

## ABSTRACT

Title of thesis: PROJECTING AUTHORITY:  
MAPS OF A CONTESTED TEXAS, 1822-1848

Emily Frazier, Master of Arts, 2023

Thesis directed by: Thomas Zeller, Associate Professor,  
Department of History

In the early to mid-nineteenth century, as in many other periods, the porosity of Texas' borders and the mobility of people across them created a setting for contestation and negotiation of power and identity. Between 1822 and 1848, the constant shifts in control over a large geographic area, the nebulous identities of residents, and the frequent but often defied governmental decrees over issues like slavery and Mexican statehood prevented any one power from getting a strong hold over Texas. Despite this uncertain reality, a key tool of state powers, individuals, and business interests alike to get a handle on Texas were maps. This thesis will utilize the circumstances of production, the content, and the context of these maps to examine how an uncertain and contested Texas conflicted with stable and authoritative mapping norms. I argue that in this setting, maps functioned as tools of Anglo nation-building in a region seen in the United States as up in the air. Moreover, I argue that Anglo-produced maps funneled the instability of nineteenth-century Texas through a distorted lens that positioned Anglo Texans as the saviors of a wilderness not adequately maintained or exploited by its Mexican and Indigenous residents. I demonstrate this argument by using the maps themselves as central sources, as the representational images shown on the maps had significant staying power in the

minds of the audiences which consumed them. This project aims to reframe nineteenth century Texas history as a question not only of actual political and territorial control, but of perception and projection.

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by

Emily Frazier

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Advisory Committee:

Associate Professor Thomas Zeller, Chair  
Associate Professor Melinda Baldwin  
Dr. Chantel Rodríguez

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Historical scholarship frequently positions Texas as a borderlands owing to its literal position as a national border, as well as its permeability for people, ideas, and power. In the early to mid-nineteenth century, as in many other periods, Texas functioned as a transnational space, where the porosity of its borders and mobility of people across them created a setting for contestation and negotiation of power and identity. Texas' uncertainty is, among other things, a geographic issue—without its actual spatial position at the fringes and on the border, the instability of the early nineteenth century might have been managed by closer state oversight. Instead, the constant shifts in control over a large geographic area, the nebulous identities of residents, and the frequent but often defied governmental decrees over issues like slavery and Mexican statehood prevented any one power from getting a strong hold over Texas during this period.

Despite this uncertain reality, a key tool of state powers, individuals, and business interests alike to get a handle on Texas were maps. A static, two-dimensional representation of the overwhelming geographic area of Texas was an excellent means to feign stability of borders and political ties, and to downplay risks like the breadth of Indigenous territorial control. In essence, a map of Texas could produce a sense of certainty not actually found on the ground. Whether that certainty accurately reflected reality was not entirely relevant, especially when maps were read by people geographically distant from Texas with no direct familiarity with its terrain. Far more crucial was that the map give a stable point of reference for its readers and function as something upon which additional knowledge could be layered and interspersed. While important contributions to early Texas maps came from Texas, many key maps, such as Stephen F. Austin's maps of Texas, were produced and published much closer to the center of

national government than the area which they depicted. In the publishing epicenters of Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, maps of and geographic texts about Texas were edited, assembled, printed, and distributed to audiences that might have had only the slightest sense of Texas' geography, history, and current events.

When, how, and in what form did cartographic narratives from the United States about Texas reach Texas? Amid the uncertainty around Texas' national commitments and the fledgling nature of many of its settlements between 1822 and 1845, it cannot be assumed that ideas like a "shared identity" brought forth by historical national maps and atlases reached Anglo Americans in Texas as readily as they reached residents in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there was no shortage of cartographic production in and about Texas during this period. These maps were usually connected to high profile individual mapmakers and cartography firms in the United States. Often-uncredited individuals in Texas also contributed to many maps, and were not so deeply entrenched in United States mapmaking trends, perhaps leading to differences in cartographic conventions and motivations in Texas maps. Further, unlike the U.S. spaces usually mapped by established cartographers, Texas was in part occupied by Anglo Americans who had at least in some sense associated themselves with the Mexican state. Thus, their maps had to reach and appeal to U.S. and Anglo Texan audiences, but also make nods to Mexican governance through the use of decorations.<sup>2</sup>

While nineteenth-century maps of Texas no doubt share many cartographic norms with U.S. maps in the same period, to uncritically group Texas maps with those of the U.S. is to overlook the fundamental tension between the authority and stability portrayed by the map and

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Schulten, *Mapping the Nation: History and Cartography in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 12.

<sup>2</sup> See decoration on *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States* by Stephen F. Austin and Henry S. Tanner (*Map 9*). This map was published and republished several times between 1830 and 1840.



the uncertain reality in Texas. The lack of political, social, and economic stability combined with the relative lack of geographic knowledge of Texas must have spilled over into the production of maps, no matter how clear cut the territorial lines on the page appeared. This thesis will utilize the circumstances of production, the content, and the context of these maps to examine how an uncertain and contested Texas conflicted with stable and authoritative mapping norms. I argue that in this setting, maps functioned as tools of Anglo nation-building in a region seen in the United States as up in the air. Moreover, I argue that Anglo-produced maps funneled the instability of nineteenth-century Texas through a distorted lens that positioned Anglo Texans as the saviors of a wilderness not adequately maintained or exploited by its Mexican and Indigenous residents. I demonstrate this argument by using the maps themselves as central sources, as the representational images shown on the maps had significant staying power in the minds of the audiences which consumed them. Further, maps in the nineteenth century were a changing technology, and a map's limitations and affordances ultimately impacted what was conveyed to viewers about Texas' landscape, people, and national identity.

This is not a history of Texas' refusal to be mapped—the maps were certainly made—but rather, a history of what was and was not represented on Texas maps, whose contributions and motivating interests were credited, and how Texas maps functioned in a larger body of geographically descriptive print materials. This project investigates these motivating interests, necessities, practical limitations, and political aspirations that resulted in a large body of maps of Texas between roughly 1822 and 1848. In this period, maps were complex to produce, intellectually, technologically, and economically. To understand how any given map of Texas did or did not reflect reality, we must consider the people, technologies, and geographically

descriptive context that communicated a representational image to a public that had little knowledge of Texas.

This thesis sits at the intersection of three important bodies of scholarly literature, drawing from and aiming to add to all three. First, this project centers on the history of mapmaking. I contend that maps are crucial historical sources when thinking of contexts such as nineteenth-century Texas, where actual knowledge of its geography was thin and boosterism was high. The framing of maps as documents of authority and knowledge production is not new, and has been championed by scholars including J.B. Harley, but the particular contrast of mapped image and spatial reality in Texas is worth emphasizing. Second, this project is intertwined with the field of Texas history, which has experienced and continues to undergo significant changes in how it approaches topics including Anglo colonization, slavery, and Indigenous history. These updated approaches have included new strategies for analyzing sources and new sources altogether. Maps have not typically been treated by Texas historians as central sources in their own right and are usually placed as accompanying visuals or are described in a cartobibliographic manner without much supporting argumentation. By contrast, this project critically examines maps to understand the nature of Anglo nation-building in Texas, resulting in new insights about how an Anglo vision of Texas was communicated to audiences in the United States. Finally, this project is connected to borderlands history, in that it is the borderlands context that allowed much of the mapmaking to be examined here to occur. As will be discussed in the third chapter, maps of Texas were only made through interaction of people and circulation of ideas about how to represent Texas on paper. Further, the motivations embedded into the final maps that were circulated to audiences are the product of attitudes developed in and because of the borderlands. To understand why and how ideas were translated into spatial representation, we

must look to the social and political context in Texas, where state power was often minimized in favor of local relationships and negotiations between people.

The chapters that follow will examine the role of maps in the history of early Texas from initial Anglo settlement in 1822 to annexation by the United States in 1845 and shortly thereafter. I have chosen this periodization to encompass Anglo colonization, Texas' independence, and annexation by the United States. Though a subset of the maps examined here were created during and after the Mexican-American War, which ended in 1848, I am not primarily taking up the events of that conflict as the focus of this project. I view Texas in the bulk of this period as a borderlands at the periphery of not one but two state powers in which actual authority and stability were lacking, and the concrete knowledge and control represented on maps were anything but.

This thesis is organized thematically, rather than chronologically, in a reflection of the theoretical considerations to be discussed in the following sections of this introduction. Chapter 2 will turn to the features of nineteenth-century Texas maps themselves, examining the ways in which an unfaithful and aspirational image of stability was reflected in maps. The images and imagery used on the maps themselves was powerful at supporting particular politically-driven notions of Texas, as maps are visual, digestible, and memorable. Chapter 3 will look beyond the representational image on the map to the individuals, interests, and inspirations that create the map. In this chapter, I argue that authorship and novelty in nineteenth-century Texas maps was far more complex than a map's credits indicated, and that authority and stability rested on this web of uncredited collaborations. Chapter 4 will consider the wider context of geographic description as it pertains to Texas in the early nineteenth century. It will situate maps as they would have been consumed by people in the United States, examining issues of access and

textual forms of geographic description that would have informed viewers of maps. This structure is intended to highlight the role of maps in Texas' early history across time, and to demonstrate the importance of treating maps not as static reflections of reality, but as historical sources that inform and are informed by the events in the area they describe.

### **Maps as historical sources**

In order to investigate the particular mapmaking context in an uncertain nineteenth-century Texas, I will first examine the crucial ways in which maps conceal their speculations, fabrications, and biases and how scholars can use them as historical sources. As visual sources, maps present their own set of challenges and nuances for looking beyond what is plainly represented on the page and toward the strategies used to produce a cartographic stability that is believed by target audiences. These complexities for reading maps as sources transcend any one example, time period, or geographic area. Instead, it is beneficial to look outside the frame of nineteenth century Texas for illustrations of the theoretical concepts discussed here. The next several pages will draw on published scholarship addressing a range of historical contexts in order to synthesize their observations into three conceptual areas. The following pages interrogate the question of maps as historical sources, and how we might break them down according to their content, authorship, and reception.

Maps are representations of space, and as such, will necessarily alter spatial reality in order to make it legible, understandable, and sized to fit on a representational medium like a sheet of paper. Beyond their alterations to spatial reality, historical maps (and all documents) can never be presumed to have existed in a textual and cartographic vacuum—they must make reference to conventions and common understandings established by other works. It follows as

well that maps are not and never have been consumed in isolation, and so the ways in which maps are received by and affect their readers must be contingent on political, social, and cultural circumstances as well as contemporary documents that may accompany them. Despite these self-evident statements that maps exist as part of a larger discourse in any given historical moment, it is simultaneously true that the individuals who produce maps can and do insert features and representations based on their own biases and interests. Because maps are imbued with authority, these elements are received by audiences as factual and observation-based components rather than subjective, interest-motivated cartographic inventions.

Perhaps unlike written documents, historical maps were often treated in the nineteenth century United States as objective by default, owing to their academic, and even scientific, subject matter. They combined the precision of scientific materials with the visual iconography of artistic illustrations, allowing viewers to come away with a birds-eye understanding of the geography of a particular place. As I will discuss in the coming chapters, the work that goes into producing a map was usually concealed from audiences in the nineteenth century, and so the end result appears all the more trustworthy. When this default level of trust is combined with the relative lack of knowledge about Texas in the United States, maps are treated by mapmakers and audiences alike as a source of truth for gleaning knowledge not easily described in text.

Ricardo Padrón, writing about seventeenth century European cartography of the Americas, argues that to "read cartographic literature as a creative enterprise rather than as a simply descriptive one," we must recognize foundational cartographic concepts—like continents—as "an invention of European culture."<sup>3</sup> In this sense, cartography ought to be viewed as a spectrum of development in which earlier work establishes particular cartographic inventions as

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<sup>3</sup> Ricardo Padrón, *The Spacious Word: Cartography, Literature, and Empire in Early Modern Spain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 27.

"fact," and later work builds higher the house of cards, all the while claiming it is based on only new data, surveys, and spatial reality. To Padrón, historians overlook this trajectory of cartographic invention when doing historical research, relegating it to "a *mise en scène* for the real work of historiography, which is narrative."<sup>4</sup> As a result, authorship over a historical *narrative* is acknowledged, but the work of producing the notions of space upon which a narrative is set goes unexamined. In contexts like nineteenth-century Texas, and indeed many borderlands settings, the space is part of the historical narrative, and so to overlook how actors understood it through cartography is to ignore a segment of the knowledge production particular to that time and place.

Here I examine three aspects of misrepresentation, fabrication, and speculation in historical maps, drawing from major works on the history of cartography. In order to demonstrate how fabrication is embedded into the foundation of cartographic production, I have chosen examples from three different "levels" of a map's existence. Beginning with the document itself, I draw especially on the work of J.B. Harley to argue that empty space, as one form of cartographic silence, is weaponized as a tool of erasure, opportunity creation, and scientific ordering. Next, I move to the realm of cartographic production, wherein I argue that any particular map is best viewed as a product of both actual earlier works (credited or not) and the cartographic inventions upon which new fabrications are built, making authorship far more complex than what appears on a map's byline. Finally, I will turn to the impact of maps on their readers and the ways in which maps and their makers draw on existing knowledge and shared beliefs to create, update, and replace audiences' mental geographies of space and place.

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<sup>4</sup> Padrón, 21.

For the purposes of this chapter, I use the term "mapmakers" to refer broadly to the group of individuals involved in the production of a specific map, e.g., surveyors, draftsmen, engravers, printers, and publishers. It is important to note that at various points in the history of mapmaking, different individuals in the mapmaker category might have had greater or lesser influence on the actual cartographic choices that resulted in the map given the processes of the day for map production. I don't intend to equally indict all individuals involved in the production of a map for fabrication and deception. Rather, my goal is to demonstrate that the process and impact of cartographic invention goes beyond that which appears on a sheet of paper and the individual who created that particular drawing.

The result of the tools of manipulation to be examined here is that maps and their makers have held and hold the power to drastically alter readers' beliefs and opinions about the way that their world is and the way it should be. In situations of contested territory, political power, and social relations, maps might be taken as neutral authoritative documents, but in fact are anything but. For historical study, this means that maps should not be considered a backdrop to the "real" story of historical actors and their interactions, but in fact be analyzed as crucial interactants which have influenced the course and public understanding of historical events.

### Emptiness in geographic representation

Spatial representation is perhaps the most obvious realm in which a map might plant a particular worldview in the minds of its readers. By using colors symbolically associated with a political ideology to shade certain territories, a map might suggest to its reader that those territories are aligned with that point of view.<sup>5</sup> Strategic choices in generalization, like

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<sup>5</sup> Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie with Maps*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 68–69.

displacement of lines and labels, might result in the immortalization on paper of one side's claim over contested territory.<sup>6</sup> Different choices in map projection notoriously can drastically enlarge or reduce the relative size of a landmass.<sup>7</sup> Most of these choices are clearly recognized to be just that—choices—by mapmakers and their sponsors, whether they are caused by ulterior motives or a straightforward desire to produce a digestible map.

The inverse of these sorts of choices in spatial representation is spatial "un-representation", or that which is left off of maps. As J.H. Andrews insists in response to the work of J.B. Harley, "we do not become liars by failing to give an exhaustive account of the universe every time we open our mouths," and indeed the failure of a map to represent an element that exists in actual space does not make its purpose malevolent.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, that which fails to make it onto the map is an area which deserves its own investigation apart from the question of the positive content of a map.

Not all of these cartographic "silences" are easily noticeable. A town map simplified to represent fewer buildings, intersections, and natural features is not obviously silent. In other cases, like representations of space by colonial authorities, silences are not only easy to identify, they are practically announced by a sudden absence of features and territorial claims. J.B. Harley argues that these absences of the typical tools of mapmaking should indeed be read as "silences" rather than merely "blank spaces," because "silence should be seen as an 'active human performance'."<sup>9</sup> A classic example of this "active human performance" can be seen in colonial mapping in North America, where the proclaimed "emptiness" of a space glossed over Native

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<sup>6</sup> Monmonier, 29.

<sup>7</sup> Monmonier, 8–19.

<sup>8</sup> J. H. Andrews, "Introduction," in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 18.

<sup>9</sup> John Brian Harley, "Silences and Secrecy," in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 86.



American residency, land use, and territorial claims in that area.<sup>10</sup> In this way, Harley argues, silences are wielded as tools of discrimination rather than existing as "passive gaps in the flow of knowledge."<sup>11</sup>

The cartographic silences that result from depictions of "emptiness" on maps can be brought into sharper contrast by other kinds of extensive detail on the map. As Susan Schulten recounts, an 1814 map of the routes of Lewis and Clark was built upon Native American knowledge and "reflected tremendous precision and attention to topographical detail" but also gave "the impression of a landscape that is all but uninhabited."<sup>12</sup> Surrounding, and in some cases, overlapping, detail on areas that are depicted as devoid of people and settlement gives the impression of authoritative knowledge. If the rest of the map is taken to be true, then logic follows that the supposedly empty area must be a truthful representation as well. Maps are presented not as a set of discrete units which are individually evaluated for representational accuracy, but as single cohesive documents in which the presumed legitimacy of one depiction is implied to extend to the entire cartographic area.

While Harley insists the production of silences should be attributed to the active choices of mapmakers, he also contends that not all silences are the result of explicit intention to create a silence, but rather, an outcome of larger epistemes.<sup>13</sup> The scientific obsession with measurement and classification in early modern Europe, for example, resulted in atlases with standardized representations of villages and topographical features which glossed over nuances in spatial reality.<sup>14</sup> We can extend Harley's argument to examine that which is not collapsible into a

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<sup>10</sup> John Brian Harley, "Maps, Knowledge, and Power," in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 67.

<sup>11</sup> Harley, "Silences and Secrecy," 86.

<sup>12</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 54.

<sup>13</sup> Harley, "Silences and Secrecy," 97.

<sup>14</sup> Harley, 98.

handful of shapes and symbols, like un-colonized territory which is settled or regularly used by Native American peoples. Rather than represent the occupancy and use of space which doesn't fit the existing model, mapmakers present the space as lacking anything at all. As Harley points out, extricating an epistemological silence like this from a conscious political choice to depict land as empty and free for the taking is often impossible.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, understanding that mapmakers and their sponsoring interests were not necessarily conscious of each cartographic choice which resulted in a silence or misrepresentation of space as empty is central to placing spatial representation within the larger ecosystem of speculative and fabricated elements of maps.

