

Fort St. Jean Baptiste aux Natchitos was established in 1714 by Louis Juchereau de St. Denis as a French post on the Red River. The post was built for three primary reasons: to open trade relations with Mexico, to stop Spanish encroachment on New France, and as a permanent source of supplies for the growing colony of Mobile (McLeod).

The Spanish, in return, established the outpost Nuestra Señora de los Adaes to counter French western trade. Despite the efforts to curb overt trade among the French, Spanish, and Indians, clandestine trade continued for the next half century (Gregory 1978, 23; Kniffen 121; L'Herrison, 14). There was illegitimate trade along what is known as the Contraband Trail, the Natchitoches-Nacogdoches Road (Kniffen, 121). Although initially a trading post and military center, Natchitoches attracted French settlers mostly for agricultural possibilities in its immediate hinterland (West, 2-3).

Capuchin fathers first visited the Native American groups (Adai) in 1711. Misión San Miguel de los Adaes, established in 1717, served to Christianize and "civilize" the Adaes Indians and win their loyalty to Spain. When the San Miguel mission was built, only two Franciscan priests and a soldier were stationed there, but on November 10, 1718, General Martín de Alarcón, Governor of Coahuila and Texas, arrived there with 72 people to reinforce the Spanish presence. In 1719 the occupants were forced to retreat to San Antonio when the missions and other settlements were attacked by the French as a result of the war that broke out in Europe between Spain and France following a disagreement between the two countries. But after two years they returned, and in 1721 they constructed a fort, Nuestra Señora de los Adaes, in addition to the mission. The palisaded fort was established to guard the mission and also to claim Spain's sovereignty of the Red River in opposition to France (Berry 44).

The Spanish and the French set up posts and counter-posts. Unexpectedly, the French ceded the trans-Mississippi half of their Louisiana under the treaty of Fountainebleau in 1762. The possessions west of the Mississippi River went to Spain and those to the east went to Great Britain under the Treaty of Paris (1763). Spain's neighbor on the east was now England instead of France. After a series of territorial disputes between France, Spain, and the United States, in 1790 the Spanish opened up the boundary of the Texas province to Anglo Americans and Native Americans living east of the Mississippi River (Pertulla). Spain, less than four decades after gaining the territory, retroceded Louisiana to France in 1800.

On December 20, 1803 the province of Louisiana was transferred to the United States. The Louisiana Purchase is yet another type of movement involving the Camino Real. The land moved from one nation's hands to another. After 1819, the Sabine River served as part of the Louisiana-Texas border and as a consequence was important because "it was where it was, not because of what it was" (Gilley, 134). Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, and Texas finally achieved its independence and became a part of the United States in 1836.

The interaction between Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana continued after Texas achieved its independence in 1836 and joined the United States. Migration and trade flowed steadily. The settlers moved across the South, with and without their slaves. During that period, and as a result of development, the stage coach lines were established, one from Louisiana to Texas on land, and the other along the Red River (Hardin). Railroads were agents of change and resulted in the founding of lumber towns. Lufkin was founded in 1882 as a stop on the Houston, East West Texas Railway that ran from Houston to Shreveport, Louisiana. Railroads allowed the time invested in traveling to be reduced greatly. Lumber mills in towns like Lufkin, Texas and Zwolle, Louisiana, created employment opportunities as well as new settlements. In 1900, there was another influx of Spanish speakers into the area when the Kansas City Southern Railroad was

being built through northern Louisiana. Many of the men who worked on the construction of the railroad were “imported” from Mexico. The lumber and saw mills in the piney woods areas of Northeast Texas and Northwest Louisiana flourished with the timber boom in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The industrial expansion in the 1930’s and 1940s produced thousands of new jobs and widespread community growth.

The construction of the railroads used to connect those industrial and job centers, in return, also created job opportunities. Northeast Texas continues to receive an influx of Mexicans and this is evident in the everyday aspects of life in the area of Nacogdoches. Signs at businesses and even the public library are printed in both English and Spanish. There are grocery stores that carry Mexican products, and there are currently plans to build a church for the Mexican population in the city.

Genealogical records and conversations with people in both Northeast Texas and Northwest Louisiana show that individuals and families moved easily back and forth across the Sabine River and Toledo Bend. While before, families would move back and forth to marry and start a family, people today travel across to attend universities such as Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas or Northwestern University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, to go for a weekend of hiking at the various state parks, or even to obtain corn leaves for tamales in Zwolle, Louisiana.

Back and forth, from Louisiana to Texas and vice-versa, the trails have changed courses, hands, and meanings, yet they remain and still continue to be used. People settled in Nacogdoches after the San Miguel mission was abandoned, but they never abandoned the area. The connection, at times in the form of a legend and at others in the form of actual migration, between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches remains strong.

Legends and myths accompany the travelers along the Camino Real. An especially

interesting local legend, whether true or not, is that of The Lady in Blue which was brought from old Spain to New Spain by the Franciscan Friar, Father Damian Massanet (Nacogdoches Jaycees, 21). It tells of a Castillian woman, Maria, who devoted herself to the life of a nun. From an early age, she was deeply mystical. She would go into trances and travel to the New World in her altered state. In the new lands of the Americas, she spoke to the Native Americans and despite the differences in language, they would understand and communicate with one another. When Father Damian was serving at a mission in Coahuila, he collected information about the Tejas. In 1689, he went to La Salle's Fort only to find its burnt remains, but there he had his first contact with the Tejas Indians. The Tejas performed many Christian rites, and the chief had asked for the missionaries. They even said that they had, for many years, seen a lady in blue in the hills. Other reports of the Lady in Blue came from the 1840's, during a malaria outbreak. The mysterious lady came to heal and take care of the sick until the plague ceased. It is said that even today the Lady in Blue wanders the Road in mourning for all those who die and for her Indians who lost their land and their lives (Nacogdoches Jaycees, 27).

Other legends tell of pack trains being robbed and gold and silver buried along El Camino. According to one tale about lost and buried treasure, two Dutchmen robbed a Spanish army of its gold. The soldiers caught up to them and killed one. The other left the gold behind and escaped, but first he buried his partner and the gold. That gold remains buried somewhere next to his partner-in-crime's bones.

II. Blackberry Bushes and Old Fashion Values: Moral, Texas

“The land has been Spanish, Mexican, Texan, but the people have always been the same. Flags may change, but the soil is the same”, Lyndia Austin, Moral, Texas. October 21, 1999.

The red, iron-rich soil of Northeast Texas, like that of Northwest Louisiana, jumps out against the, at times, painfully green grass. That red-soil-and-green-grass carpet spreads itself across the small community of Moral. Moral appears on maps just outside the limits of Nacogdoches, sometimes. At other times, Moral only appears in mind maps and the only way of getting there is by asking. “A few mile that way...” are the directions on such a mind map. I first heard about it from such a map, by word of mouth. I first saw it on an ecclesiastical map of the Tyler Diocese. This makes the church a defining marker. A marker that not only binds the people, but one that makes them known to the public.

The origin of the community’s name, Moral, is unknown but there are several theories. Moral, in Spanish, refers to blackberry bushes. Perhaps, when the Spanish explored and settled in the area, they came across such bushes and named it so. I did stumble upon some blackberry bushes in Zwolle, LA. where the soil is virtually the same in composition, so it is possible that they grew in the areas around Nacogdoches (i.e. Moral). Moral, in English, has to do with respectable, and often religious attributes such as goodness, nobility, honesty, and ethics. All these characteristics are highly valued in this Catholic community.

The first permanent structure built in Nacogdoches was the Old Stone Fort. The Spanish trader Antonio Gil Y Barbo built it in 1779, and the fort soon became a major stop along the Camino Real and a gateway to the Texas frontier. Since the Camino Real traversed the two, a tremendous number of immigrants passed through Nacogdoches and settled in the municipality (McReynolds, 27). Y Barbo’s Stone House became the most nearly permanent, tangible artifact of the area’s cultural and political development (McDonald, 1981, 3). Economic and ethnic



Photos of Nacogdoches, Texas



Photos of Moral, Texas

diversity among the families of Nacogdoches influenced such things as clothing practices and dietary practices (McReynolds, 80). Composed of Spanish, Indian, African, French, Anglo, and Mexican, Nacogdoches shared and shares many similarities with its “brother city” Natchitoches.

The Adaeseños settled in this area after they left Los Adaes and set up ranches. They continue to maintain those small ranches, and land property is as sacred as the church. It never leaves the family and is passed down from generation to generation. Family cemeteries reflect the continual presence of a few handfuls of lineages. Due to their origins and the fact that for several years they remained completely isolated, the dialect of the Moral community is quite similar to an 18th century form of Mexican Spanish (Pratt-Panford, 10).

In Nacogdoches Country Families, the old LaSalette church in Moral is mentioned:

“In September, 1872, when the Sisters of the Holy Cross left Nacogdoches, Sister Josephine stayed behind. Due to the scarcity of priests she felt that she was needed among the people of Moral to instruct the young and keep the faith alive. Then, about the year 1874, a new church was built on the Spanish Bluff Road and called Our Lady of the Pilar. This church was in use until 1942 when a new one was built by Father Monahan, with the help from the Extension Society. It is the church of the Immaculate Conception.” (Nacogdoches County Genealogical Society, 42).

The Immaculate Conception Church is the current church in the Moral community and Father George Dobosz, from Poland, is the priest.

By the 1840's and 1850's, the economic patterns in Nacogdoches resembled those of other small southern towns (McReynolds, 90). Foodstuffs and livestock went along the wagon routes to Natchitoches, to a small port town on Lake Sabine, and across the Neches and Angelina Rivers. Local stores in Natchitoches exported various food goods to Nacogdoches, beginning in

the late 1820's, and this added variation to the diet (McReynolds 275).

Genealogy is the bingo of the area. Nacogdoches residents are very eager to learn about their ancestors and meticulously record all historical data available. Another prized possession in this area is land. Land is a source of security and of status and guarantees the continuity of family. This is also true in the areas of Zwolle and Robeline, Louisiana. The land has been owned by the same families for many generations and they are not ready to give it up. There is a close tie to the land despite the ceaseless movement of people.