#### Authorship, novelty, and cartographic inventions

A second level at which maps may present a fabricated or deceptive image moves outward from the actual representation contained within the map to the circumstances of production of the map itself. Many maps make clear claims about authorship, novelty, and key sources that have resulted in that particular map. Depending on the printing and editorial processes in popular use at the time of publication, a map might list a primary "author," as well as an engraver and a publisher. While these credits highlight some of the individuals whose labor produced the map, they also conceal additional collaborators and earlier cartographic documents upon which a map might be based. Harley argues that "most maps are the product of a division of labor," and that as a result, a single map can possess "an intertextuality" that requires consideration of competing interests and multiple purposes in the production of a map.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Harley, 105.

<sup>16</sup> John Brian Harley, "Text and Contexts in the Interpretation of Early Maps," in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 38.

Despite this complex web of authorship, many mapmakers would have their readers believe that their map is unique, not based on any earlier work, and able to offer greater insights into an area than contemporaneous cartographic documents. In reality, "no map is hermetically closed upon itself," and so for a mapmaker to claim their work's novelty is to obscure earlier and contemporaneous influences that affect the cartographic representation of a space.<sup>17</sup> The impact of these of claims of uniqueness and total authority over the "accurate" representation of space is that mapmakers can intersperse their own cartographic inventions with those of earlier work, thereby enshrining both existing conventions of misrepresentation and non-representation, as well as whatever representations suit a mapmaker's current interests.

Underneath the layer of authorial authority are the actual processes by which particular aspects of maps have come to be taken as a natural state of affairs. Susan Schulten presents a set of common schemes for depicting nations and continents in nineteenth century atlases, positing that some of these are mere representational convenience, while others are bias motivated choices.<sup>18</sup> The motives for these representational choices, whether they are motivated by a spatial reality or political and social interest, are not made apparent to the reader. Such conventions do, however, further entangle any map in the broader web of cartographic production and invention that precedes it. The internal consistency between maps published by different individuals in different places projects a façade of cartographic "truth," implying that repetition in the realm of cartographic representation is a marker of accuracy as compared to the spatial reality.

Both Padrón and Schulten, building on the work of Martin Lewis and Kären Wigen, position the conventions naturalized by maps as well as other geographic texts as formative of

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<sup>17</sup> Harley, 42.

<sup>18</sup> Susan Schulten, *The Geographical Imagination in America, 1880-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 30.

the “metageography” that people use to understand the world.<sup>19</sup> Lewis and Wigen define metageography as “the set of spatial structures through which people order their knowledge of the world: the unconscious frameworks that organize studies of history, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, or even natural history,” and also argue that it goes largely unnoticed as a foundational structure for the production of knowledge.<sup>20</sup> Similar arguments could be made about the progressive development of work in any other field based on earlier established conventions. Literary works, for example, do not give authorship credit to every individual who coined a phrase or established a trope that later authors go on to use. However, when nineteenth-century mapmakers have been lauded by their contemporaries for their accomplishments in creating “the first and only correct geographical information,” as one observer put it, it obscures not only actual direct influences such as earlier maps, but also the metageography being employed to orient the reader and establish authority.<sup>21</sup> Around the time of Anglo colonization in Texas in the early to mid-nineteenth century, a rich emerging metageography in the United States came from the rise of geographic education in schools and the map publishing industry. A key framework put forth by this strand of metageography was the notion that the existence of boundaries was equivalent to national stability and legitimacy.<sup>22</sup>

The way in which outside co-existing and earlier influences come to impact a map’s production are not always linear, in that mapmakers do not solely seek to improve upon a trail of earlier mapping projects with their own work. Rather, a map is developed from an amalgam of overlapping, disjointed, practical, and aspirational maps, works, and interests, and the ability to

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<sup>19</sup> Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 26; Schulten, *The Geographical Imagination in America, 1880-1950*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Martin W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), ix. quoted in Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 26.

<sup>21</sup> Mary Austin Holley, *Texas. Observations, Historical, Geographical and Descriptive, in a Series of Letters, Written during a Visit to Austin’s Colony, with a View of a Permanent Settlement in That Country, in the Autumn of 1831*. (Baltimore: Armstrong & Plaskitt, 1833), 9, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/102498698>.

<sup>22</sup> See especially chapter 1 of Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*.

improve upon the inaccuracies of past work may be limited. Makers of map compilations like Mexican cartographer Antonio García Cubas in nineteenth-century Mexico could not necessarily resolve what was “incorrect and inaccurate” about earlier work.<sup>23</sup> They could, however, construct “a coordinated, coherent whole,” which in turn became “a projected unity known as the nation-state” in Mexico, according to Raymond Craib.<sup>24</sup> This pattern of development underscores again that the authority and power imbued to maps comes not from a fundamental accuracy or ability to speak cartographic truth, but the ability to give stability and cohesion to what is perhaps an uncertain spatial reality.

#### Audience impact: Creating, updating, and replacing mental maps

Rather than view maps wholly in terms of what claims they depict and what cartographic inventions they give authority on the page, it is equally important to consider the actual and intended impacts of maps on their audiences. For map historians, it is difficult to directly assess how maps were received and interpreted by the public, as reactions to maps straight from readers are difficult to locate, and even more challenging to generalize to a whole audience. However, many scholars have examined how mapmakers and publishers sought to position their work in the minds of audiences. This section will turn to the map’s supposed functions in the larger context of audiences’ geographic, political, and social knowledge. As documents that claim authority and stability, the images of space enshrined in maps are designed to stick with their readers, to become the canonical “mental map” of a particular region. Along with the particular spatial reference, however, comes whatever other ideas about territorial claims, political and

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<sup>23</sup> Raymond B. Craib, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 32–33.

<sup>24</sup> Craib, 33.

social arrangements, and metageography that are also indexed by the map. For a map to be effective at creating, updating, or replacing a mental map, then, it must also tap into pre-existing knowledge and beliefs in the minds of its audiences. Mapmakers historically have strategically built off of widespread assumptions and values in order to create a lasting vision of a particular spatial area.

For the United States public, the most powerful idea engrained in maps and passed along to audiences was one of a national spatial body. As Schulten argues, for the nation to become “territorially coherent,” its citizens had to know it as a single spatial unit.<sup>25</sup> This need for a national geographic knowledge extended beyond maps alone to include other instructional texts like geographic readers, as well as school curricula.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, any geographical knowledge imparted to readers in other forms ultimately revolved around the visual form of the nation, as presented in maps. The idea of geography predated that of the territorially-defined, stable nation, but Schulten marks the rise of the United States as a “nation” as instrumental in changing how audiences were fed and understood both geography and history.<sup>27</sup> Mapmakers seeking to support a narrative of national cohesion, then, had to replace any existing mental maps of the U.S. as a fragmented set of contested spaces with one of a single national outline.

What Schulten terms territorial coherence appears analogous to Thongchai Winichakul’s notion of the “geo-body” of the nation. For Thongchai, the geo-body aids in creating a clear spatial referent in the minds of those considering it, making the nation itself more “concrete” in the process.<sup>28</sup> The geo-body is inherently tied to mapping, as it is the map where the geo-body

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<sup>25</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 3.

<sup>26</sup> See Schulten, *The Geographical Imagination in America, 1880-1950*, chap. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 75.

<sup>28</sup> Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 16–17.

physically appears in a supposed objective reality. Both the geo-body and the notion of national territorial coherence revolve around the ability to “see” the coherent body that is produced on the map. More than that, however, they also rely on a communal image of the national body—that the audiences who are fed a geo-body or an image of national cohesion all see the *same* image, and can agree on its existence and fixity. The mental map of the nation that results from the territorially coherent image is then shared across a wide audience, giving them a common understanding of a geographic area as national.

While installing a particular mental map of national cohesion is an important role that maps have played, it should not be assumed the relationships between maps and their readers is one-sided, in which maps help construct readers’ beliefs in a vacuum. Rather, maps and their makers also tap into the deeply held existing assumptions and beliefs about concepts such as naming, authority, and cohesion. The cartographic inventions that comprise the metageography embedded in the map are necessarily entangled with what readers already know about the world and how they organize it. The norms of attaching names to *spaces*, thereby rendering them *places*, particularly in colonial America, draw from reader familiarity with Old World placenames. The association created between the familiar (and established) places of Europe and the new and uncertain spaces of the New World encouraged colonists to see stability in their current geographic surroundings. Harley positions this system of naming as a reproduction of “symbolic authority.”<sup>29</sup> The maps that depict these placenames then can derive their authority from the use of Old World language, rendering the maps all the more powerful for sticking in the minds of readers.

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<sup>29</sup> Harley, “Text and Contexts in the Interpretation of Early Maps,” 46.

Padrón gets at another way readers in sixteenth century Spain consciously or unconsciously contributed their own knowledge to the production of their mental maps. When reading the non-visual geographic descriptions of Hernán Cortés' "Second Letter", audiences had to fill in familiar cartographies to construct a mental map of Mexico. While some versions of the letter were published with visual depictions such as the 1524 Nuremberg map of Tenochtitlan, Padrón argues that most readers could not obtain a geographically accurate mental image of Mexico.<sup>30</sup> While the descriptive text did some work to establish a mental map of Mexico in the minds of readers, the actual result was likely a hybrid form comprised of Cortés' descriptions and readers' existing mental cartographies of Europe. Nevertheless, even the partially-detailed form still had the authority to establish a mental image of Mexico according to Cortés in the minds of the letter's many readers. The same can be said of the descriptive texts that helped readers construct mental maps of nineteenth century Texas. Even with the more widespread use of maps alongside textual description, readers were still left to fill in their gaps in understanding with familiar features from their own lives.

Through the production of mental maps, mapmakers can not only construct particular ideas about a geographic area for their readers in the moment in which they see the map, but also moving forward, long after the readers have consumed other geographic content about that place. As a map's audience continues to draw on the mental image created or updated by the map, their worldview continues to be affected by whatever narrative was supported by the map, thereby changing how they interpret future geographic texts and images. For the study of maps and history, this means that that impact of geographic documents cannot be viewed as discrete units. Rather, much like the complex web of contributions that go into a map's production, a map's

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<sup>30</sup> Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 99, 118.



reception by audiences is influenced by their mental maps, carefully constructed from an amalgam of cartographic and geographic description.

### **Maps and the context of nineteenth-century Texas**

In nineteenth-century North America, maps were rapidly entering the public sphere, becoming relevant documents accessible to the general public by way of purchase or school education. Before the nineteenth century, printed maps had been documents of secrecy and status, only accessible by those with the privilege and authority to view the full spatial reality of a territory.<sup>31</sup> In addition, prior to the nineteenth century maps were difficult to produce in large quantities and expensive to acquire, meaning that the average citizen was unlikely to encounter them regularly. However, improvements in mapmaking processes such as printing along with a greater emphasis on geographic thinking in the United States allowed maps to become more ubiquitous in the early to mid-nineteenth century. As Philadelphia, Boston, and New York took shape as the centers of U.S. map production, major mapmakers increasingly adapted their products to appeal to a wide variety of map users, from schoolchildren to would-be colonists to mere curious readers. This shift caused maps to take a new set of material forms and circulate in new print contexts.

In the case of Texas, maps frequently appeared as accompaniments to descriptive texts in which travelers would recount trips to Texas, which often included extensive geographic detail. Not all geographic description came with an attached map, however, and many published accounts as well as newspaper articles pertaining to Texas were descriptive without a visual aid. In these cases, readers were left to use the described geography to form or update a mental map

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<sup>31</sup> Harley, "Silences and Secrecy," 83–97.

of Texas. Crucially, each form of visual and/or textual geographic description must be considered in both its publication context and the larger set of geographic descriptions and representations available to readers. Maps, travel journals, and newspaper articles may stand alone as their own publications in the eyes of the printers who constructed them and the publishers who distributed them, but no geographic representation was ever consumed in an information vacuum. Readers were constantly receiving revisions to their mental images of the space of Texas, whether they came in a textual, visual, or experiential form.

These questions of cartographic fabrication, misrepresentation, and unconscious influence are central to understanding Texas' maps, as early nineteenth century readers in and out of Texas were swarmed in geographic, social and political uncertainty that was ripe to be ordered by clear depiction on a map. The geopolitical context of colonial and expansionist powers meant that land in use and occupied by Indigenous people was consistently and constantly represented on maps as empty. Cartographic emptiness served as a callout for Anglo American opportunity, which in reality would lead to violent dispossession to *create* emptiness via armed conflict and policies of Indian removal.

In this period of colonization, a growing map business in the United States along with increasingly frequent amateur and professional cartographic surveys in Texas built off the work of one another, establishing new cartographic conventions and inventions, and making others seem natural in a new geographic context. While several of the maps resulting from this web of development claimed to have a particular uniqueness, attributing both authorship and novelty was rarely as straightforward as a single author and a wholly unique map. Drawing on old legacies and recent developments in the metageography that shaped readers' understandings of maps, mapmakers, including U.S. cartographers, Texas empresarios, Texan and Mexican elite,

and low-level surveyors, brought the perceived authority of maps from publishing centers in the northeast United States to the uncertain and unstable Texas borderlands.

As Texas shifted from a site of limited Mexican and Anglo colonization to a political thorn for the Mexican government, to an independent nation, and finally to a U.S. state, competing and successive maps worked to instill images of Texas in the minds of readers. Depending on the interests motivating the creation of a map, a reader might come away with an image of Texas as bountiful or destitute, Anglo, Mexican, or independent, economically prosperous or morally depraved. Both the interests and the images changed over time—when Anglo Texan empresarios were working within the confines of Mexican colonization law, for example, it served them to portray Texas as readily available for easy and cheap land ownership by Anglos from the United States. After the formation of the Republic of Texas, far more important than offering up land was the image of Texas as distinct from Mexico, with its own stable government. These shifting ideas went hand-in-hand with changing Anglo perspectives on the Mexican state, Mexicans, and Tejanos.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, maps rarely if ever functioned alone, more often building off what readers already knew of Texas and what they would come to know through descriptive travel texts and newspaper dispatches. Readers were faced with a litany of visual and descriptive texts all aimed at creating, updating, or replacing their mental maps of Texas. These images of Texas, in turn, could and would motivate decisions to emigrate to Texas, support for its independence, and acceptance of its annexation as a slave state. Sitting at the periphery of state control, maps served as conduits of authority by which parties could influence large swaths of readers, both those who had never visited Texas as well as those who actually

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<sup>32</sup> See Arnaldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers : Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 1–13. See also the later discussion in chapter 3 of this thesis regarding Stephen F. Austin’s inconsistent or contradictory views on Mexico and Mexicans.

lived there. In the absence of a highly visible state power in Texas to produce government maps and convey a particular image of state control, the maps discussed in this thesis communicated what Texas was, and more often, the Anglo vision of what it could be.

Nineteenth-century Texas serves as a unique site of study alongside trends in mapmaking and use because of the depth of its uncertainty as a political and geographic body. This instability stands in sharp contrast to the image portrayed by most maps of Texas made in this period, and so the gulf between cartographic representation and physical reality was vast. At various moments between 1822 and 1848, Texas was spatially, politically, and economically contentious to governments and individuals in the United States and Mexico. The uncertainty that Texas represented was not all-encompassing, but knowledge of Texas' terrain, economic potential, and national commitments was fragmented and contested. Issues like the future of slavery and its economic impacts for the region were negotiated through a series of meetings between individuals, back-and-forth concessions, and local decisions to defy governmental orders.<sup>33</sup>

Information flowed in and out of Texas through word-of-mouth, print texts like newspapers, travel journals, government decrees, and cartographic documents, but the reality of how people consumed and reacted to that information was less clear. Not all knowledge was contained in print documents however, and what was fragmented for Mexicans and Anglo Americans in nineteenth-century Texas was often well-understood by Indigenous groups who had long occupied the region. Indigenous knowledge and power, especially Comanche power, was a frequent source of violence and contestation in Texas, as even drastic non-Indigenous

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<sup>33</sup> Andrew J. Torget, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands, 1800-1850* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2015), 72, 109, 145.

population growth could not protect Anglos and Mexicans from the supremacy of Indigenous geographic knowledge and organization.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to the history of mapmaking, this thesis is also supported by and contributes to the field of borderlands scholarship. A perspective oriented to the nation-state is necessary here, because it is territorial control by state powers that is aspired to and memorialized in the maps to be examined here. Many borderlands scholars, however, argue that the lives of border people are less defined by those state powers who have dictated the border than by the local interests and circumstances of being near the border.<sup>35</sup> Though any one map depicts the nineteenth-century Texas borderlands as a clean intersection of two nations, the local individuals contributing to and affected by such maps are not commensurate with state power. The lives and interests of border people in this period, including empresarios, Anglo colonists, Mexican citizens and officials, and Indigenous people were far more impacted by their interactions with one another, resulting in an even wider disconnect between the borderlines shown on the map and the borderlands of daily life. This project does not aim redefine Texas in the context of borderlands studies. Instead, it centers on the technology of mapmaking as a tool of nation-building, mythmaking, and knowledge construction to posit that in a borderlands setting, maps were all the more relevant to the settler colonial, expansionist project of Anglo American settlement in Texas.

Three concepts from borderlands history are especially relevant to this project. First, Baud and van Schendel's presentation of power relations in the borderlands as a "double triangle" between state powers on either side of the border, "borderland elites," and everyone

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<sup>34</sup> Torget, 94; Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 186.

<sup>35</sup> For example, see Michiel Baud and Willem Van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," *Journal of World History* 8, no. 2 (1997): 211–42; Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, "On Borderlands," *The Journal of American History* 98, no. 2 (2011): 338–61.

else living in the borderlands is valuable for understanding the significance of mapmaking contributions from Texas.<sup>36</sup> Depending on the circumstances, borderland elites might serve as agents of one state power or another, or could become powerful figures representing the antithesis of state control. In nineteenth-century Texas, borderland elites included Anglo Texan empresarios such as Stephen F. Austin, Anglo American and Texan political leader Sam Houston, and important Tejano individuals such as Juan Seguín and Lorenzo de Zavala. One way to view the progression of Texas' national identity is through the breakdown of relations between the Mexican state and these borderland elites. Later, the relationship between Republic of Texas political leaders and U.S. officials would be central to Texas' annexation by the United States. Simultaneously, the other residents of the Texas borderlands—what Baud and van Schendel term “common people”—also defined through their day-to-day interactions the social relationships between different interests and cultures in the borderlands.<sup>37</sup> Elite and nonelite borderland people in Texas, then, reflected this double-triangular relationship when they contributed to the production of maps. A spatial arrangement drawn in part by those in the borderlands was not merely a simple representation of geography, but a look into the political and social relationships actually in play in the borderlands. As Baud and van Schendel caution, the maps produced of a border area will usually be “too static and too simple” to capture the complexity of borderland “changeable spatial units.”<sup>38</sup> However, evidence of the strategies used to collapse complex realities of space and relationships into a set of lines and labels are also found in the maps themselves, making them useful tools to get at the attitudes and goals of the people making the maps.

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<sup>36</sup> Baud and Van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” 217–19.

<sup>37</sup> Baud and Van Schendel, 219.

<sup>38</sup> Baud and Van Schendel, 222.

The second relevant notion from borderlands history is best demonstrated by works such as Pekka Hämäläinen's *The Comanche Empire* and Juliana Barr's *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman*, which position Indigenous power as an active force in the nineteenth-century borderlands, rather than a marginal issue.<sup>39</sup> There is an inherent tension between views of borderlands history that explicitly look outside a nation-state-centered frame of reference such as these and this project, which relies on sources so centered on the nation-state that Indigenous land is scarcely presented with borders, if acknowledged at all. The contestation and relationships that defined the borderlands for people in nineteenth-century Texas, however, included and in some cases was dominated by clash with Comanchería and other Indigenous groups. The understandings of space and national identity in play in these encounters did not necessarily reflect the ones embedded in the maps to be examined here. Colonists and their allies were eager to make real their desired image of Texas as settled by immigrants from the United States and representative of Jacksonian-derived values that included the removal of Indigenous people to smaller, clearly-defined areas. The erasure of Indigenous power and space from maps was a first step to these goals, particularly when it was all Spanish, Anglo, and Mexican powers could manage in the face of Indigenous control.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, borderlands history offers a vocabulary by which we can understand the spatial, political, and social change in Texas between 1822 and 1848. Scholars offer different conceptions of how the life of a borderland can be described over time, but are in agreement that it is inaccurate to group all the ways in which people and ideas clash and interact in a border zone under a single, stable term. Baud and van Schendel, for example, make reference to a

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<sup>39</sup> Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 4–5; Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2009), 5–6.

<sup>40</sup> Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman*, 7–8; Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 194–96.

borderland life cycle, which includes the stages embryonic, infant, adolescent, adult, declining, and defunct.<sup>41</sup> Adelman and Aron look outside the borderland terminology, placing “frontier”, “borderland”, and “bordered lands” along a temporal progression.<sup>42</sup> Regardless of the terminology, the notion of change over time should be applied to Texas as well. Though “frontier” connotes a particular colonial, Anglo-centric view of the border, Texas might appropriately be described as such at the start of Anglo American colonization there—the relationships between Anglos, Mexicans, and Indigenous people were not well-defined, and the geographic boundaries that separated them were not fully known. “Borderland” becomes an appropriate term later, when political, social, and economic relationships are established, or, at a minimum, are being negotiated. These notions of change are yet another feature of the spatial, social and political reality of nineteenth-century Texas that bubble up to the project of mapmaking only in limited ways. As will be discussed, while gradual changes to maps over time show an increase in political boundaries, moving away from depictions of supposedly-uninhabited space, they do not make clear the nature of the relationships between the people living in these newly drawn-out spaces.

When Moses Austin first petitioned the Mexican government for permission to settle families from the United States in Texas in 1820, the uncertainty of the region had taken its toll, leaving fewer than two thousand Mexican residents.<sup>43</sup> After the elder Austin’s death, his son, Stephen, took over the colonization effort, which was tentatively approved in 1821.<sup>44</sup> The first

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<sup>41</sup> Baud and Van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” 223–25.

<sup>42</sup> Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History,” *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (1999): 832–36, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2650990>.

<sup>43</sup> Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 20.

<sup>44</sup> Gregg Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 2nd ed. (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2016), 94.



Anglo Americans to emigrate to Texas under Austin's contract arrived that same year, and by 1824 the majority of the first three hundred permitted families had arrived as well.<sup>45</sup>

Texas must have looked uncertain and hazy to several parties at this point. To Stephen F. Austin, Texas was a region to which he had never traveled before 1821, and his permissions to be there as empresario were tentative at best until the final approval was granted in April 1823.<sup>46</sup> The fully independent Mexican government was also so young that when Austin's father first sought permission for the colonization endeavor, it was still under Spanish imperial rule. By the time of Austin's arrival, there was a possibility that the new Mexican government would have changed their stance on Anglo American presence in Texas as it sought to shore up its new national identity.<sup>47</sup> Austin's own lack of direct familiarity with Texas combined with the risk of a turnabout from Mexican officials meant that his plans in Texas were dangerously close to becoming unkept promises.

For Anglo Americans who were considering or had decided to move to Texas in the early years, its spatial uncertainty might have been the prevailing concern. Not only had they likely never seen Texas, but they were probably operating only on second-hand reports from Austin and others about where Austin's land grant was located and what they would find when they arrived.<sup>48</sup> To imagine what their new settlement might look like would have been to fill in many visual gaps based on familiar locations and whatever other sources about Texas they might have

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<sup>45</sup> Cantrell, 107, 147.

<sup>46</sup> Cantrell, 126.

<sup>47</sup> Cantrell, 110.

<sup>48</sup> For example, see Stephen F. Austin, "Extract from Letters Addressed by Stephen F. Austin, Esq. to a Gentleman in New-Orleans," *Weekly Arkansas Gazette*, October 6, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A1066418A38D1E218%40EANX-10FF35E8DDD21438%402386445-10FF35E950BA0738%402-10FF35EAA1022E18%40Extract%2Bfrom%2BLetter%2BAddressed%2Bby%2BStephen%2BF.%2BAusti%252C%2BEsq%252C%2Bto%2Ba%2BGentleman%2Bin%2BNew-Orleans.%2BRepublic%2Bof%2BTexas%252C%2BNacogdoches%252C%2BJuly%2B20%252C%2B1821>.

seen or read. At the same time, amid the changing governing powers in Mexico, the question of what national allegiance might have been required of immigrants was likely present in would-be colonists' minds.<sup>49</sup>

Mexicans in Texas and the Mexican government may too have looked at Texas as unstable at best and at risk of invasion at worst. As Spanish control of Mexico was collapsing, anxieties about Anglo Americans in Texas living too close to the U.S. border ran high, and officials demanded residents of the border settlement Nacogdoches relocate to the interior to reduce their opportunities to aid a U.S. invasion.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, conflicts with Indigenous groups continued, further threatening Mexico's hold on Texas. Though it held symbolic authority in that Texas was recognized as Mexican territory, Mexicans lacked authoritative knowledge and power over the region and its inhabitants to actually exercise control. Mexico's problems knowing and controlling Texas were not solely its own, as the prior Spanish government had also failed to populate the vast space or to collect detailed information about its geographic features.<sup>51</sup>

Between 1821 and 1826, Texas' relationship with Mexico was mostly stable, as Anglo American colonization in Texas ramped up. The still-young Mexican government had remade itself several times since it won independence from Spain, and though Stephen F. Austin and his allies continued to lobby successive governments for support of the empresario project in Texas, there were few major threats to Anglo American colonization. After the passage of the 1824 Mexican constitution, however, which passed the issue of slavery onto individual states, tensions

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<sup>49</sup> For example, the following newspaper article announces the change in government to U.S. readers, but does not address whether settlers will be considered "Mexican" upon moving to Texas: Joseph H. Hawkins, "Revolution of the Internal Spanish Provinces," *Washington Gazette*, November 15, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A1101132308776F48%40EANX-10B375BE61BE4288%402386485-10B375BEAD454B60%401-10B375C04627F550%40New%2BOrleans%252C%2BOctober%2B13>.

<sup>50</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 92.

<sup>51</sup> Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 22–24.

began to rise between colonists in Texas and Mexican government officials.<sup>52</sup> The 1824 constitution also formalized Texas' political position in an independent Mexico, as part of the single state Coahuila and Texas. While the new formulation moved political decisions closer to Texas in the state capital of Saltillo, Coahuila, it also left aspect of Texas' political fate up to mostly Coahuilan legislators, who largely opposed slavery.<sup>53</sup> Austin's original scheme for attracting emigrants from the United States incentivized enslavers to migrate, bringing enslaved people with them. By offering more land per enslaved person brought to Texas by a colonist, Austin helped to create the conditions for an economy supported largely by enslaved labor.<sup>54</sup> Freshly empowered to abolish slavery—and as a consequence, tamp down Anglo American colonization—the state government of Coahuila and Texas took up the issue in 1826.<sup>55</sup>

The tensions that flared in 1826 over a possible ban on slavery in Texas continued to grow, as the state government, and later, the national government, enacted a series of laws designed to bring about the end of slavery in Mexico and cut off migration from the United States to Texas. After a harsh expedition report from Mexican general Manuel Mier y Terán, who reported that Anglo Texans were not upholding their promises of allegiance to the Mexican government, the Mexican government grew increasingly concerned that without making significant changes in policy, it would lose Texas entirely, either via revolution or U.S. invasion.<sup>56</sup> These policies did not move linearly, and were walked back several times due to changes in political leadership.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, by 1835 Anglo Texans had entered into a series

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<sup>52</sup> Torget, 79.

<sup>53</sup> Torget, 80, 98–99.

<sup>54</sup> Torget, 63–64.

<sup>55</sup> Torget, 97.

<sup>56</sup> Torget, 137–40; Perhaps paradoxically, Mier y Terán had a respectful relationship with Stephen F. Austin, which is also why Mier y Terán ends up credited on Austin and Tanner's map of Texas, to be discussed throughout this thesis. See Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 208–14.

<sup>57</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 274–75.

of violent clashes with the Mexican military. In April 1836 Texas won its independence as the Battle of San Jacinto.

In the aftermath of the war, Texas' new government was uncertain and unstable. Andrew Torget positions the government of the Republic of Texas as "an effort among Anglo-Texans to establish a haven for American cotton farmers in a world increasingly hostile to slave labor."<sup>58</sup> Between 1836 and annexation by the United States in 1845, the Republic of Texas faced numerous financial and political challenges as it attempted to sort out its place, geographically, economically, and nationally. By 1843, Republic of Texas president Sam Houston actively sought an annexation deal with the United States as a final effort to prevent collapse.<sup>59</sup> After intense negotiations, Texas was admitted to the United States as a slave state on December 29, 1845.<sup>60</sup> These events then precipitated the Mexican-American War, which was fought between 1846 and 1848, and resulted in an enormous land cession to the U.S. by Mexico, which included all of Texas and the disputed Nueces Strip between the Nueces River the Rio Grande along Texas' southern border.

Compounding the events producing uncertainty in Texas was its geographic position relative to the centers of state power to which it was nearest. The sheer size of Texas combined with the length of time required for journeys to it from centers of government like Washington D.C., Mexico City, and Saltillo meant that by the time power from the center could intervene in Texas, local actors had already had the opportunity to negotiate a way forward without government oversight. Even when events were calm and peaceful, Texas remained in some ways opaque to state powers.

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<sup>58</sup> Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 182.

<sup>59</sup> Torget, 244.

<sup>60</sup> Torget, 254.

It was this unknowability and peripheral position that made maps an attractive tool of territorial claims, political control, and boosterism in Texas. In any geographic region in nineteenth-century North America, maps no doubt served to index opportunity and U.S. expansion. In Texas, however, maps were at the nexus of expansionism, political tension, and a lack of geographic knowledge. These entangled factors resulted in maps that attempted to portray often contradictory ideas: emptiness and total control; cartographic novelty and established authority. Simultaneously, information flow to and from Texas was much more fragmented than for sites of U.S. expansion that were closer and more accessible to the United States. As a result, the larger body of geographic description pertaining to Texas beyond maps was all the more crucial for instilling a desirable image of Texas' stability and opportunity to readers. In these materials, especially newspapers, debates raged over how geographically distant readers could and should understand Texas. Finally, in this context maps serve as a tool of both nation-building and the role of rightful stewards of the land that Anglos felt they held. Maps stood in contrast to the narrative that Spain and Mexico had failed to appreciate the value of Texas' geography. Anglo-produced maps demonstrated that Anglo Texans could populate and use the geography of Texas, and share that knowledge via the authoritative technology of the map. Many of the uncertainties and political tensions found in Texas between 1822 and 1848 can be found in other geographic regions, but rarely do they overlap and intervene to create such a tense web of aspirational representation and spatial reality.

In order to limit the scope of this project, I have centered my analysis on the vision of Texas as portrayed in maps created mostly by Anglo Americans. I also discuss audience reactions to and interpretations of maps and other geographically descriptive texts from an Anglo American perspective. While Anglos were not the only people viewing or interacting with the

maps to be analyzed here, it is the case that most of the printed maps under consideration here were marketed to Anglo audiences, either in the U.S. or Texas. Throughout this thesis, I use the terms “Anglo American” and “Anglo Texan” to describe these individuals. In this context, I see “Anglo Texan” as a subset of “Anglo American,” in which Anglo Texans are people who have emigrated from the United States to Texas. At times, I use “Anglo American” interchangeably with “Anglo Texan” to describe Anglos living in Texas, as a means to emphasize that the Anglos in the United States who view and interact with maps could have been and were the same Anglos who actually moved to Texas. I also use the shorthand “Anglo” to refer to Anglo Americans and Anglo Texans, when it is clear from context whether I am referring to U.S. Anglos, Texas Anglos, or both.

It is important here to give an overview of the people and identities present in colonized Texas between 1822 and 1848, and the terminology used to describe them. This thesis does not, however, explore these identities in any depth, nor, in most cases, does it draw on the perspectives of any individuals in these groups. First, the term “Texian” was used by Anglo Texan colonists to describe themselves before and after the formation of the Republic of Texas in 1836. “Tejano,” in reference to the 1822 to 1848 time period, typically refers to anyone of Mexican descent who lived in Texas. Though the arrival of Anglo Americans in Texas followed closely after Mexico’s technical formation as an independent nation, Tejanos had already sparsely populated what was then Spanish Texas for many years.<sup>61</sup> “Mexican,” then, is a broader term that includes Tejanos as well as people living in the rest of Mexico. The term “Texan” is used differently by different scholars, but in this project, I use it to refer to the combined group

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<sup>61</sup> For example, Erasmo Seguín was raised in Spanish Texas and continued to live there through Anglo colonization, Texas’ independence, and its annexation by the United States. See Jesús de la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered: The Memoirs and Selected Correspondence of Juan N. Seguín* (Austin: State House Press, 1991), 3–7.

of all residents of Mexican Texas or the Republic of Texas, regardless of racial and ethnic identity.<sup>62</sup> I have chosen this approach to remain consistent with the usage of “Anglo Texan,” and to allow for a term that highlights that Texas was never solely populated by Anglos. Many other groups of people also lived in Texas between 1822 and 1848, including European migrants to Texas, free and enslaved Black people, and numerous Indigenous groups such as the Comanche, Tonkawa, and Karankawa nations.<sup>63</sup> These categories were not discrete, and mixed-race identities such as *afromestizos* complicated both compliance with laws around slavery and Blackness as well as social acceptance by Anglos and Mexicans.

In part resulting from the complex and changing identities present in nineteenth-century Texas, the relationships between Anglos, Tejanos, and Mexicans were equally nuanced and at times paradoxical. As is discussed in chapter three, Stephen F. Austin’s personal relationships with individual Tejanos differed quite drastically from his publicly spouted views on Mexicans. Arnoldo De León weaves an intricate picture of the connections between Anglo attitudes toward Mexico, United States expansionism, religion, and racial hierarchy. In seeing Texas as a “wilderness,” Anglo colonists also concluded that the people who were supposed to have domain over Texas—Spaniards, Mexicans, and Tejanos—were also primitive or lazy, and unable to bring order and stability to Texas.<sup>64</sup> Anglo leaders, in turn, saw it as their duty and right to replace Texas’ wilderness with controlled, white civilization, and to fill its supposedly empty space with “a cultural and racial copy of the United States.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> See, for example, the difference in approaches between De León, who uses “Texan” exclusively to refer to Anglos at any point in Texas, and Torget, who uses the more specific “Anglo-Texan” to refer to Anglos in Texas only around the time that independence from Mexican began to brew and was realized. De León, *They Called Them Greasers*, sec. “A Note on Terminology”; Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, sec. “A Note on Names.”

<sup>63</sup> For an in-depth discussion of this topic and the stories of specific Black individuals who settled in Texas during this period, see Harold Schoen, “The Free Negro in the Republic of Texas, I,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (1936): 292–308.

<sup>64</sup> De León, *They Called Them Greasers*, 1, 4.

<sup>65</sup> De León, 3.

Brian DeLay describes this view of Texas as being underserved by Mexican control as the “Texas Creation Myth,” which in turn aided broader mythmaking around Anglo colonization, Texas’ independence from Mexico, and annexation by the U.S.<sup>66</sup> Also entangled in Anglo prejudice against Mexicans was anti-Catholicism, which is traceable a longer history of English anti-Catholicism and association of Catholic Spaniards with violence.<sup>67</sup> As De León argues, a third key component to explain Anglo animosity toward Mexicans was their mixed-race identity. Many Tejanos in particular had Indigenous ancestry in addition to European, and to some Anglos, Spanish European identity was viewed as less white than their own.<sup>68</sup> I note here that other scholarship challenges De León’s view in some ways. As Sarah K.M. Rodriguez has argued, it may not be accurate to attribute to all Anglo colonists a goal of U.S. expansion, geographically, culturally, or politically.<sup>69</sup> Mexico’s politics were attractive to some colonists, as was Catholicism.<sup>70</sup>

In light of the attitudes held by Anglos and especially Anglo Texans about Mexicans and especially Tejanos, Anglo-produced maps take on new meaning as tools of nation-building. The maps to be examined here primarily represent the Anglo vision of Texas. At first, this vision portrayed a Texas that was largely uninhabited, ready to be rescued from the proclaimed “wilderness” it had remained under Spanish and Mexican control. When independence from Mexico stirred, the vision shifted to position Texas as politically, culturally, and economically distinct from Mexico, and moreover, capable of governing itself. The actual history of Texas does include Tejanos, but the maps that created the representational image of Texas for

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<sup>66</sup> Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War*, The Lamar Series in Western History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 227–38.

<sup>67</sup> De León, *They Called Them Greasers*, 4–5.

<sup>68</sup> De León, 5–6.

<sup>69</sup> See Sarah K.M. Rodriguez, “‘The Greatest Nation on Earth’: The Politics and Patriotism of the First Anglo American Immigrants to Mexican Texas, 1820–1824,” *Pacific Historical Review* 86, no. 1 (2017): 50–83.