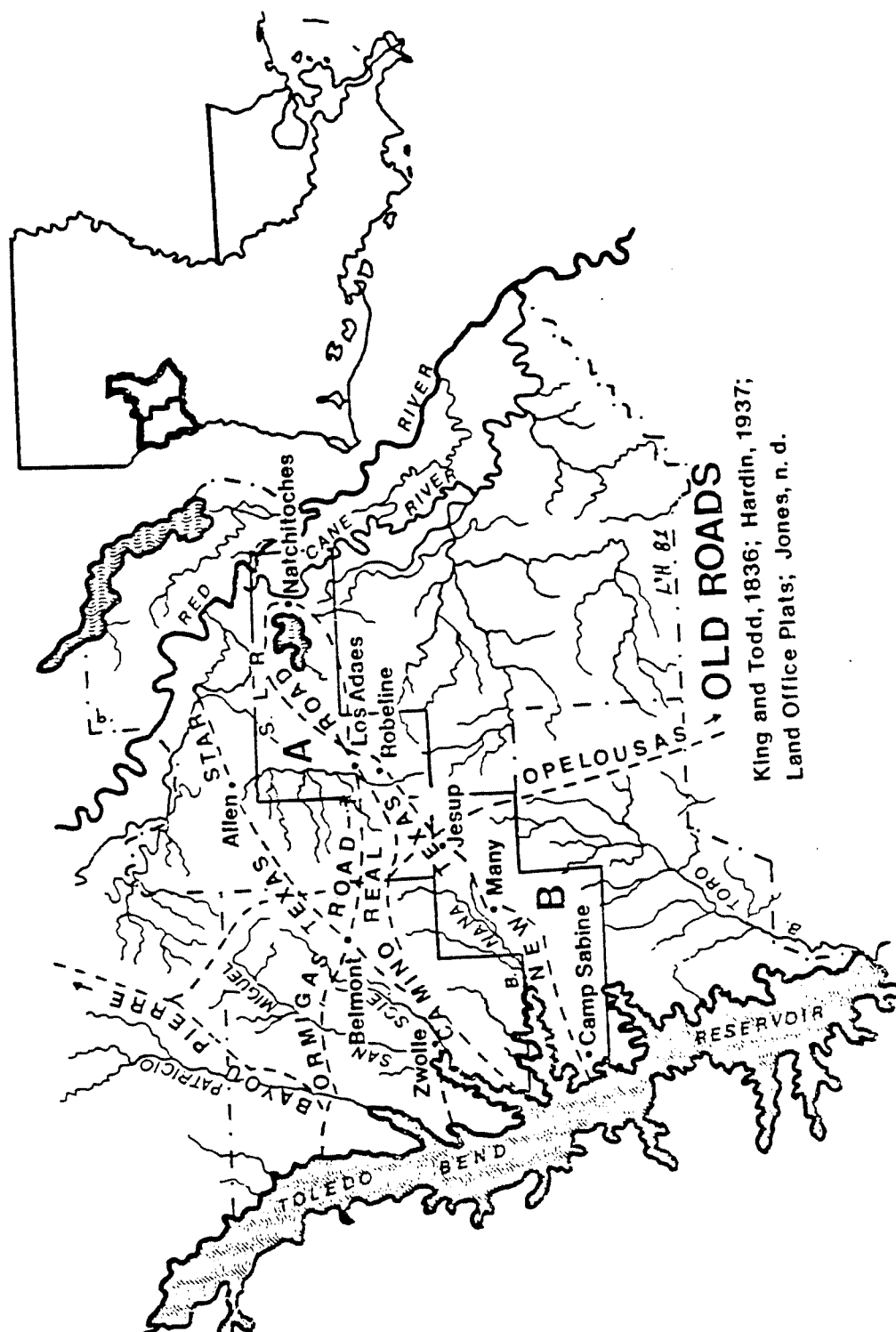
III. Past the Mission: Zwolle and Robeline, Louisiana.

“...if I could describe its Indian powwows, its Spanish fandangos, its French balls, and its American frolics”, Timothy Flint, 1815 (Hardin)

The image of Natchitoches parish in 1815 above, emerges from Timothy Flint’s description that stresses the diversity of the area. The excerpt only scratches the surface of the region’s cultural interactions that have spanned centuries. By naming several types of dances, Flint addresses the Native American, Spanish, French, and Anglo-American influences. People of African, German, Nordic, Italian, Chinese, Norwegian and Creole descent have also contributed to the history (Cohen; Hall; Hardin, 308). Natchitoches is designated as the “oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana”. The Natchez Trace coming from the east and the Camino Real coming from the west, paired with river connections made it a gateway to Texas for explorers and colonizers during the 18th century.

Founded in 1713, Natchitoches is the home of the Cane River’s Creoles. Several members of the community of Creoles are descendants of Marie Thereze Coincoin, a freed slave woman who established what is now Melrose Plantation. In contrast with their 18th and 19th century contemporaries, Cane River’s free people of color were wealthy, educated, and supported religion in a manner that often exceeded that of their Euro-American neighbors (Gilley, 93).

In the late-19th century, Chinese settled in North Louisiana after they had been introduced as laborers in the South in 1867 (Cohen, 52). Planters in Northwest Louisiana brought them in to work on the plantations, but the Chinese who settled on the Louisiana plantations did not stay long. Both plantation owners and Chinese laborers broke their contracts (Cohen, 105). Many Chinese came from Cuba, where they had also worked on plantations to replace African labor, and thus carried Spanish surnames. Those that did have Chinese surnames changed them but the descendants retain cultural patterns and practices like Chinese New Year and the



Map of Natchitoches and Sabine Parishes
(L'Herrison, 112)

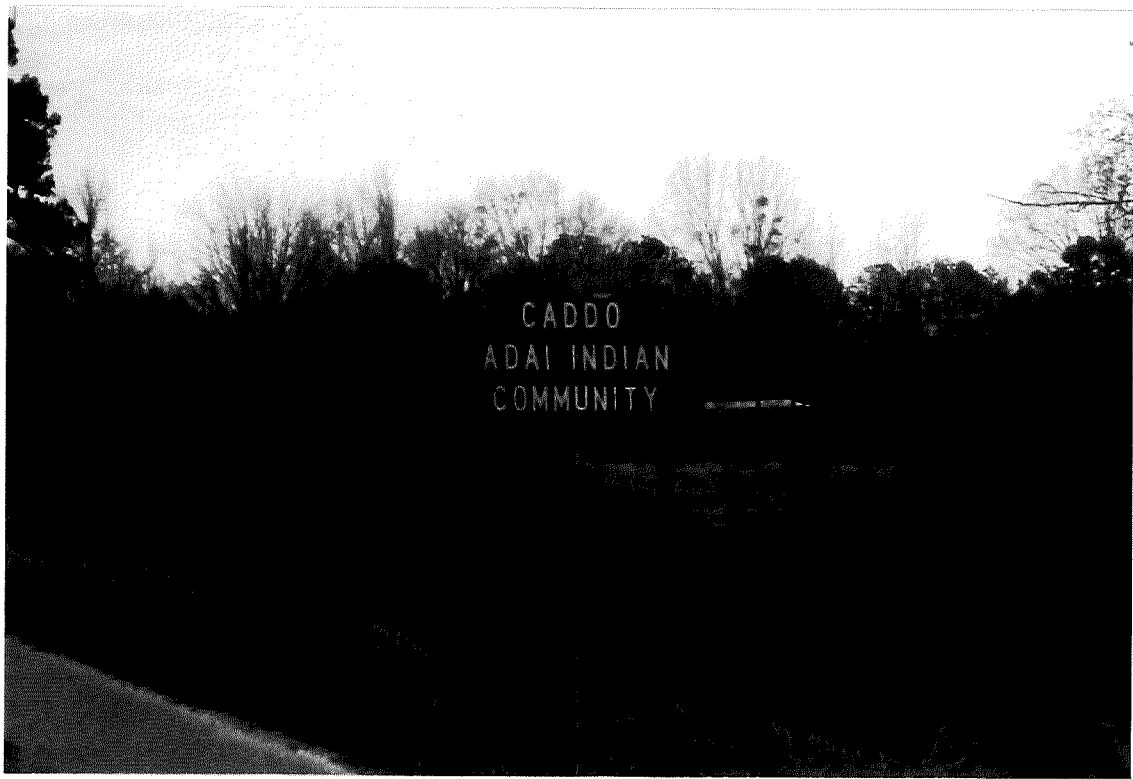
observance of rituals associated with funerals.

Robeline and Zwolle are both associated with the 17th century Spanish missions in Northwest Louisiana. Robeline was established after the Texas and Pacific railroad was built through Natchitoches parish in 1881 (Hardin, 506). No town had been established prior to the construction of the railroad. With a population of 151, Robeline has a rich history of interactions among people. Conflicts among nationalities and ethnic groups were and still are apparent. The outcome of groups working together is also apparent. Residents of Robeline cluster themselves according to ethnicity. Within Robeline is the Caddo Adai Indian Community. The community was established relatively recently, and Chief Rufus represents the Indian community there. Many of the residents of Robeline bear names that are found in the genealogical records in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Sabine Parish was created in 1843 and named after the Sabine River (the Spanish called it Rio Adays after the Indian tribe that inhabited its banks). Zwolle was named in 1896 by Jan DeGoeijen, a Kansas City Southern line stockholder, after his birthplace, Zwolle, the capital of the Province of Overijssel, Netherlands. DeGoeijen has even been referred to as "Zwolle's Godfather" (Gentry, 22). The Kansas City Southern railroad was completed in 1895, and by then Zwolle had a reputation of "the roughest town on the Kansas City Southern line" (Gentry, 21).

Bayou Scie cuts through Sabine Parish and Zwolle. Some of the first European settlers to settle in the Bayou Scie area were Spanish priests (Bayou Scie is said to be a corruption of the Spanish word "vallecillo, which means "little valley"). It was there that they established a mission and several churches. Zwolle currently has a population of around 1779 persons and the lumber mill is still a source of work. On Highway 171 is the Choctaw Apache Tribal Office where anyone can look up their Native American ancestry by computer.

Toledo Bend is a relatively recent and controversial addition to Sabine Parish. Located on



Photos of Robeline, Louisiana



Photos of Zwolle, Louisiana

the Sabine River, it includes both Texas and Louisiana in its waters. Beginning in May, 1963, land acquisitions for the J.B Reservoir started as a joint project of Texas and Louisiana River Authorities. As the largest man-made body of water in the south, Toledo Bend was built primarily for purposes of water supply, hydroelectric power, and recreation. By 1966, the dam was completed. But the reservoir created a number of problems. Shoemaker and Van Rheenen , in their master's theses for L.S.U., discuss how "the reservoir inundated major portions of the community, wiping out all of the Blue Lake Community, Beartown, and Sulfur Springs" (Van Rheenen, 32). Families had to relocate and this relocation in addition to the newfound separations "hastened the passing of community ways" (Van Rheenen 35). Underneath the waters of Toledo Bend are still the remains of some Indian graves. Excavations took place before the flooding. This promoted an awareness for the Native American history of the area.

IV. On and Off the Record: The Fieldwork Experience

I first stepped on the modern-day Camino Real in January of 1999. At the time, I was in Dr. Richardson's Ethnographic Methodologies class and had chosen food as my focus. My paper for that semester was "Switchin' in the Kitchen: Cultural Transmission in the Culinary Realms" and I did my fieldwork in Robeline, Louisiana. I fell in love with the area and the people and knew I wanted to explore the region more. A series of links made up of people and ideas led me to the area of northwest Louisiana and later northeast Texas.

The Spanish legacy and history has been downplayed in Louisiana in comparison to other states such as Texas. I wanted to do my senior thesis about the Hispanic identity in the areas of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas, and the spring semester of 1999 provided a wonderful opportunity to get a start on the research. Comfort Pratt, a doctoral student in the Foreign Language Department at L.S.U. helped me in ways beyond belief. Thanks to Comfort, she introduced me to some of her informants that she had been working with for her research. In linguistics, she is looking at the Spanish language in the area where she lives and teaches, Natchitoches. We both conducted fieldwork at the same time and even spoke to one of the families together (the Flores in Robeline, Louisiana) during one Saturday. She provided valuable information about the location and we both got ideas from one another.

Several factors influenced the extent and nature of my research including time and distance. The location of the communities I visited was a problem, but in the sense of distance. I would only be able to visit every so often, during weekends and holidays, and I had to use my time wisely. Would I be one of those "land-strip anthropologists"? I had my points of interest and some informants established. I knew what I was looking for, but how was I going to find it? The quest for the truth would need a road; the road signs were cultural markers.

There is method to madness. There is also method to fieldwork. The two can be, at

times, quite similar with frustration and confusion arising in both. The end product to the latter is by far more fulfilling. Using cultural scripts, I asked open-ended questions which touched on issues such as language (lexicon), religion, material culture, etc. The following is a rough diagram that I first employed in my research and that continues to be a start-off point for conversations:

Cultural Markers

<u>Foods:</u>	<u>Customs/Celebrations:</u>	<u>Personal:</u>	<u>Family Heritage:</u>
-made when?	-when, where?	-what do you call or	-names
-how?	-religious festivals	identify yourself? Why?	-places lived
-for what?	-family get-togethers	-what do other people	-aware or not of
		call or identify you Why?	past?
			-genealogy
			-home decoration
			-heirlooms

Over the course of three semesters, I was able to go to Robeline, Zwolle, and Moral several times. Due to the distance factor, I did in fact do more research in Louisiana than in Texas. Both of my parents joined me for the majority of the visits and added another dimension to the research. At times suggestions from them were welcomed, but at other times the difference in methodologies (they are both professors) was more than obvious.

Very often came the feeling of being a tax collector, but instead of taxes, I was collecting memories. Being a young, female student did not prove to be that large of a problem. Never did I demand anything, waving around a tape recorder. I wanted to have conversations with the people and jot down ideas and thoughts on a note-pad with a no. 2 pencil. Usually, the conversations would take place at the person's house or at the local Catholic Church. Attending masses with the community members was an opportunity to look at interaction beyond the

immediate family. The church's priests also had valuable information on the communities. I tried to work with three generations in Robeline, Zwolle, and Moral to try to see if there was any kind of cultural transmission, continuations, or changes.

I conducted library research at the Middleton and Hill Memorial libraries at Louisiana State University as well as the Stephen F. Austin University library and the public library in Nacogdoches, Texas. Several Master's Theses from L.S.U provided valuable information: Mary Van Rheenen's thesis on ethnic identity in Sabine Parish, Janet Shoemaker's thesis on Spanish language death in Ebarb, Louisiana and finally Lawrence L'Herrison's thesis on the Texas Road and the settlement of northwest Louisiana. Dr. Hiram Gregory from Northwestern University provided contacts both in Zwolle and at the Los Adaes Fort. Overall, I looked at archaeological, geographical, historical and ethnographic sources referring to Louisiana (particularly northwest Louisiana), Texas (particularly northeast Texas), material culture, studies on foodways and festivals, religion and language and their ties to ethnicity, and social events.

My focus remains on the members of the Hispanic communities along what was once the Camino Real. It is contextual and deals with a variety of topics. What could be seen as eclectic, is really just the many ways in which communities and the communities' members express themselves. I wanted the people's stories to be told by them and by their material culture.

Chapter 2: The Art of Storytelling

How do you tell a story? With words? Story-time can take place in a room, sitting on the ground, listening to a person go on about a certain point in their life. That point, or any point in the life of someone can also be expressed through objects, without the use of words.

Memories, whether fictitious or factual, are embodied in the pine straw and twists of a basket. Historic events are displayed in a bronze statue that braves the weather in the “old part” of town. A family’s legacy is ingrained in the amount of pepper that is added to the ground pork in a recipe. From small get-togethers to town gatherings, from heirlooms to recently purchased home decorations, and from a simple rosary to a century-old church--these all tell us about human experience, whether it is through a whisper or an exclamation.

Cultural markers announce both personal and shared identity. Various levels of identity (national, regional, religious, occupational, sub-cultural, political, and economic) inhabit the cultural markers (Berger, 74). They can illustrate intangible elements like religious beliefs, ethnic consciousness, or community awareness. The cognitive becomes physical. To call these markers voiceless is unfair, for they are truly eloquent and informative.

Many of these cultural markers take on material form. They take on an active role as well, but one in which interpretation is constant. Images that markers might exhibit can be on the literal or metaphorical level. Material culture is defined by Glassie as text, where object “reports thoughts and actions that resist verbal formulation” (Glassie, 46). Kingery takes it a step further and explains that “some authors have talked about reading objects as texts, but objects must also be read as myths and symbols (1). As text, myth, and symbol these items take on a multi-dimensional aspect that emits and attracts multiple meanings and understandings.

Neither culture nor material culture is static. Movement is essential to life and to the elements we use to express our lives with. What are cultural markers and what ideas do they

convey? We are surrounded by so many items that we use to define ourselves that at times we do not even realize it. Foods tie into celebrations and gatherings, ethnic identity, gender roles, and also to cultural transmission, and then the celebrations tie into religion. So, something as mundane as a food dish is a source of creation, tradition, and education. It is a sort of metaphysical nourishment, deeply personal at times.

In the book The Construction of a Nationhood, Hastings explains that the ethnicity of a group, “the common culture whereby a group of people share the basics of life...is shared through a spoken language. Ethnicity and the spoken word go most closely together” (167). Spoken language is one of the branches on the tree of culture (and of ethnicity). Branching from the same trunk is the visual language, at times subliminal and unconscious in meaning (Kingery, 1). If you listen closely to the apparently quiet things that surround you, you might hear and learn some of the most interesting things. These are instruments that are certainly unplugged, but they are hooked up to an endless network of information to the past, present, and future.

The sections in this chapter show three ways stories are told: through food, through an annual community event, and through religion. In the communities along the Camino Real of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas, the storytellers are not only the people who live in Robeline, or Zwolle, or Moral, but also the *comales* in their kitchens, the crucifixes over their beds, and even a series of festival posters in a fast food restaurant. Like stories that evolve with the coming of new performers, cultural markers and material culture may change a little. The younger generations may make some alterations and shift the values while still keeping the main plot. The Hispanic heritage and history of the area cannot be completely hushed. Politics ranging from the level of kin to that of the larger community influence the “editing” of the stories, but the larger compilation of works (cultural markers) tell us about the past.

I. The Recipe Calls for People: Food for Thought and Solidarity

I can picture it fairly well: Robeline in the winter, with the cold humidity creeping over from the Spanish Lake and the women sitting in the kitchen making the tamales. That is when they make them, during the Christmas season. Sharon describes the event in simple, straightforward terms while everyone else's hunger increases. "I live just a few steps away from my mama and my daughter Brandy about ten minutes from here." Sharon, her mother Belma, her daughter Brandy, and her step-daughter Angel make up three generations of the Flores family. The last names differ, these were some choices made after marriages, but the similarities are all there. "We use mostly pork. Hogshead sometimes mixed with deer meat for the tamales." Everything is made from scratch, even the masa. Reed jumps in and exclaims, "Yes, old-time hot tamales!"

The Flores family was just one of the many warm people I had good conversations with along a stretch of the Camino Real (revamped, of course). They live in Robeline, on the same land their ancestors lived on, in a house that is over a century in age. Scattered across the spacious yard are various farming equipment, chickens, a butane tank, and tools. Scattered throughout their words are culinary and cultural links to the past. There is *calabaza*, *menudo*, *atole*, *chiles calientes*, *empanadas*, *chicharrones*, *pan dulce*, and *pinole*. All of these foods are eaten by Native Americans and Hispanics and many of the ingredients in the foods are indigenous to the Americas.

"Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you who you are". The loaded phrase comes from the French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (Pilcher, ix). Just "who" a person is can be very complex, but then again, food is also complex. Several sources address the facets and uses of food (Barnett, Bell, Counihan, Farb, Fieldhouse, Forster, Gabaccia, Humphrey, Scapp,

Taylor). Fieldhouse gives us a list of 20 uses of food including demonstration of the nature and extent of relationships, to display piety, and to provide a focus for gatherings (preface).

Food, foodways, eating, and cooking are described as “a language through which a society expresses itself” (Forster, 126), as vestiges of previous cultures (Farb, 6), and even as “a form of safe travel” (Scapp, 6). Eating as a form of “safe travel” conjures up thoughts of great geographical distances, but I would like to take Scapp’s idea of travel and further apply it to travel between ethnic boundaries and groups, travel in time (to the past), and travel between the public and the private realms of a community and of families.

Just as quilts and woodcarvings are handmade objects that carry tradition and social meaning, so does food. Food is yet another type of handcraft. It is also a storybook filled with all sorts of chapters. Chapters include material culture, language, and social interaction. As a folk-art, identity marker, and status symbol food strengthens social ties between groups. In most human societies, the fact that one eats or offers such and such a plate of food is associated with status considerations. This results in certain foods being prized more than others (Barnett). There are cases where people will limit themselves nutritionally and only eat the so-called prestigious foods. Food also strengthens social ties between groups. Most events in the religious, social, and political life of a community, and most of those in the life cycle of individuals belonging to a family group have food connotation. This gives a new meaning to the phrase “watch what you eat”.