<sup>70</sup> Rodriguez, 72.



audiences scarcely acknowledges them or their vision of Texas. Instead, we see a geography that reflects both the Texas Creation Myth and the settler colonialist mindset of Anglo Texans. For Anglos in the United States and Texas, maps served as a kind of evidence that Texas had needed their intervention, and that it ought to be brought fully into the fold as an Anglo political and cultural unit.

## Chapter 2: Texas on Paper

At a time when knowledge of Texas by audiences in the United States was vague at best, the first maps distributed in the United States were well-positioned to establish a baseline knowledge of what Texas looked like, what it contained, and who it was for. These ideas were embedded not only in the geographic representation of Texas itself, but also other elements of the map, such as the decorations that adorned it and the adjacent notes and figures that contextualized it. The maps of Texas distributed to the Anglo public were not billed as incomplete, nor as containing subjective representational choices. Instead, they were presented, in their entirety, as documents of authority that conveyed factual knowledge about the geographic layout of Texas. While most maps no doubt contained a degree of factual knowledge that could be used to navigate the region, they also built up a subjective (and altogether uncertain) idea of a region free for the taking, with particular national attachments.

As Texas became increasingly populated by Anglo American immigrants from the United States and its national allegiance to Mexico grew tense over the issue of slavery as well as the political leadership of Antonio López de Santa Anna, its representational image as shown in maps changed as well. It is difficult to determine the extent to which mapmakers based in U.S. cities intentionally altered their representational choices in order to present Texas as part of Mexico or as independent. Changes to maps over time may have simply mirrored reports of Texas' impending independence. Nevertheless, the reflection of these ever-shifting tensions on the authoritative document of the map imbued each new arrangement with a sense of stability and truth that was ultimately aspirational. For Texas boosters and those who saw Anglos as the rightful occupants of the region, the creeping changes to maps served the goal of concretizing Anglo presence in Texas, making it not a temporary state of affairs, but the new norm.

This chapter will explore the representational strategies employed by mapmakers which communicated ideas about Texas' national identity and availability of space that were less certain than the map made them appear. In particular, I will examine the use of "in-map" choices, such as the drawing and shading of boundaries, and the labeling (or lack thereof) of areas, as well as "extra-map" features, including decorations and notes that appeared directly on the maps themselves. Maps and their surrounding decorations are paired in this chapter because it was ultimately the entirety of the map sheet that was printed, distributed, and consumed by audiences, not just the cartographic information. The contextual elements of the map and the actual cartographic representation were not taken in isolation, as they were both physically and intellectually linked on the paper of the map and in the ideas they conveyed. By considering all elements of the physical map in concert, it is possible to more deeply analyze the ideas about national space and emptiness as they might have been portrayed to public audiences.

### **Boundaries and shading**

Between 1830 and 1840, at least seven editions of Stephen F. Austin's map of Texas, produced in collaboration with Henry Schenck Tanner, were published.<sup>71</sup> The map was based on a manuscript draft produced by Austin in 1829, sent to Tanner via Austin's Philadelphia-based middleman, Thomas F. Leaming.<sup>72</sup> Tanner was part of a well-established Philadelphia mapmaking industry, and had early in his career worked under influential Philadelphia

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<sup>71</sup> Sources disagree on the exact years of publication, leading to differing counts in the number of times the map was updated and re-published. I was able to locate editions from seven different years that are dated as such either directly on the maps or in the catalog records of the archives providing access. It is possible that there are other, rarer editions that I was unable to access.

<sup>72</sup> See *Map 8*; Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, May 8, 1828]," Letter, May 8, 1828, Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph218095/>.

mapmaker John Melish.<sup>73</sup> Tanner's career as a mapmaker began in 1811, when he worked primarily as an engraver for Melish and other map publishing outfits. By 1819, Tanner had formed his own mapmaking firm and published the initial set of maps for *A New American Atlas*, the first attributed to Tanner not only as engraver, but as author. By the time of the third set of maps for the atlas in 1821, Tanner's firm had dissolved and he became the sole author of the atlas. The atlas was highly regarded by review publications, and Tanner rose in prominence as a map publisher. He continued to issue revisions for *A New American Atlas*, and also published derivative versions such as a pocket map edition. Tanner also published the first edition of his large-scale map of the United States in 1829, which was updated several times until 1844. Many of Tanner's maps were published as folded pocket maps, a format that lent itself to use by travelers to new locations, including Texas. Tanner relocated his map publishing operation to New York in 1843, and died there in 1848.<sup>74</sup>

It is not clear how Austin and Leaming came to work with Tanner in particular, though Austin requested that Leaming contact Tanner specifically in early 1828.<sup>75</sup> Given that Tanner was an established mapmaker by the time he worked with Austin, it is probable that Austin knew of Tanner's work from before he drafted his manuscript map of Texas. Austin had a rigorous educational background, having attended a secondary academy in Connecticut and later Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky.<sup>76</sup> Though Austin attended school before Tanner was active as a mapmaker, Austin's probable use of printed maps in school may have shown him where to look for an appropriate map publisher all those years later.

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<sup>73</sup> Walter W. Ristow, *American Maps and Mapmakers: Commercial Cartography in the Nineteenth Century* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), 191. See *Map 3* in appendix for an example of one of Tanner's collaborations with Melish.

<sup>74</sup> Ristow, 191–206.

<sup>75</sup> Andreas Reichstein, "The Austin-Leaming Correspondence, 1828-1836," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 88, no. 3 (1985): 254.

<sup>76</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 33–36.

Austin and Leaming, meanwhile, likely became connected through their fathers, who had worked together at one time. The younger Austin and Leaming were also distant cousins.<sup>77</sup> Leaming was a merchant in Philadelphia, and probably had the appropriate business contacts to connect Austin with a map publisher such as Tanner. At the same time that Leaming was facilitating the publication of Austin's map, he was also exercising power of attorney on behalf of Austin for a property dispute in New Jersey. Leaming also had some of Austin's letters published in the Philadelphia *National Gazette*, a strategy employed by Austin and his associates several times over the course of his time in Texas.<sup>78</sup> The publication of Austin's map with Tanner was one of several functions that Leaming served for Austin as Austin's conduit in the northeast United States.

It is difficult to fully reconstruct the relationship between Austin and Tanner, since their connection was indirect, and in at least one case, Austin requested that Leaming destroy his letters upon receipt by Leaming, a request Leaming completed.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, surviving letters indicate that Austin and Tanner continued to correspond, through Leaming and other intermediaries, for at least the first several years of publication of the *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States*.<sup>80</sup> Austin and Leaming's connection continued up until 1836, the year of Austin's death.<sup>81</sup> Subsequent editions of the *Map of Texas* after the first might have incorporated input from Austin, or the changes identifiable in each edition might have been the result of

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<sup>77</sup> Reichstein, "The Austin-Leaming Correspondence, 1828-1836," 248-50.

<sup>78</sup> For another example of Austin's newspaper publication strategy, see Austin, "Extract from Letters Addressed by Stephen F. Austin, Esq. to a Gentleman in New-Orleans."

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, April 7, 1832]," Letter, April 7, 1832, Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth217541/>.

<sup>80</sup> Leaming to Austin; Thomas F. Leaming to James F. Perry, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to James F. Perry, October 21, 1834]," Letter, October 21, 1834, Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth216307/>.

<sup>81</sup> Reichstein, "The Austin-Leaming Correspondence, 1828-1836."

Tanner and colleagues' own interpretation of events in Texas. It seems that Austin had no expectation that he would continue to be involved in the publication of the map after the initial edition, given that he wrote to Leaming that he would relinquish his rights to the map.<sup>82</sup> Austin appears to have been particularly concerned about not incurring any costs of his own in the publication of the map, which is probably why he so clearly indicated that he would allow a publisher to take control of the map.

Austin's 1829 manuscript map was simplistic in its boundary markings.<sup>83</sup> Texas is outlined in red. To the north and east, Louisiana and the Arkansas territory are labeled and marked off in other colors.<sup>84</sup> To the south, the Mexican provinces of Coahuila, Tamaulipas, and Nuevo León are labeled and outlined. Within Texas, Austin outlined and marked his own colony and additional grant, as well as the neighboring DeWitt's Colony. A variety of natural features such as bodies of water and elevation changes are also detailed on the map, though these grow sparser as map moves westward, further from the colonies. Notably, Coahuila is bounded off from Texas as if it were a totally separate state, even though by the time Austin would have finalized and sent off this map in 1829, Coahuila and Texas had been politically defined as the state of "Coahuila y Tejas" since at least 1824, when Mexico's first Constitution was passed. This delineation likely was a conscious choice on Austin's part, as in an 1828 letter to Austin, Leaming passed along comments from Tanner suggesting that Austin ought to decide whether the map would include Coahuila.<sup>85</sup> The joining of Texas and Coahuila by the 1824 Constitution was a contentious issue at the time, as both Coahuila and Texas were independently large, and

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<sup>82</sup> Reichstein, 256.

<sup>83</sup> See *Map 8* in the appendix.

<sup>84</sup> Due to color fade and color accuracy on scanned images, I was unable to precisely identify all colors used in this map and others. However, it is still possible to determine where color was used on these maps.

<sup>85</sup> Leaming to Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, May 8, 1828]," May 8, 1828.

joining them together would have produced an immense state with a likely capital and center of political power in Saltillo, in southern Coahuila, far from Texas.<sup>86</sup> Pairing Texas with Coahuila resulted in a legislative uphill battle for Texas empresarios like Austin, because Texas was much less populous than Coahuila, and thus, less strongly represented in the legislature.<sup>87</sup> Austin's choice to draw Coahuila separately from Texas on his manuscript map might have reflected Anglo Texan dissatisfaction with the joint state arrangement, even years later. Physically, the map measured approximately 26 by 32 inches, and was hand-drawn on paper.<sup>88</sup> It includes many hand-written notes around and on the map, some of which are reproduced in an edited form on the later printed versions.

While awaiting Tanner's first printed version of the map, Austin lamented the time it was taking to turn his manuscript map into the final document. In a June 14, 1830 letter to Thomas Leaming, Austin expressed concern that his work was being wasted the longer the map was not publicly available.<sup>89</sup> Austin saw the map as part of his "silent course" to attract emigrants following the April 1830 Mexican law banning further settlement from the United States over fears that Anglo Texans would break their allegiance to Mexico. In Austin's view, a map was a less obvious advertisement of Texas compared to written publications, and Mexican officials were unlikely to identify it as an attempt to violate the ban on colonization. Austin also positions maps as being intellectually inaccessible to Mexicans, writing that he "determined to have a Map published as the [m]ost effectual means of operating on an intelligent people, and the least dangerous with the Mexicans, for not many of them know any thing about maps." This letter

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<sup>86</sup> Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 80, 163.

<sup>87</sup> Torget, 80.

<sup>88</sup> See archival record at the Briscoe Center for American History for *Map 8* in appendix.

<sup>89</sup> Stephen F. Austin to Thomas F. Leaming, "[Stephen F. Austin to Thomas F. Leaming]," June 14, 1830, Austin Papers, Digital Austin Papers, <http://digitalaustinpapers.org/document?id=APB1961>.

suggests that for Austin, the map served the purpose of demonstrating to potential colonists how Anglos had utilized Texas, and simultaneously would fly under the radar of Mexican concern, apparently because Mexicans scarcely produced or used maps.

Though Austin saw the map as a tool of colonization, he was also well aware that Tanner would profit off it, commenting that if the map sold well, Tanner should send Austin one of his atlases, presumably as a token of thanks. These comments make clear the target audience for the Austin and Tanner map, and also reveal that Austin viewed maps as powerful persuasive documents, with the added benefit of stealth. As previously discussed, there is no strong evidence to suggest that Austin provided input to Tanner on the changes that were made with each new edition of the map. We also cannot assume that Tanner's interests aligned with Austin's, particularly as Austin acknowledged Tanner's financial interest in the map. The extent to which the maps' gradual changes over time were motivated out of a desire to attract immigrants to Texas, financial interest, or a need to keep up with the work of other mapmakers remains an open question.

Tanner's first published interpretation of Austin's manuscript preserved many of his original choices in boundary marking and labeling, though it added additional context to the territories surrounding Texas.<sup>90</sup> For example, the map labeled the Mexican province of Chihuahua, only barely visible on the west side of the map. It is not clear whether every copy of the 1830 published edition maintained the boundary distinction between Coahuila and Texas through the use of color, but the map does lack the dashed lines that denote separate states, which appear between Coahuila, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, and Nuevo León.<sup>91</sup> These same

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<sup>90</sup> See *Map 9*, 1830.

<sup>91</sup> The Library of Congress copy of the 1830 edition (*Map 9*) lacks color entirely, however, other authors have stated that the 1830 map was published as a full-color pocket edition. See *Map 10*, an undated example, likely an 1830 edition, which does use color outlines that distinguish Coahuila and Texas. The Library of Congress copy may not



distinctions are maintained in the 1833 and 1835 editions of the map.<sup>92</sup> In the 1830 (full-color), 1833, and 1835 editions, color is used to outline both colonies internal to Texas as well as borders between Texas and other states and countries. The colored borders also depict boundaries not adjacent to Texas, such as those separating other Mexican states visible on the map. All seven printed editions of *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States* measured the same size, approximately 23.5 by 30 inches when unfolded. Additionally, most, if not all, editions, were published in pocket-map format, meaning they were sold folded to approximately four by six inches in size and attached to small front and back cover pieces for easy reference and transport by travelers.<sup>93</sup> The maps were printed via engraving, likely on a copper plate, representing a well-established form of mapmaking at time when the newer lithographic printing method was taking hold. The maps were likely hand-colored after printing.<sup>94</sup>

The 1835 edition represented a significant update to the depiction of Texas' internal boundaries. Whereas the 1830 and 1833 editions were limited to Austin's grants and DeWitt's Colony, the 1835 showed virtually the whole of Texas as having been divided up and doled out to various empresarios and landholders. While the number of colonies and land grant Texas continued to grow in the years the map was published, there was no great territorial explosion between 1833 and 1835. Indeed, some of the colonies that did not appear on the map until 1835

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have been a distribution copy, but rather, an uncolored print that was never sold. In either case, it was the use of color that demarcated the Coahuila-Texas boundary, rather than the actual printing on the map.

<sup>92</sup> See *Map 11* (1833) and *Map 15* (1835).

<sup>93</sup> Henry Taliaferro, "Texas at Crossroads: Stephen A. Austin's Texas," in *Mapping the West: America's Westward Movement 1524-1890*, ed. Paul E. Cohen (New York: Rizzoli, 2002), 113. Additionally, see *Map 21* (1836), held by the University of Texas at Arlington and *Map 31* (1840), held by the University of Houston to view the pocket map covers.

<sup>94</sup> See archival records for the copy of *Map 20* (1836) held by the Star of the Republic Museum, and the copy of *Map 29* (1839) held by Stanford University. There is a possibility that color was added to these maps through the use of additional engraved plates that were covered in colored ink and printed atop the black inked base map, which may have been a process in use in the mapmaking industry at the time the maps were printed. However, archival records indicate they were hand-colored, as many copperplate-printed maps were. See "Copper Plates in Map Production," *MSU Libraries Blogs: Map Library* (blog), February 9, 2016, <https://blogs.lib.msu.edu/node/234681>.

had existed at the time Austin created his original manuscript map.<sup>95</sup> Given that the original map was the product largely of Austin's own cartographic work, it is possible that though Austin knew of other colonies, he did not have enough information about their whereabouts and boundaries to accurately map them.<sup>96</sup>

Compared to earlier versions, which depicted a Texas that was largely empty of political boundaries, save for the eastern coast, the 1835 map puts forth an image of Texas that is filled with boundaries, and by extension, residents. The addition in 1835 of a note in the lower left corner of the map indicating how many families will *eventually* be settled in each of the grants further implies that audiences should presume the increase in land grants to correlate to an actual increase in population. Because such large segments of the area are carved out by grant boundaries, the 1835 map uses color to outline the small segments that have *not* been doled out to various interests. However, land granted in Texas rarely equated to population density, and so despite the apparent growth in the number of land grants, the population may not have increased as drastically as the map suggests.<sup>97</sup> Viewers of this map would not necessarily have been aware of that fact, and nowhere on the map are actual population numbers provided. As a result, for the uninitiated viewer, the 1835 edition might have suggested that Texas was almost fully-populated, or well on its way. Further, any sense of uncertainty around the un-granted spaces within Texas was quashed with this map. Though it denoted empty spaces, the use of outlined colors suggested to viewers that *someone* had visited that area and mapped it, making it all the more certain.

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<sup>95</sup> For examples of other contracts already doled out by the time of Austin's manuscript map, see Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 121–22.

<sup>96</sup> Austin had worked on the establishment of DeWitt's Colony and thus likely had had the opportunity to survey it or get a copy of a survey, as discussed in Dennis Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin: An Illustrated Essay of the Early Cartography of Texas," *The Occasional Papers: A Philip Lee Phillips Map Society Publication*, no. 8 (2015): 17, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/pdf/plp/occasional/OccPaper8.pdf>.

<sup>97</sup> DeWitt's Colony, for example, only reached 377 residents by 1830. See Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 122.

The political boundaries within Texas that become more apparent on the 1835 map and beyond should be contextualized in light of the empresario system. Championed by Moses and later Stephen Austin, empresario contracts became the backbone of Texas land grants. Empresarios were designated by the Mexican government, and were responsible for settling a pre-determined number of families on a specific tract of land in a particular timeframe, in most cases six years.<sup>98</sup> In addition to having their name and reputation tied to the success of the colony, empresarios' financial interests were heavily tied up in the colony's development. The Mexican government would not compensate an empresario for their work in settling the colony until a minimum threshold of new colonists had been reached.<sup>99</sup> Only then would the empresario actually own a valuable plot of land within the land grant as compensation. Empresarios also benefitted financially from the administration of the colony, via fees paid by colonists.<sup>100</sup> Over the whole period of Anglo colonization, empresarios and their business associates employed several other strategies to maximize their profits from land grants.<sup>101</sup> For this project, it is sufficient to understand that empresarios, even if they had a political and/or altruistic interest in colonizing Texas, were deeply entangled with the *economic* success of colonization, and many were involved in several business ventures based on that economic potential.

If the colony were to fail, either by abandonment or contract cancellation by the Mexican government, an empresario would have very little to show for their work. As a result, empresarios such as Austin had a serious financial stake in spreading the word about Texas to would-be emigrants in the United States *as well as* assuring colonists and government officials

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<sup>98</sup> Mary Virginia Henderson, "Minor Empresario Contracts for the Colonization of Texas, 1825-1834," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1928): 298.