All objects exist in context and are products of context. The context of the food in northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas is one of many ethnic groups interacting in both the past and today, it is one of rural areas and traditional people. Catholicism and Native American and Hispanic influences all intermingle in the lives of the people. I employed the use of cultural scripts rather than a strict questionnaire to find out about cultural markers and the people

themselves. I could not just sit there and ask them to list all the Hispanic foods they had eaten from childhood to present day or what they themselves make. You have to give a framework for remembering since memory happens only in the act of remembering

With cultural scripts, I had a network of branches I could follow up on and obtain even more ideas and material. For example, I asked “What do you and your family do to celebrate Lent?” This provides information with respect to family gatherings, traditions, food, and also gender roles. Working with several generations gave way to learning about cultural maintenance and adaptation.

Many of the families and individuals I spoke with in Robeline and Zwolle, Louisiana and in Moral and Nacogdoches, Texas referred to the same foods. Some call them “Spanish”, emphasizing peninsular derivation, others say they are “Mexican”, and a few admitted the Native American origin. The families on either side of the Sabine River travel back and forth for festivals, church gatherings, and visiting. Several of the women in Nacogdoches said people go over to Louisiana just to get the corn husks for the tamales they made (Austin, Y’Barbo, Buster).

Other agents of cultural transmission related to food are folk-remedies and recipes. These are passed on between kin and close friends and are indicative of cultural heritage and family origins. They both consist of ingredients available locally and both are tested with the “trial and error” method. A family might guard the ingredients as a secret or they are shared to later on diffuse geographically and culturally. Steven Tobias’ article on “Early American Cookbooks as Cultural Artifacts”, points out that cookbooks, in addition to recipes, contain “hidden clues and cultural assumptions about class, race, gender and ethnicity” (Tobias, 3).

Food is used to prevent, diagnose, and treat physical illness (Scapp, 6). Folk remedies and the greater concept of the folk medical system are integrated with official and unofficial institutional systems in culture. The family, the church, and even the local economy work

themselves in the integral network of folk medicine. Several of the elderly people I spoke to were able to list a few folk remedies, but they no longer used them. To stop blood, Henry Remedies of Zwolle would use spiderwebs. "For colds, just boil weeds or tree tops. We'd also drink this bitter drink...English call it...I forgot. Anyway, we'd take it for flus. It grew in the ground. Sassafras was used for the blood. The root and the grass made into a tea." Henry Remedies' folk remedies for cuts and colds were similar if not the same to others around the area. Reed and Belma Flores from Robeline would boil pine-straw to make a tea for coughs, rubbed Vaseline on cuts, and used quinine for a variety of ailments. Henry, Reed, Belma, and the others now go to medical doctors and pharmacies to obtain prescription medicine.

Hubert Posky from Moral, Texas, came to chat with me after being "out back killing fire ants". While his wife sat on the porch, talking on a cordless phone and husking onions at ten in the morning, Hubert with a faded mason tattoo on his right upper arm said that, "families still get together to make hot tamales. They're not as good now since all the old women have died. They would cook corn and grind it to make masa and use hogheads. Now, just go buy meats at the stores". Amy Malmay Parrie at the Choctaw-Apache Tribal Office in Zwolle, Louisiana also reflected on tamales, "Women would buy corn and cook it outside. They put it in lye and salt and that's cooked for a whole day. They might have used a *metate*. The Spanish brought the pigs, it used to be venison. Here in Zwolle only three women use hogshead, the rest go to the store."

Food, and more specifically tamales, are a reason for much of the movement between community members of northeast Texas to northwest Louisiana. Joyce Montes from Moral has relatives in Zwolle and explained how many people "buy shucks from Zwolle" since "they have a store there". Pearline Buster, a close friend of Joyce, describes it as "the tamale connection" and how people "get corn shucks in Zwolle". Zwolle has the Tamale Festival every October, but some churches in Nacogdoches have tamale dinners in January and February.

Many of the traditional foods of the area are labeled Mexican, Spanish, and Indian. Labeling of people is paired with labeling of food. Tex-mex and traditional Mexican dishes are made. Again, people might refer to the cooking as Spanish, but it has nothing to do with the Peninsular cuisine, not even the ingredients or the seasoning. Tamales, *pinole*, homemade hot chocolate, tortillas, dishes made with squash, *menudo*, blood pudding, and beans are present in the kitchens and on the tables of the "New Camino Real" because of the migration from Mexico. The instruments for cooking are also Mexican in origin (comales, cast-iron pots, etc.).

Several residents of Robeline, Zwolle, and Moral strongly affirm their Spanish heritage. They may call Spain the "Old Country" (Flores) and consider *menudo* a dish from Spain. Or, they might simply and firmly state that "I ain't no Mexican! We don't make that stuff, but we know about it" (Buster). Mary Van Rheen comments in her master's thesis on ethnic identity in the Sabine Parish, "Spanish remains a much more familiar term than Hispanic, although it may be taken to mean Spanish heritage rather than a direct tie with Spain. The relatively few people who choose to call themselves Hispanic usually express a literate interest in their heritage and possess some degree of sophistication, often as a result of post-secondary education."

Foodways studies asks the question, "Why do people eat what they eat?" Research has suggested that people eat what they do for sensory and social reasons as well. It also shows the effects of influence from media, marketing, and advertising (Miles). Humans are capable of eating food whose nutritional properties are mediocre simply in order to display economic status, social position, and social status. The study of popular beliefs, customs, and modes of behaviors, thick description, can yield information like sexual divisions of labor, social behaviors, the impact of technology on social behaviors, and kinship pattern (Schlereth). All of these are found in activities associated with food.

In the communities of Northwest Louisiana and Northeast Texas, recipes are handed

down through the generations just as the land has been. Encoded in the foods and recipes are family histories and the greater history of the area. Native American and Spanish lexicon are sprinkled throughout the recipes' ingredients.

Food and eating, two basic constants, occur in the kitchen. The kitchen is also a source of creation, education, as well as a place of frustration. Production, heritage, gender roles, growth, politics, and gossip all occur in the kitchen. The kitchen is by no means limited to the four walls of a room in a house. Fruit or vegetable gardens, a block party, or a baptism at the church down the street are just as good. Social events like religious celebrations and other community gatherings provide educational opportunities to learn about one's own history and that of others.

Gender roles are apparent in kitchens. Traditionally, the women work in the kitchen in the house, while the men procure the food outside. Theodore Humphrey looked at festival community life in rural Oklahoma. He noted that "gender-specific roles tend to be strongly reinforced through symbolic and idealized ways in the preparation and presentation of foods". Most of the women do prepare the foods indoors, in the kitchens, while the men work in outdoor spaces, for example fishing and hunting.

In between and throughout cooking and eating, conversation is steady. Oral culture tends to mislead if it implies a simple opposition with written culture. Cooking can be described as a richly shaded language (Pilcher, ix). Or, as Carole Counihan states in The Anthropology of Food and Body, "Food constitutes a language accessible to all". Ideas about the body metaphorically inform ideas about conception, growth and nurturance, color, food and food taboos, fertility, maternal and paternal roles, and exchange (Counihan, 9). The communities' oral culture is not limited to recipes and food talk, they also speak of daily events. Not only is there talk about community politics, but there is also talk of kin politics. Kitchen gossip can be some of the fiercest out there.

Food is an important element as well as the church. It can display piety and express moral sentiments. Symbolic meanings are attached to some products, drinks, and dishes (Fenton, 69). There is also a bond between family and religion. Many members of the Hispanic communities in northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas adhere to dietary restrictions of Catholic holidays. On Good Friday or Christmas, they might gather together and eat tamales or sweet breads (*pan dulce*). During Lent, they stay away from meat and eat fish on Fridays, and some even do the same on Wednesday's during Lent.

Central to the identity of the private sphere, eating and food preparation is extended to the public sphere as well. Food is a primary focus of much economic activity and festival foods also function as a sign of cultural affinity. They are a mark of identification, positive or negative depending on who the recipient is. The private sphere is also linked to religious events. Many of the Catholic churches in the communities I went to have frequent fish fry's or other types of dinners. What ties all three generations of people together is Catholicism and foods. They take religion and religious celebrations seriously. Family ties and gatherings are significant. Van Rheenen, who worked with the Ebarb community in northwest Louisiana, concluded, "The fundamental importance of kinship and the people's primordial ties to their rural settlements feed into their prevailing image of themselves as a close-knit community..." (Van Rheenen). The continuity from the past often takes place in the form of food and foodways. As one man commented, "I am the link to the past" (Reed Flores).

Rich in tradition and rich in change, the Hispanic communities of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas relate to one another through foods and food-related activities. It is a daily thing that has been going on for generations. When we think of food as brain-food, or as physical nourishment, the people of Robeline, Zwolle, and Moral teach us that it is something that brings people together.

II. Time to Wake Up From the Siesta: Visual Narratives from the Dairy Queen in Zwolle

Journal entry, December 12, 1999:

“So, I finally convinced myself to not get the Belt-buster combo at the Dairy Queen. Besides, I don’t think they even started serving lunch at that time. I opted instead for hash browns and a biscuit...and coffee. After the morning mass at St. Joseph’s, the place is packed. I don’t think it’s for the coffee, though. While stirring my fake sugar in the even faker coffee I notice all the posters along the wall from the Tamale Festivals of the years gone by...”

The lack of restaurants in Zwolle makes the Dairy Queen a prime target for Zwolle residents, and even more so for people passing by or visiting. It’s either the Dairy Queen or Hootie’s, which I recommend for the barbecue chicken. The Dairy Queen is down the road from the Apache-Choctaw Tribal Office and near St. Joseph’s Catholic Church. It is home to hamburger combo meals, but also to the complete collection of Zwolle Tamale Festival posters. The first couple of times I ate there, it did not entirely register in my mind just what the posters meant. But later on, during my hash brown breakfast visit, I realized how communicative they are. The posters, visual narratives, showed how the community perceived, or rather presented itself throughout the years. Who exactly organized the publicity and was in charge of the artwork? How have the images chosen to be on the posters changed through the years? With the change in images is there a change in identity?

In Joe Wilson and Lee Udall’s Folk Festivals: A Handbook for Organization and Management, a section under the chapter devoted to publicity mentions posters and brochures. According to Wilson and Udall, “The most important information on any festival poster is the name of the event, the dates, and the location; and any design you choose should focus attention to these items.” (95-96). The event name, when it occurs, and where are certainly important for bringing together people from within the location and from outlying areas. But, if they define importance in terms of community values, I’d rather think that what the poster is suggesting on

the level of community awareness and presentation is just, if not more important.