<sup>99</sup> Henderson, 298; Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 119.

<sup>100</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 151-53.

<sup>101</sup> For discussion of some of these partnerships and business schemes, see Henderson, "Minor Empresario Contracts for the Colonization of Texas, 1825-1834"; Mary Virginia Henderson, "Minor Empresario Contracts for the Colonization of Texas, 1825-1834, II," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (1928): 1-28.

that their colony was well-established and stable. Further complicating this desire to advertise, especially once numerous land grants had been approved all over Texas, was Texas' size and the relative lack of knowledge that the U.S. Anglo audience would have about Texas. Maps, then, became a critical tool to communicate how Texas was organized and where specific grants were located among the large space and number of political units. At the same time, mapping served a practical administrative purpose, allowing empresarios and their agents to track land already doled out to colonists and land still available for new families.<sup>102</sup> As a result, empresarios were well-positioned to both contribute to maps and to appreciate and encourage the circulation of printed maps in the United States and Texas.

The 1836 and 1837 editions of the *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States* basically reproduce the same internal divisions of the 1835 edition, only with different color choices and the addition of full-color shading in 1837.<sup>103</sup> Additionally, beginning with the 1836 edition, color is no longer used to distinguish boundaries between states and territories not adjacent to Texas. This includes boundaries between Coahuila and other Mexican states, which has the effect of taking Coahuila out of the frame of focus on the map. While Coahuila had previously been marked off from the rest of Texas on the map, it was still highlighted and emphasized in the same way as Texas in earlier editions. By shifting the representation of Coahuila, along with all other Mexican and U.S. states and territories, the map indicates that Texas was conceptually independent from Coahuila and Mexico. Also in the 1836 edition and beyond, the shading colors previously used to distinguish *different* territories bordering Texas are removed, and replaced with a single outline color for the entire U.S.-Texas border, and a second color for the U.S.-Mexico border. While the change is minor, it effectively portrays Texas as an

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<sup>102</sup> Henderson, "Minor Empresario Contracts for the Colonization of Texas, 1825-1834, II," 17.

<sup>103</sup> See *Map 20* and *Map 21* (1836) and *Map 23* (1837).

independent nation sandwiched between the U.S. and Mexico. 1836 was the same year that Texas won its independence from Mexico at the Battle of San Jacinto. However, the 1836 map edition was likely completed before Texas' independence was formalized, as the copyright imprint is dated to 1835.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, tensions between Texans and the Mexican government had been rising for several years, and newspapers in the U.S. in 1835 and 1836 reported on the impending independence.<sup>105</sup> Tanner, or one of his employees, was likely aware of this changing political situation, and may have altered the map as a result.<sup>106</sup> Though viewers of the map may not have realized it, given the close timeline of the map's production and Texas' independence, the map anticipates an independent Texas before it was fully formalized. It is unlikely that the preemptive depiction of an independent Texas had a significant impact on the ultimate success of the war of independence. However, it did work to swiftly introduce to viewers the idea of Texas as an independent nation. Viewers of the map were also well-positioned to accept a new national unit of an independent Texas, as many of the same attitudes held by Anglo Texan colonists about Mexico's stewardship of Texas were shared by Anglos in the United States.<sup>107</sup> For audiences in

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<sup>104</sup> The lower left corner of the 1836 edition (*Map 20* and *Map 21*) contains the copyright imprint. It is likely the map was mostly complete when Tanner registered the copyright, as applicants usually provided proof of the existence of the copyrighted materials. See Jason Lee Guthrie, "Entered According to Act of Congress: Copyright and Photography in 19th Century America," *Military Images* 38, no. 1 (2020): 72–75.

<sup>105</sup> Newspapers covering the tensions in Texas included several in New York, suggesting that the Philadelphia-based Tanner likely consumed similar content. For examples, see "Texas," *New York Spectator*, October 1, 1835, *Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers*, [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GT3015689561/NCNP?u=umd\\_um&sid=bookmark-NCNP&id=e285c98a](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GT3015689561/NCNP?u=umd_um&sid=bookmark-NCNP&id=e285c98a); Francis Hall & Co., "War in Texas," *New York Spectator*, October 29, 1835, *Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers*, [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GT3003782076/NCNP?u=umd\\_um&sid=bookmark-NCNP&id=ef3d6e96](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GT3003782076/NCNP?u=umd_um&sid=bookmark-NCNP&id=ef3d6e96); "[Untitled]," *The Herald*, January 1, 1836, *Chronicling America*, Library of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030311/1836-01-01/ed-1/seq-2/>.

<sup>106</sup> There is no surviving correspondence between Austin and Leaming relating to Tanner in these later years, and thus no evidence to suggest that Austin might have suggested this change on the map to Tanner. Austin did travel to Philadelphia in 1836 and did meet with Leaming, though this meeting probably took place after the 1836 edition was finalized. See Reichstein, "The Austin-Leaming Correspondence, 1828-1836," 281–82.

<sup>107</sup> While Anglo Texan attitudes toward Tejanos and other Mexicans no doubt further developed after settling in Texas, the roots of many of these views were widespread in the United States, based on ideas about Spaniards and Catholicism. U.S. readers were additionally being served Anglo Texan ideas about Mexico via the newspaper articles and travel accounts circulating in the United States. For an in-depth study of specifically U.S.-based attitudes, see David Thomas Leary, "The Attitudes of Certain United States Citizens Toward Mexico, 1821-1846"

the United States, Texas' independence could perhaps have been viewed as the natural conclusion to the Anglo project of civilizing Texas' wilderness.

The emphasis on Texas, separate from Coahuila, Mexico, and the United States, grows stronger in the 1837 edition of the map.<sup>108</sup> In this edition, all of Texas is shaded in full color, and the surrounding states and territories are totally unshaded, only outlined on the side adjacent to Texas. The 1837 edition does not indicate a new copyright imprint date as compared to 1836, but the cartouche in the lower right corner is dated to 1837, suggesting that updates might have been made in late 1836 or early 1837.<sup>109</sup>

The 1837 map and beyond depict what Thongchai terms the “geo-body” of the nation, and what Schulten calls a “territorially coherent” nation.<sup>110</sup> While earlier maps represented Texas as a regional part of other national interests (Mexico), the maps that come after Texas' independence from Mexico present it as a standalone national body. The map solidifies a stable, recognizable “shape” of Texas, literally and politically, that is drawn in the way one might expect to see other national bodies. These updates are primarily cosmetic, in that the base map seems to have changed only in very minor ways from the 1830 first edition, but they demonstrate a progression that follows the political tensions and shifts happening in Texas at the same time. While most changes trailed behind the unfolding political events, rather than predict or precede them, they also bring a stability to a space that was not yet certain. Texas' independence was acknowledged by the U.S. by 1837, but violence continued, and the Mexican government did not

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(Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1970), <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/attitudes-certain-united-states-citizens-toward/docview/302440733/se-2>.

<sup>108</sup> See *Map 23*.

<sup>109</sup> Most maps, especially those by ubiquitous printers such as Tanner, include cartouches that usually detail the map's title, author, and date, and include aesthetic decoration not found elsewhere on the map. In this map, the date on the cartouche seems to be the only element that changed on the base map between 1836 and 1837. The addition of color was likely a separate process that did not require altering the copper plate used to print the black ink base outline and text.

<sup>110</sup> Winichakul, *Siam Mapped*, 16–17; Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 3.

accept independence.<sup>111</sup> This uncertainty, however, is not visible on the clean lines and minimal text of the map. For viewers who were not themselves in Texas, the map put forth an image of agreement, rather than contestation. Newspapers provided regular updates on continued tensions, but the mental image of a stable Texas created by maps such as the 1837 edition and beyond likely persisted in the minds of readers.<sup>112</sup>

The 1839 and 1840 editions show shifts in the internal political organization of Texas, but maintain the external boundaries and overall shape.<sup>113</sup> While maps through 1837 divided Texas by land grants, 1839 marks the first time that Texas' earliest counties begin to serve as the primary organizational structure. Labeled individual land grants remain on the map, but are less emphasized with dotted-line boundaries instead of full-color shading or outlines. By 1840, there are additional counties formalized onto the map, including some breakups of larger counties into smaller ones. For viewers paying close attention to subsequent map editions, the shifts in the counties between 1839 and 1840 might have signaled the continued contestation on the ground in Texas, but most viewers were unlikely to acquire a new map edition after only a year, unless they had particular reason to need a new one.

The shift from a land grant-centered political organization to a county-centered one on the map is significant in that it shows a system in which the sub-divided units of Texas are political parts of a larger political whole, rather than a system of contracted land in which only

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<sup>111</sup> Violent encounters occurred not only between Mexicans and Anglo Texans, but also Anglo Texans and Indigenous groups, though there is some evidence that some of the latter clashes may have been a result of alliances between Mexicans/Tejanos and Indigenous groups. See Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 203–4, 210–11.

<sup>112</sup> “Foreign,” *Cheraw Gazette*, February 14, 1837, Chronicling America, Library of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88084121/1837-02-14/ed-1/seq-2/>; “Postscript: By the Express Mail,” *Alexandria Gazette*, June 14, 1837, Chronicling America, Library of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85025007/1837-06-14/ed-1/seq-3/>; “Infamous Outrage on the American Flag,” *Morning Herald*, April 7, 1838, Chronicling America, Library of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030312/1838-04-07/ed-1/seq-4/>; “Latest from Texas-Important Rumor,” *Morning Herald*, October 19, 1839, Chronicling America, Library of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030312/1839-10-19/ed-1/seq-2/>.

<sup>113</sup> See *Map 29* (1839) and *Map 31* (1840).

the whole of Texas was treated as a political unit. The existence of counties as formalized on the map further contributes to the idea of a stable and independent Texas, with an organized government. The county-based political boundaries also add to the notion that a single central government holds knowledge of the whole geographic space. The counties shown on the map had been declared official by the Republic of Texas legislature for the first time in 1836, shortly after Texas won its independence, and were converted from the municipality system of political organization used by the Mexican government. The Mexican government had of course known the names and locations of land grants and municipalities within Mexican Texas, but the “grant” terminology used on earlier editions suggested a much more individual-based system of political organization. Grants were awarded to people, not political units, while counties signaled administrative parts of a political whole. The difference is largely semantic, but might have had an impact on how map viewers saw Texas’ national identity and the certainty of the knowledge contained in the map.

In a span of ten years and seven map editions, Texas was transformed in the eyes of the map from a region largely lacking in settlement and political organization to an independent nation with a national government dividing it into parts of a cohesive whole. As additional boundaries were drawn, Texas was drawn into sharper focus by Tanner and his colleagues, until the map ultimately represented the region as its own national body. These changes seemingly followed the unfolding political events in Texas, which Tanner likely watched from afar, reading updates in newspapers and other publications. Texas was not the only Mexican territory at odds with the central government during this ten-year period. Other Mexican states, including the Coahuila portion of the former Coahuila and Texas, Tamaulipas, and Nuevo León, also rebelled in the face of the centralist government of Santa Anna, which had stripped them of their



autonomy. These three states formed the short-lived Republic of the Rio Grande in 1840, meaning that while boundaries of Texas were being redrawn on maps, the political identities of its neighboring states were also being contested and renegotiated.<sup>114</sup>

It is important to note that while Tanner's depictions of Texas on the *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States* appeared to support Texas' moves toward independence from Mexico, this should not be taken to demonstrate Tanner's personal political convictions. Well after the Austin and Tanner map had represented Texas as politically distinct from Mexico, Tanner published folded pocket map editions of *A Map of the United States of Mexico*, which showed Texas as part of Mexico. These 1846 and 1847 maps, which were updated versions of a much older 1826 map by the same name, came not only after Texas' independence from Mexico, but also after its annexation by the United States.<sup>115</sup> However, the government of Mexico continued to dispute the status of Texas until the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, and there was likely an audience of buyers even in the United States who viewed Texas as part of Mexico until that point. The depiction of Texas shown in the *Map of the United States of Mexico* which directly conflicted with the Texas of the Austin and Tanner map is likely the result of Tanner's desire to sell maps to any and all interested buyers, regardless of political sympathies.

Though it is now possible to view each edition of the map side-by-side and see the at times dramatic changes in its representation of Texas year over year, this kind of high-level view was probably unavailable to most audiences of this map. These maps, frequently published as pocket maps, were expensive, and most people who obtained one would not have been likely to find cause to purchase another after only a few years had passed, especially given that the same

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<sup>114</sup> For more on the Republic of the Rio Grande and its connection to the Republic of Texas, see David M. Vigness, "Relations of the Republic of Texas and the Republic of the Rio Grande," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (1954): 312–21.

<sup>115</sup> See *Map 7* (1826), *Map 34* (1846), and *Map 36* (1847) in the appendix.

space was represented in each edition, even if the boundaries, labeling, and shading changed. Instead, most viewers would have consumed only one or two of these editions, and then maintained that image of Texas for years to come. As a result, each uncertainty or temporary arrangement immortalized into the map by Tanner became an enduring idea of stability, whether it was as a portion of a Mexican state, as an independent state, or as an independent nation.

### **“Empty” space and territorial claims**

Shifting boundaries are one strategy to make repeatedly make stable contested space. Another feature frequently seen on maps of Texas during Anglo American colonization that on closer inspection highlights the uncertain physical reality is the use of unbounded empty space. When situated next to the fully-shaded, geometric boxes and shapes of land grants and counties, everything blank and undivided looks to be empty, or at least, lacking in territorial claims. The labeling in these segments of the map, which is often sparse, small, and un-bolded, offers no political divisions, but rather, descriptions of what sort of “wilderness” will be found in the supposedly empty space. In the case of nineteenth-century Texas, the territory of Indigenous groups, particularly Comanchería, was often lumped together with this form of descriptive labeling. This gave Indigenous land the appearance of being nebulous, uncertain, or possibly empty. Later Texas maps did away with the empty space entirely and divided it up among the emerging set of counties, or else shaded it in and left it unlabeled.<sup>116</sup> These representational choices, while common across most maps produced in the United States, effectively minimized Indigenous territorial control, which for colonists in Texas was an ongoing concern.<sup>117</sup> Tensions

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<sup>116</sup> For example, see *Map 23*, the 1837 edition of Austin and Tanner’s map.

<sup>117</sup> For example, see *Map 3*, an 1820 map of what is currently the United States and Mexico by John Melish, John Vallance, and H.S. Tanner, in which most of the western area is left unlabeled; Torget, *Seeds of Empire*, 94, 105, 184.

with Indigenous groups were a frequent topic in newspaper coverage of Texas as well, likely raising would-be emigrants' anxieties over the safety of moving to Texas. To depict Comanche-controlled territory as empty might have reassured future colonists that Texas was both safe and full of land that was free for the taking. Further, depicting Indigenous people as mostly absent from Texas was aligned with the prevalent Jacksonian attitude of Anglos toward Indigenous people. The presence of Indigenous people in close quarters and tense relations with Anglo Texans conflicted with Anglo beliefs that if Indigenous groups were not already assimilated to white, Christian culture, they never would.<sup>118</sup> As these maps were being printed and circulated, the Indian Removal Act was signed and implemented in the United States, while Anglo Texans did not have the force of the United States government to forcibly displace its Indigenous neighbors.

The first two editions of Austin and Tanner's *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* depict most of Texas as empty, save for Austin's land grants and DeWitt's Colony in the southeast.<sup>119</sup> The rest of the region primarily denotes natural features and wildlife, such as bodies of water, woodland, prairie, buffalo, and horses. These notes appear to be derived from comments that appeared on Austin's manuscript draft of the map, and the notes are likely a substitute for the lack of cartographic detail in those areas of the map. A handful of Indigenous settlements are marked and labeled, though only in the areas around the marked land grants. To the west, a large swath of land, with no marked boundaries, is labeled "Comanche Indians". This perhaps serves as an acknowledgement that Anglo knowledge of Texas was limited in the western half of the region, and that Comanche control was expansive. However, this vague

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<sup>118</sup> Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire* (Cornell University Press, 2003), 134–39.

<sup>119</sup> See *Map 9* (1830) and *Map 11* (1833).

labeling also minimizes the legitimacy of Comanche territorial control, especially in comparison to the clearly defined and shaded land grants. By simplifying complex land usage patterns down to a single meandering label, the map functionally makes empty the western part of Texas in the eyes of an ignorant map viewer. For boosters of Texas, it was a lack of clarity that was desirable in this case, because it could allow them and viewers of the map to assume that Comanche control was minimal, and thus, not a risk to colonists. These early editions show a sort of selective uncertainty, in which a small pocket of definite boundaries is surrounded by space that is known to be there, but has little detailed knowledge mapped onto it.

By the 1835 third edition of the Austin and Tanner map, the land that was previously portrayed as devoid of settlement had been divided up and filled in by the boundaries of additional land grants.<sup>120</sup> In the 1835, 1836, and 1837 editions, small segments of land not yet granted to individuals are shown, but have been shaded in, rather than left blank.<sup>121</sup> Comanche land is still labeled as in earlier editions, as are Indigenous settlements, but they are shaded over by the colors used to fill in land grants. Indigenous settlement and land control become a backdrop to colonist settlements in these maps, further solidifying the position of the maps that Indigenous land should not be a concern for its viewers. To leave Indigenous groups off the map entirely might have caused viewers to question the accuracy of the map, given that Indigenous people were present in the United States and given that Indian removal was ongoing there. By including an acknowledgement of Comanche and other Indigenous presence, however small, the map showed to audiences that it was supposedly representationally accurate vis-à-vis their expectations. Additionally, as later editions of the Austin and Tanner map filled in more details about the grants overlapping Comanche land in western Texas, the became more and more

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<sup>120</sup> See *Map 15*.

<sup>121</sup> See *Map 20* and *Map 21* (1836) and *Map 23* (1837).

certain in its portrayal of territory. Even though the labeling of Indigenous land did not change from earlier editions, in later versions of the map it becomes surrounded by confidently drawn boundaries and grant labels. When compared to these clearly marked territories, Comanche land was unlikely to be viewed as unknown and more likely to be seen as dispersed or minimal. The train of logic for audiences might have been: if knowledge of western Texas was extensive enough to fill in land grants, then the mapmaker must also have known enough about Comanche territory to map it correctly.

In reality, while violent campaigns to expel Comanches from the region were ongoing in this period, expulsion was far from complete, and Indigenous sovereignty was still contentious for the Mexican and Texan governments.<sup>122</sup> The 1839 edition of the map perhaps indicates some of this back-and-forth over territorial control, as it reverts to earlier depictions of the western part of Texas, leaving around a quarter of the region unshaded and labeling it in large, bold letters: “Cumanche”.<sup>123</sup> By the 1840 edition, however, the map once again filled in Comanche territory with shading and county labels.<sup>124</sup>

Some mapmakers used other strategies to represent supposedly unclaimed territory and Indigenous control. Published as a foldout accompaniment to Mary Austin Holley’s travel account *Texas*, one 1833 map, engraved by New York-based William Hooker, left Comanche territory off Texas entirely.<sup>125</sup> The author of this map is not identified. Another version of the same map, published in 1834 with color shading, includes an unbounded labeling of Comanche territory, and also labels Choctaw, Creek, and Cherokee territory in the Arkansas territory

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<sup>122</sup> Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 195, 215.

<sup>123</sup> See *Map 29*.

<sup>124</sup> See *Map 31*.

<sup>125</sup> See *Map 12*. It is possible that Hooker was also the author of the map, given that no other individuals are credited on it, and many mapmakers worked in multiple publishing roles. However, it is not possible to say with certainty. Nevertheless, I have referred to the map as the Hooker map as a shorthand to refer all editions that appeared across several texts, since Hooker is the only credited contributor.

outside of Texas.<sup>126</sup> It is not clear why Indigenous land control was left off the 1833 map—Holley discusses the Comanche nation in the text, including its general geographic location.<sup>127</sup> However, she also describes the nation as “a wandering race,” perhaps suggesting that Comanche territory was left off the map to support this point. It is ultimately not clear whether the omission was intentional, or if later versions of the map were correcting the error. This example perhaps demonstrates Harley’s idea of the epistemological silence as discussed in the introduction. Since Comanche territory was not bounded off into clearly-defined land grants as Anglo American settlements were, and since mapmaker knowledge of Comanche land use was minimal, there was no epistemologically-sound way to depict Comanche territory on the map. In the eyes of Anglo mapmakers, Texas was owned (depending on the year) by Mexico or the independent Texas government. The fact that Indigenous people were clearly present in Texas, but did not hold formal ownership of the land in the view of Anglos, Mexicans, or Texans complicated mapmakers’ ability to represent the space as controlled and as having territorial sovereignty. Rather than use an alternative representation strategy to indicate that Comanchería looked different from land grants, the mapmaker may have simply elected to exclude that which didn’t fit the existing way of organizing the world.

Thomas Gamaliel Bradford, in contrast to Hooker and Tanner, represented Comanche territory in the same way that land grants were drawn on his 1835 map of Texas, which was republished in 1838.<sup>128</sup> This map was likely one of his first works, as his first atlases also appeared in 1835. In his career, Bradford primarily produced a variety of national and world

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<sup>126</sup> See *Map 13* in the appendix.

<sup>127</sup> Holley, *Texas*, 88.

<sup>128</sup> See *Map 16*, *Map 26*, and *Map 27* in appendix.

atlases in collaboration with different publishers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia concurrently.<sup>129</sup>

The 1835 map appeared in Bradford's *Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical & Commercial*, a world atlas that included state, country, and continent level views from around the world as well as environmental illustrations and several essays on the regions depicted in the maps. In some editions, the map is paired with an essay describing Texas' natural features, political history, and population, including mention of the ongoing rebellion for independence.<sup>130</sup> On this map, a region beginning in the northwest corner of Texas and taking up around a fifth of the map is shaded and labeled "Comanche Indians" just as grants around it are shaded and labeled. The map acknowledges Comanche land control in the same formal manner that other territorial claims are recognized, coming closer to the reality of Texas than most other maps. The map also does not give any indication that the land labeled as Comanche territory is empty or available for future land grants.

This representation of Comanche land control might have worked in two ways. First, it elevated the presence of the Comanche land in Texas to an equal level as that of land grantees and settlers. Viewers of this map would have come away with a decidedly different image of Texas' political boundaries than viewers of the 1835 version of Austin and Tanner's map, for example. Audiences of this map in the United States with little knowledge of Texas might have

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<sup>129</sup> Ristow, *American Maps and Mapmakers*, 270–71.

<sup>130</sup> I was unable to locate an 1835 edition of the atlas that contained this map, but archival records and other sources indicate that some 1835 copies did include the map. See archival record for *Map 16* in appendix. It is not clear whether the accompanying essay also appeared in 1835. See "1835 Bradford Map of the Republic of Texas (First Specific Map of Texas in an Atlas)," Geographicus Rare Antique Maps, accessed March 18, 2023, <https://www.geographicus.com/P/AntiqueMap/Texas-bradford-1835>; In the second and third editions of the atlas, both from 1838, the map is paired with an essay, though the two essays are completely different, a fact that is perhaps attributable to the change in publishers from the second to third editions. See Thomas G. Bradford, *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commerical*, 2nd ed. (Boston and New York: William D. Ticknor, Wiley & Long, 1838), 64B-64C, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/95x7ie>; Thomas G. Bradford, *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commerical*, 3rd ed. (Boston: American Stationer's Company, 1838), [64B], <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/6sjf40>.

recognized that Indigenous presence there was significant and lasting. A second interpretation of this map questions whether Bradford's territorial bounding of Comanche land reflected a geographic reality, or was convenient representational image. Maps contemporaneous with this one, including those of Hooker and Tanner, situate Comanche land as overlapping several different land grants, rather than being concentrated in the northwest corner of Texas. It is possible that this representation of Comanchería was aspirational, intended to suggest the possibility that the Comanche nation could be expelled to only as-yet-ungranted sections of Texas. With this interpretation, boosters could have used this map to indicate that relations between Comanche people and colonists were peaceful, demonstrable by their non-overlapping territories. The essays that accompany the map in later editions of the atlas offer little clarity, as they make only brief references to Indigenous presence in Texas. While the essay that appeared in the 1838 third edition of the atlas situates Indigenous tribes as "occupy[ing] the northwestern and northern sections" of Texas, it also describes Indigenous people as "wandering," leaving open the question of aspiration versus territorial reality.<sup>131</sup> In either case, Bradford's map represents a shift away from other mapmaker's representations of Texas as containing large swaths of empty space, instead presenting it as neatly divided and claimed by both the Comanche nation and colonists. This contrast between Bradford's map and the early editions of the Austin and Tanner map reflects different uses of certainty and uncertainty as well. Bradford wields cartographic certainty to confine the Comanche nation to a small zone of the map, surrounded by Anglo settlement.

Ultimately, none of these representations by Anglo American mapmakers of Comanche land control were accurate to the way that Comanchería functioned, or its relationship to Anglo

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<sup>131</sup> Bradford, *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commerical*, 1838, [64B].



colonies in Texas. Anglo American spatial terms and representational norms, European in origin, could not account for the Comanche tradition of land use and description.<sup>132</sup> The boundaries of Texas, and the ideas of statehood and nationhood that they entailed, did not map cleanly onto Comanche land use or political and social organization. Additionally, audiences for these maps were most likely to view Indigenous groups and territory as potential problems and uncivilized, not as equal parties who had much longer-standing claims to the same land.<sup>133</sup> As such, mapmakers had little incentive to accurately represent Indigenous space and instead used incompatible Eurocentric cartographic conventions to make passing attempts at noting Indigenous territory.

Spatial choices, including the use of boundary markers and the representation of non-colonized regions, contributed greatly to the production of the idea of Texas as an independent, cohesive nation. By contrasting neatly bounded boxes of Anglo land grants with ambiguous depictions of Comanche territory, most maps downplayed the very real tensions between colonists and Indigenous groups. Whether these choices were aspirational or trailed behind actual events, they communicated notions of stable national space to audiences in the United States. Though the uncertainty that actually defined Texas in this period was communicable to U.S. audiences through other media like newspapers, the images constructed through maps were powerful, and likely stuck with audiences long after the reports found in texts had faded.

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<sup>132</sup> The differences between Comanche and Anglo American spatial understanding are too complex to discuss in sufficient depth here, in particular because they are entrenched in both language and norms of land use. For a deeper discussion, see Daniel J. Gelo, "'Comanche Land and Ever Has Been': A Native Geography of the Nineteenth-Century Comanchería," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 103, no. 3 (2000): 273–307.

<sup>133</sup> Gary Clayton Anderson, *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820–1875* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005)--See especially chapters 4, 5, and 6.

## Decorative elements and notes

Between the direct geographic representation found on maps and the contextual documents that were published with and apart from maps are the aesthetic and informational elements found around the map. Features like the cartouche, legend, and various tables and figures are not inherently geographic, but are physically and intellectually associated with the map. For map viewers in the nineteenth century, cartouches and other decorative features helped to position the map as not only a navigational document, but as an overall image, to be consumed as artistic as well as informational.<sup>134</sup> In the same way that a piece of art might have an accompanying card or sign indicating its artist and title, a map's cartouche provided a frame of reference for the contents of the map itself, including the author, title, and other pieces of information needed to decipher the map, such as a legend. Viewers were accustomed to seeing cartouches on maps, and likely would have looked to it to learn what was interesting or unique about a particular map of Texas, especially given that most maps depicted similar basic outlines of Texas that on first glance might have looked identical. All of these decorative elements contributed to the national and political image put forth by the map, giving viewers subtle cues as to how to interpret the geographic content of the map.

On all editions of Tanner and Austin's *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* prior to 1840, a symbol of the Mexican republic is used in the lower right corner cartouche. The image includes an eagle holding a banner in its talons which reads "Republica Federal Mexicana" above a cactus whose paddles are labeled with the states and territories of the Mexican republic. On the ground around the cactus are a bow and arrows, and a boat.<sup>135</sup> Below

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<sup>134</sup> Martin Brückner, *The Social Life of Maps in America, 1750-1860* (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2017), 221.

<sup>135</sup> Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 17-18.

the imagery, the credits list both Austin and Tanner, as well as the map's engravers, John Warr and William W. Warr. The map additionally credits Manuel de Mier y Terán, a Mexican military officer who had surveyed portions of Texas. Both the imagery and the credit to Mier y Terán render the map intensely Mexican. In the beginning, this might have been a nod to the Mexican government, as a way to assure it of Texas' allegiance to Mexico. After 1836, when Texas had won its independence, it is not clear why Tanner did not adjust the imagery on the cartouche to reflect Texas' newfound independence. It is possible he did not want to make such a substantial change to the engraving plate, should Texas be re-conquered by Mexico.<sup>136</sup> The Mexican national imagery persisted until 1840, when the eagle and cactus were removed in favor of additional text, thus retitling the map *Gen'l Austin's Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States*. In fully removing the Mexican decorative elements from the map, Tanner signals Texas' status as independent, and national in its own right. A second function of the map's new title might have been to draw greater attention to Austin's role in the map's production, as he had died in 1836 and perhaps achieved greater memorialization status. Though the 1840 map was released five years before the United States annexed Texas, Tanner's decision to almost entirely scrub the Mexican presence from the map suggests he or his firm saw independence from Mexico as the new equilibrium in Texas.

All editions of Tanner's map have a scattering of contextual notes throughout the map providing details about specific landmarks and features. Every edition prior to 1840 also has a larger contextual note in the lower left corner with details about the part of Coahuila not pictured on the map. It concludes by stating that the capitol of Coahuila, Saltillo, was renamed "Leona

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<sup>136</sup> Altering copper plates, as were most likely used to print Tanner's maps, was possible, but time-consuming and expensive, and couldn't be reverted without re-engraving the plates once again. See Ristow, *American Maps and Mapmakers*, 281.

Vicario.” Although Leona Vicario was once again renamed back to Saltillo in 1831, Tanner’s maps continued to include this note through the 1839 edition. Beginning with the 1835 edition, there is an additional note with lists some of the land grants in Texas and number of families required to be settled there by the Mexican government. This note seems to emphasize the purpose of the map, to bring U.S. emigrants to Texas. By including statistics about the number of families that might one day live in these grants, as well as information about how much land will be doled out to them, the map makes the divvied up internal political organization look appealing. Notably, this note does not say how many families had actually settled in any of the colonies to date, perhaps to instead let assumptions be made based on the aspirational numbers. Like the Mexican imagery of the cartouche, after 1836 this note became less relevant, as quotas from the Mexican government were no longer enforceable in an independent Texas. In the 1840 edition, both the notes about Saltillo and settlement quotas were removed, though on the map itself Saltillo was still labeled Leona Vicario.

While Tanner’s continued use of Mexican imagery may have been a simple holdover from earlier work, other maps during and after the Texas Revolution used their cartouches to make clear Texas’ national status. A map engraved by Joseph Yeager, titled *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*, clearly announces Texas to be wholly independent from Mexico, listed on the cartouche as one of the three countries featured in the map.<sup>137</sup> The publication date of this map is somewhat questionable, as the front of the printed map does not indicate a date. A copy held at the Museum of the Big Bend is dated 1836, while a copy in the Newton Gresham Library at Sam Houston State University is dated to 1837. A third copy held by Texas Christian

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<sup>137</sup> See *Map 22* (1836), *Map 24* (1837), and *Map 32* (ca. 1840). Yeager may be the sole author of the map, or perhaps was only the engraver. Little else of Joseph Yeager is known beyond a small number of additional engraving credits.

University is listed as being published circa 1840, though all three copies appear to be identical with no changes to the base map or shading that would distinguish them as separate editions. Though undated, the map is marked as a specially-printed accompaniment to *Atkinson's Casket*, a monthly magazine that was distributed to subscribers with “monthly embellishments,” including plates, maps, and sheet music.<sup>138</sup> The map appears to have been sized to fit inside a copy of the *Casket*, measuring approximately 8.5 by 11 inches.<sup>139</sup> According to the list of embellishments for the 1836 volume, a map was included with the March issue that matches the description of *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*. The immediately adjacent earlier and later editions do not list any sort of map of Texas in their lists of embellishments that would suggest the map was sent to subscribers several years in a row, meaning that the Yeager map is probably most accurately dated to March of 1836. The map was published a month before Texas gained independence from Mexico in April 1836, but may have been conceptualized around the start of the war in late 1835, when independence became a serious possibility. The map's makers, then, did not wait for Texas' independence to become assured before formalizing it in the spatial representation on the map.

Though *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States* is credited as a special engraving for *Atkinson's Casket*, two pieces of evidence suggest the base map or manuscript version of the map was not drawn up for the *Casket* specifically. First, the text for which the map is designed to accompany, a descriptive sketch of Mexico and Texas, is inconsistent with the political situation depicted on the map. While the map evidently labels Texas and Mexico as independent of one another, the text not only describes Texas as province in Mexico, but also recounts an earlier

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<sup>138</sup> Samuel C. Atkinson, ed., *Atkinson's Casket: Gems of Literature, Wit and Sentiment*, vol. 11 (Philadelphia: Samuel C. Atkinson, 1836), sec. General Index, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006057558>; Frank Luther Mott, “A Brief History of ‘Graham's Magazine,’” *Studies in Philology* 25, no. 3 (1928): 363–64.

<sup>139</sup> See archival records for *Map 24* and *Map 32* in appendix.

instance of Anglo Texan colonists defending the Mexican flag from a burgeoning rebellion by other colonists.<sup>140</sup> The text makes no reference to Texas' War of Independence at all, and paints a peaceful view of the relationship between Texans and the Mexican government. Taken in combination with the map, it is likely that the two documents were produced separately, and though the map was specially-printed to accompany the *Casket*, it was not made with regard for the Texas described in the text. The second reason to suspect the map was produced separately from the *Casket* is the fact of its later reuse as foldout map in the 1847 travel account *The Life, Travels and Opinions of Benjamin Lundy*.<sup>141</sup> In this text, the map was retitled *California, Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*, and the credit to Joseph Yeager was removed. Nevertheless, the two maps are extremely similar, and seem only to differ in the colors used to shade territories and a small descriptive note added to the 1847 map. The 1847 version is likely a reprinting of the earlier map, perhaps using the same engraved printing plate for the base map and a new plate to add color, the title, and the descriptive note. While it is possible that the specially-drawn map for *Atkinson's Casket* might have been sold to the publisher of *The Life, Travels and Opinions of Benjamin Lundy* for use in that text, it is more likely that the publishers of both works simply purchased the map from another maker and had it printed.

John Arrowsmith's 1841 map of Texas goes a step beyond the Yeager example in recognizing Texas' independence.<sup>142</sup> The map's cartouche says it is "compiled from surveys in the Land Office of Texas, and other Official Surveys," acknowledging that Texas' land office is an authority on its boundaries and organization. The cartouche also features the seals of both the Republic of Texas and the General Land Office, which are followed by the statement

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<sup>140</sup> Atkinson, *Atkinson's Casket*, 11:111, 113.

<sup>141</sup> See *Map 35*.

<sup>142</sup> See *Map 33*.

“Recognized as an independent state by Great Britain 16<sup>th</sup> Nov’r 1840.” The Arrowsmith map uses its decorative elements not only to assert its status as an endorsed map of Texas, but also to announce that Texas is recognized by at least one other sovereign nation as independent. These official endorsements lend the whole map a supposed certainty not necessarily present on other printed maps. Private mapmakers certainly held positions of authority with respect to geographic knowledge, but the seals and statement of recognition for the Republic of Texas combined with the name of Arrowsmith, an established mapmaker, blend state authority and cartographic authority. The cartouche implies that the map’s portrayals of space have both the benefit of experiential data from the Texas General Land Office as well as the mapmaking expertise of Arrowsmith. This map was published in London by an English cartographer, and so the recognition by the British government would have been relevant and appealing to British viewers of the map. John Arrowsmith worked in a family publishing operation in London at one point, though he may have worked completely alone later in his career.<sup>143</sup> Nevertheless, the Arrowsmith name perhaps carried weight with viewers of the map who were familiar with other Arrowsmith family printed materials.

The map also appeared in several contexts that intellectually positioned Texas as an independent nation. It accompanied an 1841 edition of Scottish diplomat William Kennedy’s *Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*, which, by its title, recognizes an independent Texas.<sup>144</sup> The map also appeared in Arrowsmith’s *London Atlas of Universal Geography*, as a later addition to the original set of maps which appeared in editions prior to

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<sup>143</sup> Francis Herbert, “The ‘London Atlas of Universal Geography’ from John Arrowsmith to Edward Stanford: Origin, Development and Dissolution of a British World Atlas from the 1830s to the 1930s,” *Imago Mundi* 41 (1989): 99–102.

<sup>144</sup> William Kennedy, *Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: R. Hastings, 1841), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001264415>.