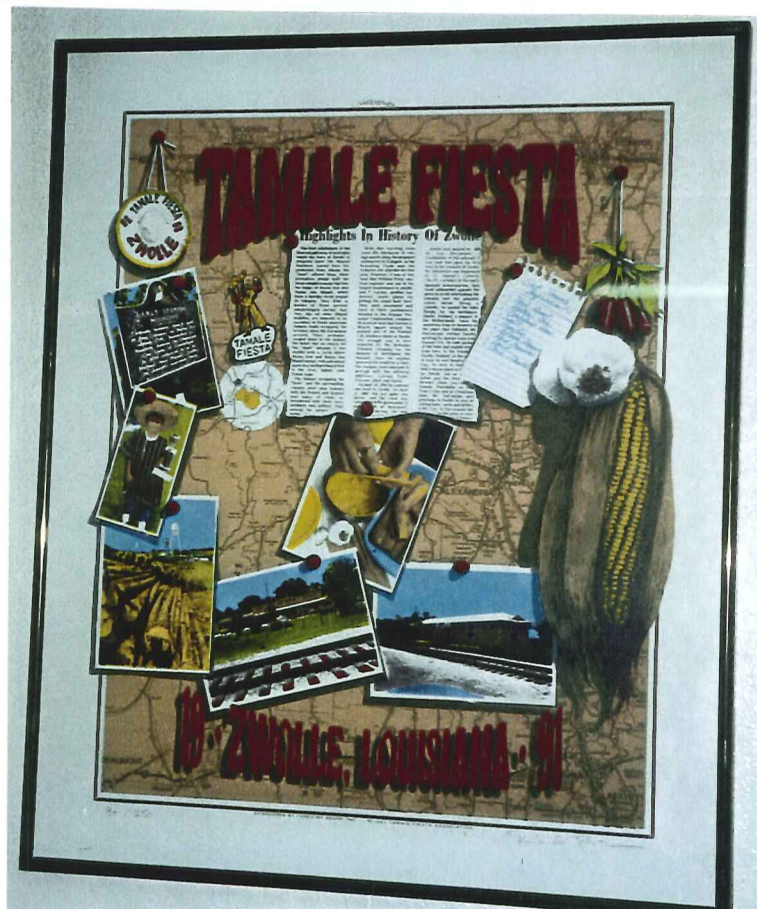
The Tamale Fiesta provides entertainment and publicity. There is the Fiesta Supper, square-dancing, and costume and tamale-eating contests. Festivals of all kinds are the intersection of commercial and private food preparation (Humphrey, 193). A food festival is a source of cohesion and cultural meaning for communities. George Lewis looked at the Asparagus festival of Stockton, California noted, "the food festival as an American cultural event, then, likely rests on similar mythic reinterpretations of reality that define these events as existing almost outside the constraints of reality itself--community can be both invented and celebrated at such festivals" (73).

The festival began in 1985 as the idea of the manager of the Sabine Parish Chamber of Commerce. It was designed to promote tourism and to improve the area's image. The tamale was chosen simply as a convenient focal point (Van Rheenen, 108). Stockton, California celebrates asparagus and Zwolle celebrates tamales. For several generations, the families of Zwolle and surrounding areas had been making tamales. This is a Native American food (Mexico), and yet the community often associates it with Spanish food. Recently, though, many have recognized it as a Native American dish. To add another twist, they choose stereotypical Mexican imagery to depict their Spanish heritage: cacti, sombreros, donkeys, etc.

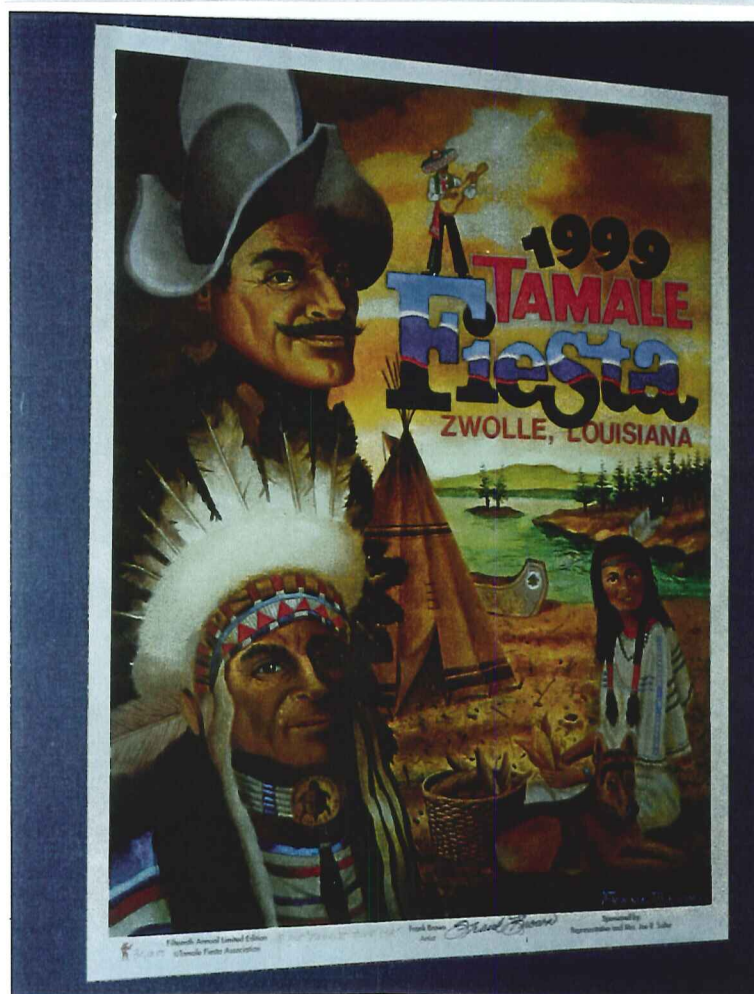
The very first poster for the Tamale Fiesta of Zwolle was made in 1985. The festival was celebrating its 10th birthday and Zwolle was profiting economically from the crowds of visitors. There is an annual poster contest for the annual tamale festival. A committee chooses which design will grace the poster. According to Martha Henderson, a historian, "Usually somebody on the lake wins. There are no real local artists". The design chosen to represent the Zwolle festival showed a stereotypically moustached and sombreroed Mexican taking a siesta. Beside him lies a plate of tamales and in the background is a dancing woman with a flowy, red



The first and second Zwolle Tamale Festival posters from 1985 and 1986



Tamale Festival posters from 1990 and 1991



Tamale Festival posters from 1998 and 1999

dress and a few fireworks going off. Did the members of the community want to express to outsiders that they were of Mexican heritage?

As noted in the previous section on food, being labeled Mexican carries negative connotations. Zwolle has been traditionally Spanish-speaking and Catholic in a state that has had mostly French speaking Catholics and a majority of Anglo-Protestants (Van Rheenen, 2). It is true that immigration from Mexico did take place over the course of several generations and prior to the formal establishment of Zwolle. With the boom in the lumber industry, a multitude of Mexican workers came to the area and surrounding towns looking for employment. This influx of Mexicans only strengthened the Anglo conception of Zwolle's tie with Mexico. Many of the community members are of Apache-Choctaw ancestry. As Mary Van Rheenen comments regarding the Tamale Festival, "the annual Tamale Fiesta in Zwolle with its Spanish adjectives and Mexican costumes further confounds the puzzling picture of this unique group of people" (2)

Those who refer to the food's and event's imagery as Spanish might use that particular definition to "whiten" the situation. Others may simply not know how to differentiate what is Spanish and what is Mexican. There is the contradiction in the community where the ones that do not want to be Mexican present themselves with stereotypes. The "weekend identity" situation has been reflected on by several people I spoke with. This sentiment of people adopting an ethnicity for a festive weekend is mirrored with local Pow-wow's. Sharon Flores of Robeline thought the Pow-wow's to be "like Mardi-Gras, you know, you put on a costume, but you don't really know what's behind". Residents of Zwolle comment on how members will portray themselves as Spanish or Mexican, but only in the atmosphere of and during the festival.

There are pro- and anti-festival people. The secretary at St. Joseph's Catholic church was mad at Zwolle's Tamale Festival: "They've gone the wrong way--to Mexico". Zwolle's

Tamale Festival has been successful in the domains of tourism and economics. Each year, the number of attendants increases as does the profit. Julie Parrie from the florist shop said during the festival, “the houses are the busiest”. The food festival tries to join the culture and geography into a regional culture using the tamale food tradition. What was once reserved for special occasions and holidays is available abundantly for everyone during one weekend in October.

Returning, to the posters, some images and traditions created can be interpreted as insincere and parody-like, others may be more neutral. Imagery using human figures appeared again in the 1986 poster (a flamenco dancer with three men playing stringed instruments in the background) and the 1987 poster (a sombreroed man with his arm around a woman with long, hair in two braids; they are staring at the moon behind cypress trees). For the next 11 years, still-life images decorated the festival posters for the most part. There were *metates*, corn, and garlic images.

The poster for the years 1991 and 1992 showed Zwolle’s history in a scrap-book fashion. The railroad and lumber industries were acknowledged as well as St. Joseph’s Catholic church. Starting in 1996, the imagery focused in more on the Native-American aspects of both the food and of the area. The still-life images do not openly point to a particular group as do the ones with human images. Interestingly, the 1999 Tamale Festival poster, by the artist Frank Brown, depicts a Spanish conquistador, a Native-American chief, a Native-American woman sitting beside a dog husking corn, and a Mexican with a bit sombrero playing a guitar. The conquistador and the Native-American couple dominate the space of the poster. The Mexican musician plays his guitar above the “f” of the word “fiesta”.

Only the committee members decide who’s drawing will become the following year’s official festival poster. So then, to what extent to they represent the ideas of the community

with regards to identity? The community agrees that the festival is beneficial for tourism and the people themselves actively participate in the events. Ethnic labels are misused and identity is searched for in the posters and the festival's related material culture. Van Rheenen illustrates the Tamale Festival so well when she states, "as both ethnic celebration and caricature, the Tamale Fiesta did not give the area a new identity any more than its official images depict the people's heritage. The event itself, however, expresses the complex perplexities of the people's identity." (117).

Images that have been used to reinforce social class and define cultural insiders and outsiders are now used on posters to advertise Zwolle to tourists and travelers. This year, the Zwolle Tamale Fiesta celebrates its 25th year. Over the past 24, the images have changed from depicting stereotypical images of what is Mexican (but often considered Spanish), to still-life arrangements of foods and objects for food preparation related to tamales, to addressing the Native-American history of the community.