1841.<sup>145</sup> The atlas was updated and reprinted several times, suggesting it was successful in reaching a large audience. Notably, while the atlas does depict on other pages territories that do not comprise independent countries, it includes no other maps focusing solely on a single Mexican or U.S. state, clearly positioning Texas as distinct from internal territories belonging to other North American powers. Newly primed to see Texas as independent, audiences who had interacted with this map might have viewed Texas as more internally cohesive and stable.

## Conclusion

Geographic and non-geographic elements of early nineteenth century Texas maps worked off one another to produce an image of stable, uncontested Texas. While political tensions boiled in Texas and Mexico, maps produced by mapmakers in the U.S. and Great Britain took a snapshot in time of one particular political arrangement, and then immortalized it on paper to be distributed to audiences around the world. These maps were at times aspirational, creating boundaries and claims not yet settled in the physical reality of the space. They also selectively emphasized and downplayed the tension and contestation that existed in a space that had been claimed and used by Indigenous people long before the arrival of Europeans or Anglo Americans, employing competing representational strategies to create a notion of difference between colonists and Indigenous groups. Often, the maps followed events as they played out, and so the progression of maps like those of Henry Schenck Tanner provide a useful tool for tracking the political changes that translated to the map over time. Each subsequent map introduced a new image of the geo-body of Texas into the minds of audiences, creating the

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<sup>145</sup> John Arrowsmith, *The London Atlas of Universal Geography, Exhibiting the Physical & Political Divisions of the Various Countries of the World, Constructed from Original Materials* (London: John Arrowsmith, 1842), <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/30lzqi>.



potential for competing images of Texas as Mexican or as independent. Coupled with other sources about Texas, such as newspapers and travel accounts, audiences in the U.S. in particular could build for themselves a rich mental map of Texas, with clearly defined boundaries, consistent government, and peaceful relations with neighbors. Whether these ideas would come true once colonists and travelers arrived in Texas was a different question, and reality may not have aligned with depiction and expectation. In most cases, however, audiences could not know what moments in time and interests led to the creation of a particular map, and rarely did they get disclaimers about the gulf between representational image and geographic reality. These questions of motivating interests, mapmaking collaborators, and webs of authorship will be the subject of the next chapter.

### Chapter 3: Webs of Authorship, Convention, and Invention

Most of the maps of Texas produced and distributed in the early nineteenth century have the marks of professional work, such as copperplate and lithographic printing, neat cartouches, and names of high-profile professional mapmakers. Map production largely came out of the northeast United States, in publishing epicenters such as Philadelphia, Boston, and New York. Though the credits on these maps largely pointed to professional mapmakers, in reality amateur surveyors, sketch artists, explorers, and professionals collaborated to produce maps of Texas. The contributions of these individuals are often not acknowledged on a map, creating a shadowy web of cartographic collaborators whose choices and motivations are difficult to fully identify. Though credited collaborators undoubtedly played a role in a map's final image, it was more often the uncredited surveyors, explorers, and draftsmen who actually traversed the landscape of Texas and made representational decisions that translated the instability of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Texas into a mappable body.

Unraveling this web of surveyors, explorers, and new Anglo Texan colonists is challenging, since they are not credited on the maps themselves and there is not much other evidence to tie individuals to specific maps. Additionally, many maps were compiled from overlapping sets of sources, including earlier published maps, meaning the waters are murky when it comes to questions of influence, motivation, political choice, and representational accident. Even without knowing the specific identities of contributors, an intertwined web of mapmakers, publishers, surveyors, explorers, and colonists created the maps that were distributed to the public as the discrete projects of separate individuals. The representational choices contained within these maps were, in turn, presented as natural, logical, and accurate ways of depicting the geographic and political space of Texas. This idea was strengthened by the

fact that multiple maps could and would represent areas in the exact same way. Maps' and mapmakers' authority was derived from the fact that their depictions of Texas could be compared to and verified by the work of others.

However, underneath the surface of credited collaborators, a different view of map production becomes visible. An alternate interpretation would suggest that maps were internally consistent with one another because they were the product of collaboration, inspiration, and re-creation. Instead of viewing similar maps by different makers as unconnected projects, we can see them as collective products of a web of contributors, ranging from mapmakers' contemporaries to earlier cartographers whose mapmaking choices become immortalized as the standard in all later maps. The cartographic conventions and inventions that appeared authoritative as a result of their repeated, (supposedly) independent use were likely reproductions stemming from a single earlier work, uncredited in derivative maps. While audiences for these maps might have recognized cartographic conventions as convenient representations of geographic reality, they probably could not have identified the extent to which conventions and inventions were borrowed, copied, adjusted from map to map. Mapmakers' authority as producers of supposedly-accurate maps, then, was constructed on self-referential use of earlier maps and conventions as well as aspirational mapping of space not yet well-understood.

This chapter will highlight several examples of these unlisted collaborations and concealed reproductions on Texas maps. It will also argue that this unseen web of cartographic invention and collaboration resulted in certain individuals being held up as authoritative on account of their mapmaking accomplishments.

### **Stephen F. Austin's vision of Texas**

While he was far from the only Texas mapmaker, Stephen F. Austin is in many ways the center of Texas' cartographic universe. Whether a map or geographically descriptive text was actually his work or not, Austin's name was frequently invoked as a way of connoting his project of Anglo colonization in Texas. As such, Austin's vision of Texas is an important basis upon which images of Texas were constructed and circulated. Today, Austin has become a mythologized figure in popular understandings of Texas history, often treated as a heroic figure who arrived in Texas with the sole goal of establishing a new extension of United States society. This narrative, while inflated by twentieth-century scholarship such as Eugene Barker's *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, existed during Austin's lifetime as his image became synonymous with Texas in the minds of Anglo audiences in the United States and Texas.<sup>146</sup>

Austin's motivations for coming to and staying in Texas were more financial than altruistic. As Gregg Cantrell has carefully reconstructed, the Austin family was in a fairly dire debt situation at the time that Moses Austin came to Texas to seek permission to settle Anglo families there.<sup>147</sup> From the beginning, the empresario contract granted to Moses Austin would have allowed him financial gain. The terms negotiated by Stephen later on in 1823 would also allow him to profit off the families settled in Texas. As such, Austin had a significant financial stake in the success of his project. His involvement in mapmaking reflects this—Austin wrote that he saw his collaboration with Tanner on the *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* as an opportunity to entice potential emigrants from the United States to Texas. His moves to keep the peace with the Mexican government in times where other Anglo colonists were growing

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<sup>146</sup> For a discussion of the role of Barker's Austin biography in the positioning of Austin as a mythologized figure, see Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 378–79.

<sup>147</sup> Cantrell, 43–79, 98–99.

restless also highlight Austin's financial interest, which was entangled with appeasing Mexican officials.<sup>148</sup>

Apart from these economic elements, once arrived, Austin also set to work implementing his ideas about what Texas was and ought to be for Anglo colonists. In an April 1829 letter to William H. Wharton, an Anglo who would ultimately permanently settle in Texas and serve in the Republic of Texas government, Austin detailed his vision of Texas. He described the sort of individuals from the United States he wanted to attract to Texas, in the hopes of making it “the garden of North America.”<sup>149</sup> This language is aligned with how Austin and others described Texas elsewhere—as the most ideal setting in North America, particularly in terms of its climate and natural resources. Later in the letter, Austin admits to balancing his interest in the betterment of Texas with his financial situation, stating “I have no ambition of a political military or avaricious character. My ambition has been to succeed in redeeming Texas from its wilderness state by means of the plough alone, in spreading over it North American population enterprise and intelligence, in doing this I hoped to make the fortune of thousands and my own amongst the rest.” This quote also underscores that Austin saw Texas as being in need of saving prior to his arrival, and that Austin believed that with his guidance and the work of Anglo colonists, Texas could be rescued from its supposed “wilderness” state. In the closing of the letter, Austin specifically requests it not be published in newspapers or shared widely, suggesting he wrote it not as a tool of boosterism, but as a true expression of his feelings and goals.

The specific attitudes Austin brought with him to Texas and developed once there are somewhat more challenging to pin down, again owing in part to his notable financial interest that

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<sup>148</sup> Cantrell argues that Austin's decision to help quash the Fredonian Rebellion in late 1826 was due in large part to his personal financial losses if the rebellion had succeeded. See Cantrell, 188.

<sup>149</sup> Stephen F. Austin to William H. Wharton, “[Stephen F. Austin to William H. Wharton],” April 24, 1829, Digital Austin Papers, <http://digitalaustinpapers.org/document?id=APB1710>.

often impacted his stances on political and social issues. Cantrell describes Austin as the product of both Jeffersonian and Jacksonian era values, which often resulted in personal moral quandaries for Austin, and conflicts between his words and actions.<sup>150</sup> Austin described slavery at times as a moral wrong, but then spent years lobbying the Mexican government to continue to permit in Texas, as slavery was a key draw for potential emigrants in the United States.<sup>151</sup> He did not immediately view Indigenous presence in Texas as a threat requiring removal or violence, but also only imagined peaceful relations between colonists and Indigenous people if and when Indigenous groups lived sedentary lives more like those of colonists. Austin also was not opposed to all-out violence against Indigenous groups, should relations have further deteriorated.<sup>152</sup> Despite his well-documented personal friendships with Tejanos including José Antonio Navarro and Erasmo Seguin, both of whom supported Texas in its war of independence, Austin also made public comments disparaging Mexicans as a whole, using racial epithets to describe them.<sup>153</sup> More broadly, Austin's allegiance to the Mexican government was thin, with his primary motivator to maintain a good relationship being the aforementioned financial stake in the empresario contract. In 1835, when tensions between Texas and the Mexican government ran high, Austin wrote to cousin Mary Austin Holley that his goal from the start had been to "Americanize Texas."<sup>154</sup> This is not to say that Austin intended to help Texas break away from Mexico from the start, but rather, that he knew the project of colonization would bring values held by Anglos in the United States to Texas, rather than change Anglos into Mexican citizens with Mexican values.

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<sup>150</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 11–12.

<sup>151</sup> Cantrell, 189–91.

<sup>152</sup> Cantrell, 140–42.

<sup>153</sup> Gregg Cantrell, "Stephen F. Austin: Political and Cultural Mediator," in *Major Problems in Texas History: Documents and Essays*, ed. Sam W. Haynes and Cary D. Wintz (Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2002), 106–9.

<sup>154</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 308.

### **(Un)credited mapmaking contributions**

In her 1833 travel account of Texas, Mary Austin Holley credited Stephen F. Austin with creating “the first and only correct geographical information of the country, that has ever been published.”<sup>155</sup> Holley’s text consistently situates Austin as the noble hero of Texas, and so it is unsurprising that she would make such a clear-cut claim about Austin’s cartographic work.<sup>156</sup> Holley and Austin were cousins, reconnecting in Texas in 1831 when Holley traveled there as precursor to her possible relocation there.<sup>157</sup> The two were close friends, and Austin was eager to have Holley live nearby permanently.<sup>158</sup> Though Holley did return to Texas after her initial visit in 1831, she never settled there permanently.<sup>159</sup> Holley’s close personal connection to Austin goes a long way toward explaining her particularly aggrandizing tone about Austin and his accomplishments, and why she would be eager to boost his image as the source of all knowledge about Texas.

Though Holley’s claims are perhaps conscious exaggerations, other scholars have also stated that Austin himself purported to have created the first printed map of Texas.<sup>160</sup> Austin and Holley may not have known it, but Austin’s 1830 map published with Henry Tanner was in fact not the first to be printed and published in recent years. An 1826 printed map by Fiorenzo Galli and lithographed and published by Claudio Linati in Mexico preceded Austin’s, though several scholars note that Galli’s map was likely based at least in part on one of Austin’s earlier

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<sup>155</sup> Holley, *Texas*, 9.

<sup>156</sup> Elsewhere in her introduction, Holley accuses the Spanish of being too selfish to settle Texas, and presents Austin as the sole figure to have “torn away the veil that hid it from the view of the world.” (p. 9)

<sup>157</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 242–43.

<sup>158</sup> Cantrell, 244–46.

<sup>159</sup> Cantrell, 384.

<sup>160</sup> Robert S. Martin, “Maps of an Empresario: Austin’s Contribution to the Cartography of Texas,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (1982): 387.

manuscript maps created between 1822 and 1826.<sup>161</sup> Additionally, Austin himself had seemingly used at least one printed map of Texas in the production of his own maps, U.S. military officer Zebulon Pike's 1810 *A Map of the Internal Provinces of New Spain*.<sup>162</sup> The map was compiled in 1807 during one of Pike's expeditions in service of the U.S. military, and was published in 1810 as one of the fold-out accompaniments to *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi*.<sup>163</sup> Pike's map covered a much larger area than only Texas, and lacked substantial detail beyond a handful of settlements and natural features. Nevertheless, it was a printed, published map of Texas that predated Austin's work, calling into question whether Austin legitimately thought of his map as the "first and only."

Austin was not the only map author to be incorrectly described as creating the "first" map of Texas. Years after Austin and Tanner's map had been published at least six times, and many other mapmakers had created their own variations of Texas' cartographic representation, an 1840 edition of the *Houston Telegraph and Texas Register* reviewed a text that it claimed included the "first" map of Texas. The newspaper, reviewing Richard S. Hunt and Jesse F. Randel's *A Guide to Texas, with a Map*, described the foldout map as "invaluable, as it is the first map of Texas

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<sup>161</sup> It is not clear how widely the Galli and Linati map (*Map 6*) was circulated. The only known copy is surrounded by notes in the margins, which Robert Martin theorizes may be by Mexican general Manuel Mier y Terán. This would suggest military use of the map, though the fact that it was professionally printed and credits a publisher suggests it might also have been sold to the public. Martin, 387; Carlos Eduardo Castañeda and Early Martin Jr., eds., *Three Manuscript Maps of Texas by Stephen F. Austin* (Austin: Privately printed, 1930), 18–19; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 13.

<sup>162</sup> See *Map 2*; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 9.

<sup>163</sup> Zebulon M. Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and Through the Western Parts of Louisiana, to the Sources of the Arkansas, Kans, La Platte, and Pierre Jaun, Rivers; Performed by Order of the Government of the United States During the Years 1805, 1806, and 1807. And a Tour Through the Interior Parts of New Spain, When Conducted Through These Provinces, by Order of the Captain-General, in the Year 1807*. (Philadelphia: C. & A. Conrad & Co., Somervell & Conrad, Bosnal, Conrad & Co., Fielding Lucas Jr., 1810), <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/99poy8>; Jay H. Buckley, "Pike as a Forgotten and Misunderstood Explorer," in *Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*, ed. Matthew L. Harris and Jay H. Buckley (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 41–42.



ever published.”<sup>164</sup> The review is not identified as a paid advertisement placed by Hunt and Randel, but the language mirrors the preface of the text itself, which was authored by Houston residents and was sold in Houston, indicating that the review is perhaps more promotion than objective evaluation.<sup>165</sup> Outside of authoring the text, which was republished in subsequent editions after 1839, and their apparent residence in Houston, nothing else is known of Hunt and Randel.

The claim that Hunt and Randel’s map was the first published is clearly false, and it is also unlikely that the newspaper’s publisher or review’s writer thought it to be true, as a large number of maps of Texas were circulating in the United States and Texas by this time. The full phrase used to describe the map is “the first map of Texas ever published, making pretensions to accuracy,” and is followed by the sentence “This has been made from actual surveys of the country, so far as surveys have been completed.”<sup>166</sup> The review, as well as the preface of the *Guide*, from which this claim was taken, seem to suggest that earlier maps of Texas were not based on surveys. This implies, by extension, that earlier maps were less accurate composites in comparison to the map that accompanied the *Guide*, and in that sense, the map could be considered “first” in accuracy. The claim that the map was first in some way is complex enough that it was likely deliberately formulated to place the Hunt and Randel map atop a hierarchy of novelty. Hunt and Randel’s publisher and the reviewer in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* evidently saw the perception of “first”-ness to be an attractive enough feature to make this

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<sup>164</sup> “The Telegraph,” *Telegraph and Texas Register*, January 1, 1840, Texas Digital Newspaper Program, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth48082/>.

<sup>165</sup> Richard S. Hunt and Jesse F. Randel, *Guide to the Republic of Texas: Consisting of a Brief Outline of the History of Its Settlement* (New York: J.H. Colton, 1839).

<sup>166</sup> “The Telegraph.”

somewhat misleading claim about the map, even though many readers could likely independently confirm that the claim was false.

More important than the question of *whether* particular maps were the first to be published is the perceived value in *being* the first to create and publish a map. A singular map with the claim of being the first published was impactful, but a mapmaker with the credit of having created the first printed map of a region could use that prestige for years and maps to come. Notably, both the claims around the Austin map as well as the map in the Hunt and Randel text center on the publication of the map, rather than the mere act of creating a personal or manuscript map. The prestige of a published map was likely the appealing element in these cases, as publication necessarily involved collaboration with established mapmakers, printers, and publishing houses. The implicit authority of working with individuals like Henry S. Tanner imbued both the mapmakers and the maps with authority. As a result, it was most valuable to laud a map not as being the first one drawn, but the first one viewed highly enough by publishers to print and sell. Being first at publication also establishes the representational choices in the map as original, based on experience and data rather than other publications. By positioning their own work as “first,” these mapmakers and their boosters placed themselves atop a hierarchy of map authorship, wherein subsequent works could never be as original as their work, because later works followed and may have used the original map.

Apart from claims of novelty, makers of Texas maps also heightened their prestige by limiting the number of acknowledged contributors on the maps. Virtually all maps of Texas, even those co-produced by Texas-based and U.S.-based mapmakers, were the product of land surveys, accounts, records, and other maps that preceded it. A single cartographer or team of cartographers was unlikely to ever independently traverse the entirety of a region as large as

Texas and produce an accurate representational image of its natural features, political divisions, and settlements. The individuals acknowledged on the map itself—usually comprised of a publisher, an engraver or lithographer who physically produced the map’s printing plates, and perhaps a cartographer—only scratched the surface of contributors, each of whom approached their work with their own motivations and interests.