IV. Faithfully Yours:

Journal entry, June 22, 1999:

“Hadr’t been to mass since Easter and haven’t had communion in years. After the evening mass at the Moral church I went over to Pearline and Phil’s. They wouldn’t have spoken to me if I hadn’t attended the church. The gospel was about the Golden Rule and Father Dobosz brought up Kosovo. I get to Pearline’s house and there are tons of religious objects. Statues of Joseph and Mary, pictures of Jesus...and Elvis are everywhere. The first thing she told me was ‘I’m not buying anything. If I hadn’t seen you in church, I wouldn’t have let you in my house’.

Cultural markers don’t necessarily have to be tangible like a tortilla, a poster, or a road sign. They can be beliefs too. Catholicism remains dramatically important in the communities of east Texas and northwest Louisiana. Every cultural tradition has symbols that function to synthesize disorder and order, known and unknowns, continuity and discontinuity (Pandian, 13).

Matovina, in Tejano Religion and Ethnicity, explains how U.S. Latino theologians prefer that image of the assimilationist “melting pot” be replaced by that of the “stew pot”. He further states that, “Just as in a stew pot each ingredient enriches and is enriched by the other ingredients, so too in our society the different cultures should be mutually enriching and not overpower one another... resistance to the melting pot is manifested in popular expressions of faith.” (Matovina, ix). David Bellande who wrote his master’s thesis at L.S.U. on Ethnic and Religious Diversity in a South Louisiana Community, wrote that religion can be an ethnic marker because it “lends itself so ready to fracturing” (53).

Catholicism does in fact dominate the communities in northwest Louisiana (Zwolle and Robeline) and northeast Texas (Moral). It takes place both in private and public realms. The church has played a role in maintaining traditions. People will make the sign of the cross every time they go by a Catholic church, the houses will be blessed, and many are baptized, go through communion, and are confirmed in the Catholic church.



Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Moral, Texas

Religion, religious objects, and food are all intertwined. In all of the houses I went to there were religious objects in the living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, and yards. Such objects were crucifixes, statues of Mary, Jesus, Joseph, and other saints as well as pictures, paintings of the Last Supper, holy water, and rosaries. Quite often, the rosaries will be placed on the bedposts and some of the families might drink holy water. Families attend mass every weekend and many of the younger members go to the churches on Wednesday nights for religious teachings. During religious holidays, traditional activities and foods take place, when at other times during the year there is a different routine. For Christmas, members of Zwolle, Robeline, and Moral will gather together to cook and eat tamales and *pan dulce*.

Father David Richter from St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Zwolle said "Catholicism is the defining factor for Hispanicism". As a native of north Louisiana, Fr. Richter has noticed how recently, many people from the Catholic community gravitate more towards their Indian heritage while those of the Protestant "don't really want much to do with the Native-American side". When growing up, the people were counseled not to speak Spanish to children. Today, they have courses for Spanish at the local schools. Catholicism was not stigmatized in the community as was the language.

As noted in my journal entry, a lot of the acceptance from the members of these communities lies in a the "outsider's" religion. In the community of Moral, about 5 or 10 minutes from Nacogdoches city, the new Mexican immigrants also share the Catholic faith, but they are still considered outsiders. Father George Dobosz from Poland, is the priest at the Immaculate Conception Church in Moral. He lives in a trailer right next to the church and has become close to the small community. The day I spoke to him was the same day they would have the first mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. That church was built for the new Mexican population and will have masses entirely in Spanish. "It's a big metal building near the

highway and serves the Mexican community”. He went on to talk about the different kinds of “spirits” (Mexican and Spanish) and the different cultures of the area. Father Dobosz said, “In the 30’s, 40’s it was a difficult time. Better not to speak Spanish. Same for Polish, you need to learn English for future. The language is lost, but the spirit isn’t--the Spanish spirit. It’s a very conservative faith and the Virgin Mary is very important and religion is public”.

While the people struggle with ethnic identity, Catholicism remains a constant. It is seen in every generation. Religion is a cultural influence (Cowell, 88). It is also a unifying force, both at the familial and at the greater communal level. It is both a worship of the older generations and of the younger ones (Pérez 16). The church structure itself is a gathering place and an identity marker. The internal aspects of the religion are transmitted in the church and at homes. Practices and material culture that revolve around Catholicism are shared by the people of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas.

Chapter 3: Voices Carry

Religion, food, and language are three aspects of culture that have a longevity to them. In some cases, they may even be immortalized. In the previous chapter, I touched on the material manifestations of the edible, visual, and spiritual, and how culture can be transmitted through them. This chapter is going to be about language; what one expresses about their identity in what they say and in what they don't say. Oral transmission should not be restricted to a literal, aural nature. Silence, or a lack of audible words, can express so much.

Language, like material culture, is very much tied with ethnicity. It can be a central symbol of ethnic consciousness. Both language and ethnicity are dynamic and fluid, and they undergo change under social and economic contexts. One's conscious attitude toward one's language depends largely upon how others think about that person's language and how it is valued. Both languages and ethnicity can also be stigmatized as is the case in the Hispanic communities of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas.

Raymond Williams said that since culture is a signifying system, its products are communicative ones which function as usable signs. These signs do not develop by themselves; they are socially produced and, once they are operative, a person is born into them, socialized in them (Warren, 63-64). Language can be a vehicle for social mobility, but it is not social mobility itself. As the vehicle for cultural accumulation and historical transmission, language defines a social group. Its codes of communication, or sign systems, relate to both "high" (elite) and "low" (popular) culture (Meyer, 111).

Language as a verbal art has both aesthetic and expressive uses. The articulation of language is dynamic on both the individual and the group level. The same can be applied, to an extent, to the written dimension of language. Cultural discourse is a part of the symbolic culturescape, rich in meaning (Kovacic, 7). Within the landscape, culturescape, and soundscape,

language can be a way to express and transmit culture. The residents of the communities in northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas have shifted the value of the Spanish language. A young girl may be learning Spanish at a high school in Nacogdoches. Her grandmother, who may have known Spanish at her age, was not allowed to speak it at school. That grandmother who was forced to “forget” Spanish in high school “forgets” it today even when she is allowed to speak it.

In Renato Rosaldo’s article on “Cultural Citizenship, Inequality and Multiculturalism”, he paraphrases a passage from Richard Rodríguez’s Hunger for Memory where Rodríguez expresses, “Spanish is a domestic language; it is fine for family life, but it has no place in school, politics, and the workplace...racialized ethnic culture can thrive only within domestic rather than the public sphere” (Flores). Rosaldo then argues that Rodríguez is ignoring the social and ideological factors that structure such an experience. How is the Spanish language viewed and received by the individual families and also by the communities of Moral, Zwolle, and Robeline? How has it changed in the last two or three generations?

In this chapter I want to explore how language is used to transmit ideas of ethnicity and also community politics. From dispersed lexicon to altered surnames, from bilingual signs to learning Spanish in the third grade--these are forms of cultural transmission. Assimilation is evident in the language loss of the communities, though the schools may offer classes in the Spanish language.

I. Public vs. Private “Memory”

The distinction between “public” and “private” tends to be dichotomous in nature rather than continuous (Cowell, 13). The differences between the descriptive and the prescriptive uses of “public” and “private” depend on whether we do treat their relation as dichotomous or continuous. By placing a dichotomous distinction between the public and the private, the specifics and the historical contexts are pushed aside. Several things are meant when I am referring to the public and private with regards to language: when and where the language is spoken (situational), if it is accepted and if so how that is displayed, and also around whom it is used.

Language acquisition and use is at the core of human intersubjectivity. Accessing of sharing a common language does not mean that cooperation will ensue, but it does provide a ground for sharing common understandings. As a part of culture, language provides an index of that culture and becomes symbolic of that culture as well (Fishman).

As my conversations with people progressed, they would come up with more Spanish vocabulary. A few of the men (both in Louisiana and in Texas) spoke Spanish when they worked in Houston. All of the members of the older generations remember either hearing or speaking Spanish at home. Reed Flores from Robeline had been a carpenter all his life (he is now retired, but continues to work in the yard). He spent eight years in Houston where “no one spoke English”, so he could only communicate with his co-workers in Spanish. His grandparents and parents spoke it fluently.

Alice Y’Barbo who lives near Nacogdoches is from Pennsylvania. Her husband, on the other hand, is the seventh generation to live on that land. She mentioned how, “my husband’s parents spoke Spanish when they were kids. Real Spanish”. Hubert Posky from Moral doesn’t remember a single word, but his brother, “down the road can speak it”.

The majority of the lexicon is associated with foods, weather, and things around the house (rooms/spaces and objects):

calabaza (squash)	azucar (sugar)
menudo (dish with hominy and tripe)	metate (grinding stone)
atole (cornmeal pudding)	pinole (cornmeal and sugar)
sabana (blanket)	chiles seco (red pepper)
almohada (pillow)	tripas (tripe)
chiles calientes (hot peppers)	manteca (lard)
mesa (table)	casa (house)
sala (living room)	bandeja (tray)
puerta (door)	porcha (porch)
hermano (brother)	tormenta (storm)
cucaracha (cockroach)	trueno (thunder)
sol (sun)	lluvia/lluvia (rain)
empanadas (meat pastries)	pajaros (birds)
pan dulce (sweet bread)	chicharrones (fried pork skins)
tractores (tractors)	tanque de butano (butane tank)
petaca (furniture chest)	ruedas (tires)
ventana (window)	chorizo (sausage)
cojin (cushion/pillow)	harina (flour)
manteca (lard)	frijoles (beans)
ajo (garlic)	silla (chair)
tomates (tomatoes)	maiz/mais (corn)
pino (pine tree)	ciruela (plum)
nispero (persimmon)	durazno (peach)
cachucha (cap)	conejo (rabbit)
tortuga (turtle)	

Many of these people had not used these words in years. They did not even realize how much they could remember. Once a context was given, or a framework, they surprised themselves with their Spanish vocabulary.

A few admitted to not wanting to speak it. Joyce Montes after the 6:00 evening mass in Moral said, "I can understand it, but I'm scared to speak it". Another church member refused to

admit that she had any type of Hispanic roots. Lyndia Austin who also attends the Moral church said, "People are very touchy about what they call themselves. There's a stigma in East Texas. It's good to be Spanish. Now it's coming back because any time there is a majority it happens. There's a majority right now because of the new immigration from Mexico". This is not the same case for northwest Louisiana. The majority is not Spanish-speaking or the new immigration from Mexico. But, there is a stigma in both areas and it has existed throughout the 20th century.

School was a place where Spanish was forbidden for the older generations. This affected home-life and many of these individuals' parents were the ones who encouraged them to give up the language. Speaking Spanish means not being "White" and is associated with being Mexican or "non-white". The ethnic stigma was then transferred onto the language, and people stopped teaching it to their children (Shoemaker, 99). Students, particularly children, are taught to become proficient in English so that they can engage in the "other" culture. That "other" culture is viewed as necessary and their "own" culture is complementary (Fishman, 49).

Now that Spanish is offered in the schools, the younger generations "have become far enough removed from the stigma attached to speaking Spanish that they wonder why the old people abandoned their language" (Shoemaker, 106). They don't necessarily make the connection between speaking Spanish and being Spanish. The younger generations also learn Spanish through television programs. Brandy Gojean from Robeline mentioned how she "learned the numbers off Sesame Street". She took Spanish in high-school for three years and plans to teach her children that language. Several people noted how there appears to be a trend to learn the language again, and one outsider commented how he, "can't figure out if it's a cultural revival or if it's because Spanish is an 'in' thing".

So, when do the people use Spanish? For the most part, Spanish is generally in use with

the loose lexicon. Conversational Spanish is not commonly used, though perhaps more in northeast Texas. Freddie Montes of Moral admits to speaking Spanish when she's giving orders. When Freddie and her friends call each other by phone, they talk to each other in Spanish and use an 18th century Spanish. With some people they might choose to maintain a full conversation and with others they may not. This rests on how well they know you.

In the northwest Louisiana communities, Spanish remains at the lexical level. There are few people who speak that 18th century Spanish fluently or semi-fluently. As mentioned earlier, the new immigration from Mexico to northwest Texas is a factor in language maintenance and renewal. Alice Y'Barbo near Nacogdoches, commented on the Moral community by saying, "they were ashamed they were Spanish and kept it a secret. Now they'll tell you they do this and that tradition". She then went on to say how, "people at first used to think of the Spanish around here as Mexicans, but when the Mexicans came in...it's a whole other ball game". While the communities in northeast Texas may be confronted with a growing Mexican population, the communities of northwest Louisiana have an increasing consciousness of their Native-American heritage.

A close-knit network structure is an important mechanism of language maintenance, as discussed in Milroy's Language and Social Networks. Linguistic change will then be associated with a break up of such a structure. The ethnic stigmas that had been transferred to the Spanish language in these communities have had an effect on the number of those who participate in the language.

II. From Name-Calling to Name-Changing

People quite often give names to themselves to show who they *feel* to be and they give names to others to show how they perceive those others. Name-changing may help a group redefine itself (Banton, 18). But, people belong to several groups. They identify themselves and others by language, religion, gender class, residence, etc. The cultural traits by which an ethnic group defines itself can be replaced by others in the course of time (Roosens, 12).

Lyndia Austin's son-in-law, Miguel, and his brother Dante live with them in Moral. Dante sees the U.S. as a mixed society having to label people in groups using cultural stereotypes. Lyndia's daughter (married to Miguel) had her share of problems with the classification system. The University Registrar would not let her put down "Hispanic" as her ethnic affiliation. They wanted to see her birth certificate, which had put her down as "White". By definition, she could not be White and Hispanic at the same time. Dante again questioned, "What's up with all this classification in the U.S.? White seems to signify the power in all of the countries. Now it's not a caste system per se, but there's still a caste system".

An indication of a threat to a language comes in the form of name changes (Van Rheenen, 98). Several surnames in the Hispanic communities were either Anglicized or were changed into a French equivalent. Y'Barbo was changed to Ebarb; Ramirez to Remedies; Parilla to Parrie; Charnaca to Ezernack; del Ríos to Rivers; Bermea to Malmay; Padilla to Paddie. Several of the men I spoke to mentioned changing their surnames when they joined the army. Again, the attempt to "whiten" their identity is revealed in such surname-changing.

The same last names appear on the grave markers and in the address books of the communities in both northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas: Sanchez, Remedies/Ramidez, Leone, Rivers, Parrie, Ferguson, Santos, Cortinez, Martinez, Sepulvado, Ezernack, Ebarb, Procell, Poskeys, Lazarines, and Rodrigues.

Thirteen of the surnames that are common to the communities are from the original 13 families of the Apache-Choctaw Tribe, according to Amy Malmay. The men of Spanish decent married Native-American women. The 13 original families were: Ebarb, Ezernack, Garcie, Leone, Laroux, Malmay, Martinez, Procell, Paddie, Ramirez, Rivers, Sepulvado, and Parrie.

James Poskey from Moral was sitting next to his wife outside. He brought out some photocopies of genealogical records of his family (Paasche's from Norway). We then got on the subject of connections among families in the area with families in Louisiana. "Oh yeah, a bunch of Cordovas here from Louisiana. As for me, two Poskey guys came from Norway to Mississippi. One of them stayed in Natchitoches and one came to Nacogdoches. In Louisiana, he married a white girl from Mississippi.

Everyone seems to be interested in genealogy from the individual families in Moral to the Apache-Choctaw tribal members in Zwolle. Alice Y'Barbo, a Pennsylvanian with family originally from the area, lives right next to a Catholic church about 15 or 20 minutes from Nacogdoches. When in high-school, her son tried to do a family tree but "none of the old people helped", so she and a friend helped put the book "Y'Barbo and Mora Families" together. "My mother didn't look Spanish at all, so I just wondered what nationality I was".

Just as there is an interest in finding one's own family history, or "who am I?", there is a replay of the caste system in the communities and especially in the areas of Robeline and Zwolle, Louisiana. The Busters of Moral use various ethnic labels. Pearline says, "I'm not Spanish. I'm a Spaniard, but not Spanish. My grandfather came from Spain, but Spanish is like a slang word for me. My grandma on my daddy's side is a full-blood Indian--a Tejas". Her husband, Phil who ended up buying the same land he picked cotton on, said, "I'm mixed-up. I'm a Spaniard and an Indian. I can understand Spanish, but I can't speak it well."

Henry Remedies from Coon Ridge Road in Zwolle, said, "Before we called ourselves

‘espanoles’. My grandfather came from Texas and landed here. He married an Indian woman and had three boys and that’s where we got started. All Indians faded away. Now they got the Indian program in Ebarb, the Indian deal. Younger kids interested in that.”. As for who in the area spoke Spanish, “Tommy down the road knows Spanish and Mexican. Wife’s from Mexico”.

Both the manipulation of surnames and of ethnic labels is a way to transmit how views on ethnic groups have developed (in addition to inter- and intra-relations). There is still a fondness for relating many things to the “Old Country”, or Spain. Spain is at a safe distance in contrast with the proximity of Mexico. What is behind a surname or an ethnic label is not always readily known. Like language loss or assimilation, name-changing is a way to adapt to conflicts arising among ethnic groups.

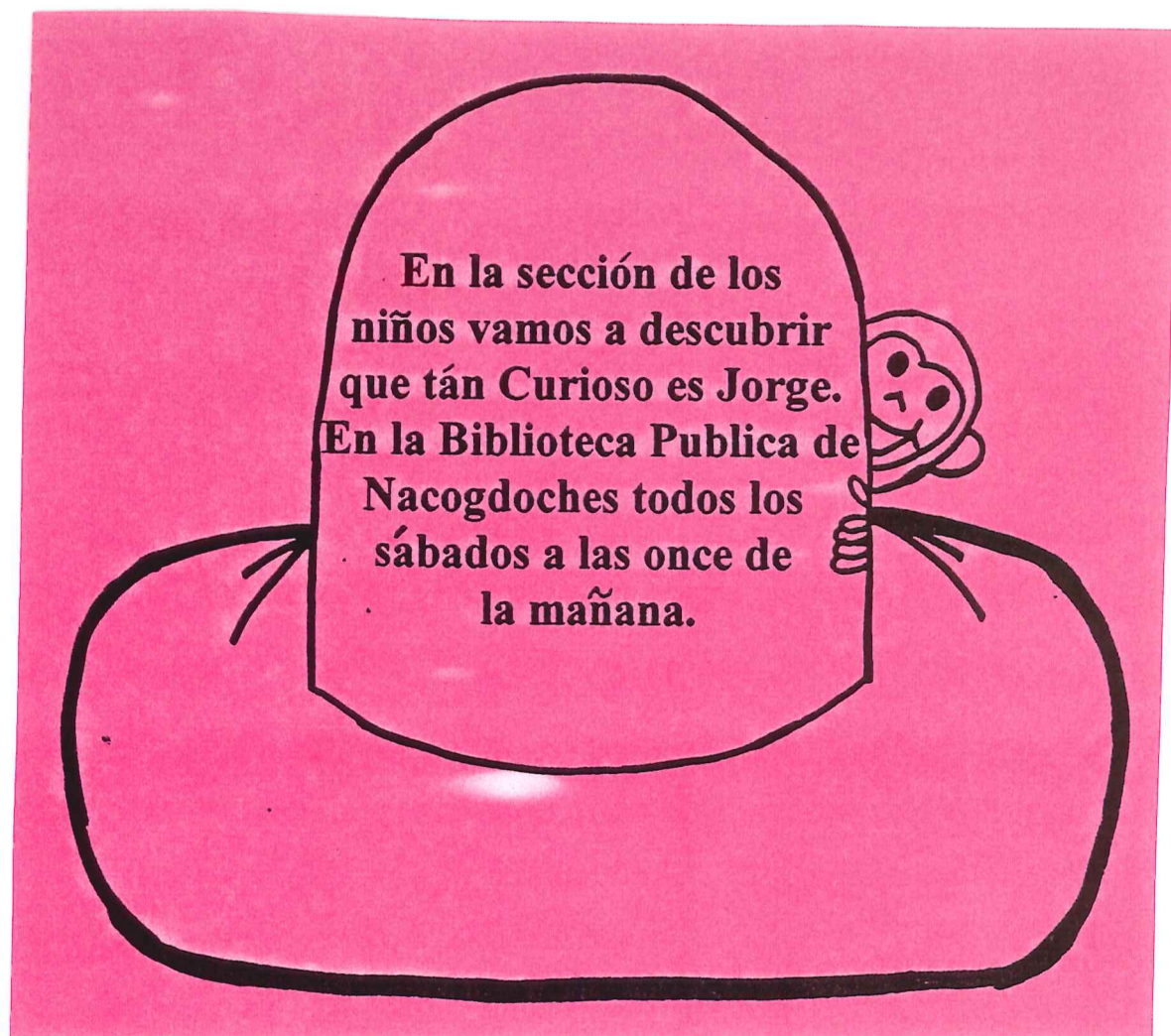
III. Signs of the Time

In Nacogdoches, Texas and the surrounding areas, many signs are bilingual (at the library, the grocery store, the banks, etc.). It is a possibility that this may have developed because of the recent rise in the Mexican immigrant population. According to Doris Meyer, Spanish is becoming a market vehicle and an exploitable resource in this country (Meyer, 112). There are many Mexicans employed in Nacogdoches.

Almost right after crossing the bridge into the state of Texas, bilingual signs appear. In Nacogdoches, there is La Mexicana Store & Mexican Products. There's a sign for Orlandi Valuta, the equivalent of a Western Union, that says "*Giros a México*" (roughly meaning "money orders to Mexico"). A lot of the workers that come, send money to their families back in Mexico.

An artifact is the product of a particular context. The expression or utterance of a language is also the product of a particular context. Bilingualism is displayed publicly by businesses, libraries, and churches. Through text, the signs recognize the Mexican population and adapt to them rather than the Mexicans having to completely assimilate in public with English. The Mexican immigrant community has its own grocery store and also a new Catholic church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, recently built by the highway. In nearby Chireno, the Catholic church there will soon start giving mass in Spanish for the Mexican population. For the most part, the Spanish-speaking residents of Moral and Nacogdoches do not attend the Spanish masses with the Mexican residents.

In the schools, the students are surrounded by more Spanish than before. Hispanic Heritage Week is celebrated in Nacogdoches the last week of October during which several talks are given. At the public library, there is an entire section on books only in Spanish and there are gatherings for children and parents on Saturday morning.



Handout from the Public Library in Nacogdoches. It reads:
"In the children's section we will discover just how Curious George is.
At the Public Library in Nacogdoches every Saturday at 11:00 a.m."

A few of the Mexican immigrants have expressed how they simply were not aware of an Hispanic community in northeast Texas. As Miguel, a bilingual teacher for the first grade from Mexico noted, "I was unaware of this Hispanic society here for such a long time. It goes unnoticed. We were just a bunch of guys going up north. Even before it became a part of U.S., those before were here with grants and then there are those that have just come here".

While individuals may have problems with the new immigrants, the community at large and the businesses welcome them with bilingual arms. This may be in part because they mostly interact with one another (they have their own church and stores), but this is something that should be explored more.

Chapter 4: Passing Down the Stories: Cultural Transmission and Ethnicity

Among the Hispanic communities that stretch along the once-known-as “King’s Highway”, people display and conceal their ethnicities. Ethnic groups are continually changing as their members react to new circumstances and assess the opportunities they present. A web of structure, process, and consciousness is built out of the group’s parts (Banton, 5). According to Roosens in Creating Ethnicity, “an ethnic category, network, or group, however, offers from the social point of view, commonality in language, a series of customs and symbols, a style, rituals, an appearance, and so forth, which can penetrate life in many ways” (17).

It is impossible, though, to reduce ethnicity to a list of traits and practices that can be isolated (Upton, 3). Many cultural continuities and changes are not visible in the material world. Ethnicity as a creolized identity demands that we look at such material culture not as deterministic. The oral and material culture of the communities are tools for expressing identity. Ethnicity is a tool as well and is used for individual self-fashioning (Upton, 5).

Much of this self-fashioning or cultural identity requires either a member of a particular group to leave or an outsider from another group to enter. When a population has substantial differences to shape and maintain boundaries, ethnic groups are formed. Since they are flexible, shifts in the boundaries take place when a need arises to organize activities in sectors that were previously given little significance (Bellande, v).

In northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas, two groups have “entered”. There is a growing consciousness of the Native-American history of the areas of Zwolle and Robeline, Louisiana. I spoke with Amy Malmay Parrie at the Apache-Choctaw Tribal Office about this. She said when she was in high-school, “I wasn’t given a choice, I had to be Hispanic...In the 80’s, the tribe was dead and it was fixing to be taken off the state tribal list. In 1994, Mr. Bolton

picked it up. For the first two years, there was a lot of participation and then it dwindled down. But, now there's a lot more interest and participation and they're incorporating the Native Americans in activities like the Tamale Fiesta". Rhonda Remedies who works at the Los Adaes Fort said, "Now it's acceptable to recognize the Indian part. It's like a fashion. If you're Spanish you're also an Indian, most likely."

In northeast Texas, the new immigration of Mexicans is the "outside" group that forces people to reconsider their definitions of what is Spanish and what is Mexican. In northwest Louisiana, Spain is viewed through an altered filter of Mexico. There are still people who associate Mexico with the "Old Country" and those that associate the "Old Country" with Mexicanisms.

Culture and history are elastic. The writing of history, just as its presentation in public history texts, involves political choices (Norkunas, 16). Teaching is a medium for the retransmission of ethnic values in some cases. The same compatibilities and antagonisms taught in the classroom are consciously addressed by the individuals. Are some of these communities continuing to practice these Hispanic traditions because they wish to or because they feel threatened by the "outside" or "other" ethnic groups?

Several families in Robeline and Zwolle displayed, perhaps even more, their cultural heritage after the establishment of Indian Communities. This open Native-American presence is not reflected in Moral or Nacogdoches, but with the Mexican population growing, the people are also re-inserting themselves into the Hispanic group.

Working with three generations in all of the communities gives way to learning about cultural maintenance and adaptation. Reed Flores, 77 years in age, and his 9 year-old grandson both pray everyday to the Virgin Mary, but the young boy would rather eat pizza than menudo. There are generational skips as well. Many of the younger people have grown up with their

grandparents. In the case of the Flores family, Brandy Gojean grew up with her grandparents (Reed and Belma) rather than with her mother, Sharon. She married two years ago and now lives in an apartment in Natchitoches, but continues to maintain more of the family's cultural practices than her mother who lives, literally, a few seconds away from Reed and Belma. "I'm like my grandmother", said Brandy over the phone, "My mom's a little different". She continues her grandparents' traditions as a result of being raised by them.

The younger generations, as previously noted, are able to learn Spanish in an environment that does not directly castigate them for speaking it. There is a lot more exogamy in the communities than before, but the close tie to the lands brings families back. In addition to the movement of the younger generations, they are also questioning the stigma's attached to the language, material culture, and ethnicity they encounter in their familiar settings. Many become the insiders that "step outside" and examine their community.

The ethnic history of a community and its complex mythosymbolism cannot be put aside in order to comprehend the community (Staellart, 15). The historical contexts are also to be taken into account, including current contexts. There seem to be two different variables that affect the communities of northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas. They share names, religion, language, and foodways, no doubt. But, the stereotypes and the joking about Mexicans in Zwolle are not present in Moral and Nacogdoches due to proximity and presence of the group. In northeast Texas, the language is gaining public recognition. In Zwolle and Robeline, the Indian tribal communities have made successful efforts for national and local recognition.

The religion, language, names, and foodways common to these communities can be seen as Hispanic/Indian-Hispanic. What changes, though, are the ways they are categorized and defined (like people). This has changed through the years depending on such things as "outside" ethnic groups firmly establishing themselves, how the teaching of local history in schools has changed

throughout the years, whether members have left their communities and returned with a different perspective on their community, and also whether people feel threatened by other groups.



Sharon Roberts, Angel Roberts, and Reed Flores at the Flores home in Robeline



Phil and Pearlina Buster, Joyce Montes, Freddie, Lyndia Austin and Bell Cloudy in Moral



Mural depicting the Camino Real in Nacogdoches, Texas

Conclusions

Storytelling among the communities along the “New Camino Real” comes about through the use of both material and oral culture. The issues and arguments revolving around ethnicity and identity may not be openly discussed, but they may be openly displayed through the material culture. Metaphors embody and express information about how individuals in a culture feel about their relationship to other people, things, and themselves. Thus, structural metaphors express similarity to something experienced in the physical world (Kingery, 22).

Concerning material culture, the location of objects is important. One should take into consideration where various objects are found, say in the household. Are they used for display or public functions and located in living rooms, dining rooms, or kitchens where they can be seen by all? Or, are they used for private functions and found in bedrooms or bathrooms? Cultural coherence and appropriateness come about by learning how to control the public and private symbols that constitute a culture (Pandian, 3).

The communities in northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas share common material cultures: food, food-related items, religious objects, and the Catholic church. The Zwolle Tamale Fiesta is something unique to that town. The other communities, may share the same recipes and may eat them during certain holidays, but only Zwolle promotes the tamale as a part of its regional heritage. With tourism in mind, it offers up what some consider to be the “local culture” up for sale. In Politics of Public Memory, Norkunas looks at how tourism, “ends up by promoting the preservation of fictional recreations of ethnicity as expressions of ethnicity become commodities to be bought and sold” (Norkunas, 2).

Regarding language, an integral and reciprocal relationship exists between language, culture, and reality. Culture is embedded in language, language is based on and derived from a lived reality, and both language and culture create and mold that reality. Ethnic consciousness is

not necessarily dependent on maintenance of a unique traditional language, although linguistic change in an ethnic group might be an indication of acculturation or assimilation.

There have been several studies in the U.S. with immigrant and minority groups that have shown that English is considered the standard language used in formal and public settings, while the immigrant's native language is considered most appropriate in private or informal intra-group settings and situations. The Spanish language that the older generations had to give up cannot be entirely recovered with the schooling of the younger generations. Meanings attached to the language have evolved as well. Some of the older people refuse to talk because of the negative implications that were once attached to the language.

Through the cultural transmission in the oral and material cultures of the Hispanic communities in northwest Louisiana and Northeast Texas, the complexities of identity and ethnic consciousness become apparent. Family, friend, and language networks provide information concerning familial and communal dynamics.

Overall, these communities share (geographically and trans-generationally) common foods and the Catholic religion, along with the associated Spanish lexicon. These are used to transmit the rich history of the communities. It is incorrect to think that rural habits always resist change. Perhaps the changes may go unnoticed or may not be openly symbolized. Though these communities are generally rural, they have gone through a lot of changes despite the constants of religion, food, and lexicon.

Although there have been several studies in the area (linguistics, folklore, ethnography, archaeology, and history) there are other issues to be explored. Because of the time and distance factors noted in the section on fieldwork, participant-observation was limited to weekend visits with the people and attending masses whenever possible. I think the issue of the new Mexican immigration in the Nacogdoches area should be further explored as well as other connections

between the areas of northwest Louisiana and those of northeast Texas. Can the Native-American awareness in northwest Louisiana be seen as a variable that is not present in northeast Texas? There seems to be more of a nostalgic yet antagonistic relationship towards Mexico and Mexicans in northwest Louisiana compared to northeast Texas. This could be due to the proximity of Texas and the actual increasing Mexican population. All of these thoughts ought to be pursued as well.

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