The credited collaborators lent the map authority, implying that everything displayed on the map was the product of their own work. For example, Austin and Tanner’s *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* credited five individuals. Austin and Tanner have top billing as the compiler and publisher, respectively, which highlighted the established authority of Tanner and the direct experience of Texas from Austin. John and William W. Warr are listed as engravers, and were frequent collaborators with Tanner in Philadelphia.<sup>167</sup> The fifth contributor, Mexican general Manuel Mier y Terán was credited on the map’s cartouche with providing “the Latitude and Longitude of Saltillo[,] Monterey[,] Laredo[,] Bexar[,] Nacogdoches and the Point from where the boundary line leaves the Sabine.”<sup>168</sup> As other scholars have argued, this specific recognition of Mier y Terán’s work was probably intended to demonstrate that the map was drawn from direct observation by not only Austin, but also other authoritative, government-sanctioned parties.<sup>169</sup> Additionally, Austin and Mier y Terán were on friendly terms, and drawing attention to their indirect collaboration on the map might have begun as a valuable reassurance of Anglo Texans’ national allegiance to Mexico.<sup>170</sup> Together, these credited collaborators gave the

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<sup>167</sup> For example, the Warrs engraved several plates for Tanner’s *New and Elegant Universal Atlas*. See Ristow, *American Maps and Mapmakers*, 200.

<sup>168</sup> For example, see the credits on *Map 9*, the 1830 edition of the Austin and Tanner map. See the following discussion about Mier y Terán’s geographical data collection, as it is not entirely clear whether Terán showed a manuscript map to Austin in 1828, or only shared certain data with Austin that later made it into Austin’s drafts: Reinhartz, “The Maps of Stephen F. Austin,” 13–14.

<sup>169</sup> Reinhartz, 14.

<sup>170</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 218.

map far-reaching credibility, from readers in the U.S. familiar with Tanner's work, to colonists in Texas who knew Austin, to Mexican officials concerned with how Texas presented itself in a larger national scheme.

Under the surface, several additional contributors to Austin's mapmaking efforts come to light. While it is difficult to tie specific influences to exact maps, it is clear that Austin worked off the maps of several others in producing his own from the get-go. In 1822, the same year Austin produced his own first hand-drawn sketch maps of Texas, he hired a colonist, Nicholas Rightor, to create a map of the area between the Brazos and Lavaca Rivers.<sup>171</sup> Rightor's resulting hand-drawn map measured approximately 9.5 by 14.5 inches, with hand-colored shading on bodies of water and prairie land. In the unmapped area outside of the zone bounded by the Brazos and Lavaca Rivers, "Texas" is misspelled as "Taxes," perhaps underscoring the relative newness of Texas to even those tasked with mapping it. As Bryan and Hanak contend, Austin's own 1822 map bears such strong similarities in the area also mapped by Rightor that Austin must have been using it to compile his map of the larger area.<sup>172</sup> Many scholars also believe that Austin relied heavily on an 1807 manuscript map by Franciscan priest Father José María de Jesús Puelles, which details the coastline, many rivers, and some roads through Texas.<sup>173</sup> The hand-drawn 1807 map is one of many produced by Puelles, which were often drawn up along with reports at the request of government officials in Mexico.<sup>174</sup> Austin likely would have had

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<sup>171</sup> For Rightor's map, see *Map 5*; For Austin's 1822 sketch map, see *Map 4*; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 8.

<sup>172</sup> James P. Bryan and Walter K. Hanak, *Texas in Maps* (Austin: University of Texas, 1961), 10, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/101180180>.

<sup>173</sup> See *Map 1*; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 8; Martin, "Maps of an Empresario," 379; Bryan and Hanak, *Texas in Maps*, 10.

<sup>174</sup> Marion A. Habig, "Puelles' Report of 1827 on the Texas-Louisiana Boundary," trans. Benedict Leutenegger, *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 19, no. 2 (1978): 138; For background on the life and mapmaking career of Puelles, see Jack Jackson, "Father José María de Jesús Puelles and the Maps of Pichardo's Document 74," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 91, no. 3 (1988): 321.

the opportunity to see the map while in Mexico City. In addition to these manuscript maps, the previously discussed printed Pike map of 1810 may have influenced Austin's drafts.<sup>175</sup> Austin and Tanner's map might have easily credited these earlier influences in the same way that Mier y Terán's observations were acknowledged, but doing so risked downplaying Austin's own contributions and seemingly novel discoveries shown on the map. If cartography from the period of colonial Spanish rule in Texas was highlighted as major influences on the map, Austin might have had less authority as a successful empresario in the eyes of both the Mexican government and would-be colonists. Austin's failure to acknowledge Rightor's work on the map is somewhat more curious, as Rightor's map was both more recent and represented the accomplishment of an early Texas colonist. Rightor's name did not, however, carry the same weight that Mier y Terán's did as a general and trusted representative of the Mexican government, so listing him may not have been viewed as a benefit to the map's prestige.

The web of earlier and contemporaneous influences that surround Stephen F. Austin's mapmaking efforts reveals that credited authorship was not as straightforward as acknowledging a map's major contributors. Instead, it was a balance of contribution, name recognition, and political considerations that resulted in a curated set of listed mapmakers. Austin's map drafts, as well as his printed map with Tanner, likely included countless other contributions not preserved in the archival record, such as descriptions of settlement locations sent to Austin by others and artists who added color to the printed maps. The resulting image of the map is therefore mediated through the interests of these individuals that might have motivated their depictions of space on the map. This list of contributors would have included empresarios and their agents with significant financial interests in ensuring their colonies were visible to audiences in the United

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<sup>175</sup> See *Map 2* in the appendix.

States. Though the listed authors were involved heavily in the maps' production, the choices on the map cannot be fully attributed to them alone. Viewers of maps such as Austin and Tanner's likely would have taken the credited mapmakers at face value, trusting the content of the map as an extension of the mapmakers' authority. Conventions and representational shortcuts first used by earlier authors, perhaps in a one-off or informal way, became enshrined in the printed, published maps backed by authority of a respected U.S. mapmaker. Further, the conventions used in the map are presented as standalone choices with ties to geographic reality, rather than part of a larger set of cartographic norms that appear in numerous maps.

### **Naturalizing cartographic invention**

Austin's own work was also used as an uncredited source for the work of another mapmaker. As mentioned earlier, Fiorenzo Galli, an Italian mapmaker based in Mexico, produced an 1826 map of Texas that was lithographed by Claudio Linati, also an Italian immigrant to Mexico.<sup>176</sup> Linati and Galli were seemingly business partners, also collaborating to publish the Mexican literary and political magazine *El Iris* together for several months in 1826.<sup>177</sup> While other lithographs came out of the partnership between Linati and Galli, they did likely did not produce any other maps, separately or together, as none survive today. Reinhartz describes the Galli map as being "based substantially on Austin's map of 1822."<sup>178</sup> In my own comparison of Austin's 1822 *Mapa Geografico de la Provincia de Texas* with the Galli map, it becomes clear that the two share a nearly identical mapped area, as well as extremely similar

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<sup>176</sup> See *Map 6*.

<sup>177</sup> Dawn Ades, *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 349.

<sup>178</sup> Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 13.

coastlines along the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>179</sup> As Reinhartz notes, Austin would have sent a version of the 1822 manuscript map to Mexico shortly before the publication of the 1826 map, meaning that the timing was right for Galli to have used Austin's map in his own work. Outside of their similarities and the timing, there is no indication that the maps were connected, and so to viewers of both, they might have appeared to be distinct, but highly consistent, depictions of Texas. Any overlap in the audiences of these two maps were likely officials in the Mexican government. The Galli map survives today in the form of a single copy, suggesting it was not widely distributed.<sup>180</sup> Additionally, some scholars believe the surviving copy to be that which belonged to Mexican official Manuel Mier y Terán, further bolstering the notion that the map was used by government representatives.<sup>181</sup> Austin's 1822 map was sent to Mexican government as part of his petition for additional support and infrastructure in Texas, and likely circulated around the same time as Galli's.<sup>182</sup> Representational conveniences used by Austin, such as nearly perfectly straight lines representing roads between certain settlements, were repeated by Galli without acknowledgement, supporting Reinhartz's view of the connection between the two maps. Extending this interpretation to the map audience's perspective, viewers seeing straight-line roads on multiple maps, imposed atop more carefully drawn river branches, might have interpreted the paths literally, rather than understanding them as simplifications of more complex paths. The apparent consistency between the maps might also have convinced viewers of the

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<sup>179</sup> See *Map 4*.

<sup>180</sup> Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 13.

<sup>181</sup> Martin, "Maps of an Empresario," 387; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 14.

<sup>182</sup> Castañeda and Martin offer a different interpretation of when exactly Austin's 1822 map might have been shared with Mexican officials compared to Reinhartz's timeline. It is possible that the map was sent, with small changes, multiple times during Austin's early years in Texas, when he submitted frequent petitions and requests to the Mexican government. See Castañeda and Martin Jr., *Three Manuscript Maps of Texas*, 15–18; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 13.

authority and capability of both mapmakers, given that they were seemingly able to produce such similar results independently.

An alternate strategy used by at least one maker of Texas maps involved crediting Austin and Tanner explicitly for an edition of their 1830-1840 printed map as a source. Ephraim Gilman, at one point the principal draftsman for the United States General Land Office, produced *Sketch of Texas, with the Boundaries of the Mexican States, as shown on Gen'l Austin's Map of Texas* during or after 1839.<sup>183</sup> The date of the map's publication is somewhat ambiguous as although "1839" appears under the map's title, the date may be referring to the edition of Austin and Tanner's *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* used to determine boundary lines, not the date of this map.<sup>184</sup> The map appears to reflect changes in Texas' national (or, perhaps, state) boundaries by superimposing the boundaries shown on the Austin and Tanner map over a different western and northwestern boundary along the Rio Grande and Arkansas River.

The larger boundary drawn by Gilman, which expands the size of Texas as compared to Austin and Tanner's map, was ultimately the same boundary used as part of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which marked the end of the Mexican-American War.<sup>185</sup> Given that the title of Gilman's Texas map is *Sketch of Texas*, and lacks extensive internal detail other than bodies of water, it is possible that this map represented one draft to conceptualize what a new Texas would look like after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The use of Austin's map represents an older version of Texas, prior to Mexico's land cession. I tentatively date Gilman's map, then,

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<sup>183</sup> See *Map 38*: The Library of Congress dates the map to 1839, but there do not appear to be any markings suggesting this outside of the "1839" below the title, which may or may not refer to Gilman's map. For background on Gilman as well as history and timing of the Texas boundary dispute, see Mark J. Stegmaier and Richard T. McCulley, "Cartography, Politics—and Mischief: Ephraim Gilman's 1848 Map of the United States, Now Expanded Coast to Coast," *Prologue Magazine*, 2009, <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2009/winter/gilman-map.html>.

<sup>184</sup> See *Map 29*.

<sup>185</sup> See *Map 37* in appendix, which shows the new boundaries of Texas immediately following the land cession of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.



closer to 1848, after Texas was annexed by the United States and when the U.S. was working out the terms and new boundaries as laid out by the treaty.<sup>186</sup> Given its simple sketch design and overlaid boundaries, the map was likely created for internal government use, rather than public circulation. If this map is indeed from around 1848, Texas' internal geography was not the primary concern for the government officials using the map. The literal contours of the region's external boundaries were the subject of negotiation, and this map might have represented a first step in proposing a map for the new U.S. state.

While the Austin and Tanner map in other cases was regarded as a document of authority and accuracy on its own, in the case of the Gilman map, it represents a historical snapshot in time for comparison's sake. There is nevertheless a particular authority bound up in Gilman's use of the map when he was likely producing his *Sketch of Texas* in service to the U.S. government. Many other maps of Texas from around 1839 used the same western boundaries of Texas, but Gilman chose Austin and Tanner's ubiquitous map as the exemplar, acknowledging not only the authority of Austin and Tanner's map, but also perhaps its status as an original from which other maps were derived. Unlike other examples, where the sources of cartographic conventions found from map to map are concealed, Gilman's map explicitly calls out Austin and Tanner as originating a feature that was slated to be updated by new land control.

Another case of diverging lineages of cartographic convention is identifiable in the representation of Texas' southern boundary with other Mexican states. The Rio Grande and the Nueces River run in mostly parallel tracks in southern Texas, with the Nueces lying approximately 150 miles north of the Rio Grande. Throughout the disputes over Texas'

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<sup>186</sup> Reinhartz places the map at 1839, positing that it was created for hydrographic drainage study. However, Reinhartz does not offer any evidence for this assertion beyond the 1839 date printed on the map. See Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 19.

independence from Mexico and later annexation by the United States, the issue of these rivers as Texas' southern boundary were hotly contested by the U.S., Mexico, and the Republic of Texas. Before political tensions between Texas and Mexico boiled over, the precise location of the boundary appears to have been less of an issue, as both rivers fell partially within the boundaries of the political unit Coahuila and Texas.

Before 1835, most, if not all, maps drew the boundary of Texas at the Nueces River, with the Mexican states of Tamaulipas and Chihuahua falling partially north of the Rio Grande. Two 1835 maps produced by the Colorado & Red River Land Company, which controlled several land grants in Texas, present the strip of land between the Rio Grande and Nueces Rivers ambiguously.<sup>187</sup> The maps label the area as belonging to the states of Coahuila and Tamaulipas, but simultaneously identifies a portion of the strip as being controlled by the Rio Grande & Texas Land Company. This labeling likely represents the changing nature of Texas's relationship with the rest of Mexico. Beale's River Grant in the Nueces Strip was an officially-sanctioned contract, but its appearance on a map titled *Map of Texas* suggests that the mapmakers saw it as part of Texas rather than Coahuila, even though the area technically fell within Coahuila's boundaries. It is not clear what led the Colorado & Red River Land Company to represent the strip in a way that was inconsistent with other maps of the same period. One possibility is that, as a corporate land grant holder, rather than an individual, the company was interested in maximizing the geographic area potentially available for future colonization projects. Suggesting that Texas' southern boundary fell along the Rio Grande, rather than the Nueces River, created a

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<sup>187</sup> See *Map 18* and *Map 19*. Some scholars suggest there was uncertainty around the actual boundaries of these grants falling near and between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. Additionally, there were other earlier land grants made in this area by the Spanish and Mexican governments, some of which perhaps overlapped with the uncertain boundaries of the mapped grants. See Vernon B. Hill, "Spanish and Mexican Land Grants between the Nueces and Rio Grande," *South Texas Law Journal* 5, no. 1 (1959): 47–59.

new area of possible land to be doled out to the company. These lithographed maps, one shaded with color and the other outlined, were likely distributed as pocket maps, measuring around 25.5 by twenty inches when unfolded.

Other maps, including those by Austin and Tanner, U.S. Post Office topographer David Burr and cartographer T.G. Bradford, kept the boundary at the Nueces River until at least 1838.<sup>188</sup> Burr's 1834 and 1835 pocket maps unambiguously place the southern border along the Nueces River, with color shading along the river that matches the rest of Texas' external borderlines.<sup>189</sup> As with the maps by the Colorado & Red River Company, Beale's Grant appears in the Nueces Strip between the two rivers, but the clearly drawn borders on Texas seem to negate any uncertainty around the grant's position and place it in Coahuila, rather than Texas. At the time he created these maps, Burr was an official of the U.S. Post Office, but the maps seem to have been commercially distributed, meaning they probably had a reach beyond post office and other government officials.<sup>190</sup>

An 1838 map of Texas by T.G. Bradford shifts the boundary for the first time to the Rio Grande, using the same dark outline shade as the rest of Texas' borders with the U.S. and Mexico.<sup>191</sup> While it clearly indicates a shift in boundary, the map appears to have been printed from an older copperplate engraving, as the labels for Coahuila and Tamaulipas overlap the Rio Grande into the Nueces Strip. In a hand-colored version of the 1838 map printed in Bradford's *Illustrated Atlas, Geographical, Statistical, and Historical, of the United States, and the Adjacent Countries*, the dark national outline indicates the shifted boundary, but the color shading does not

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<sup>188</sup> For two examples of maps prior to the boundary shift, see *Map 9* (Austin and Tanner, 1830) and *Map 16* (T.G. Bradford, 1835) in appendix.

<sup>189</sup> See *Map 14* (1834) and *Map 17* (1835) in appendix.

<sup>190</sup> Both the 1834 and 1835 editions indicate they were published by J.H. Colton & Co., and were prepared as pocket maps. It is unlikely these maps would have been for government use only given the publisher and format.

<sup>191</sup> See *Map 25*.

fill in the Nueces Strip between the old boundary and new.<sup>192</sup> The national status of the Nueces Strip is left somewhat ambiguous as a product of clashing representational strategies. By 1839, an updated version of Bradford's map had filled in the Nueces Strip with full-color shading and colonies, indicating that the once uncertain region was politically a part of Texas and removing any earlier uncertainty.<sup>193</sup> This map appears to have been created from the same base map as the 1838 edition, as it nearly identical except for a few additional labels and shading differences. It may have been published in an atlas after 1839 like the 1838 map, though I was unable to locate an atlas containing the 1839 edition.

Both the Bradford maps and the Austin and Tanner maps show the same shift in boundary around the same time, suggesting that the changes may be connected.<sup>194</sup> Every edition of the Austin and Tanner map prior to 1839 places the southern boundary at the Nueces River. In 1839, the map shifts the boundary to the Rio Grande, where it remains for the 1840 edition.<sup>195</sup> Given that Bradford's map first indicated a shift in Texas' border in 1838, it is possible that Bradford's map motivated Tanner's publishing outfit to make the same change for the 1839 edition of the Austin and Tanner map. At the same time, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the 1839 edition of the Austin and Tanner map would have gone into production, and whether Tanner and his staff would have seen the Bradford map before making the updates for 1839. As a result, it is difficult to identify with certainty the directionality of the relationship between the work of Bradford and Austin & Tanner. Nevertheless, both mapmakers seem to have chosen, within a span of a few months, to move a disputed boundary in favor of Texas, despite there

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<sup>192</sup> See *Map 28* in the appendix.

<sup>193</sup> See *Map 30*.

<sup>194</sup> It appears most Texas mapmakers did not produce as many subsequent editions of their maps as Bradford and Austin & Tanner did, and so I was unable to locate other clear examples of maps that changed their representation of the boundary from an earlier version.

<sup>195</sup> See *Map 29* (1839) and *Map 31* (1840).

being no official agreement between Texas and Mexico to move it (or to recognize Texas' independence). It was not until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 that the Nueces Strip was officially ceded. While Texas first officially claimed the Rio Grande as its border in 1836, there does not appear to have been any further progress in 1838 that would have motivated a change in the maps at that moment.<sup>196</sup> It is likely that one of these mapmakers were following the other, relying on their work to update their representation of Texas to depict a new aspirational image, in which Texas had successfully claimed land from multiple Mexican states, and was settling residents there. For one of these mapmakers to have acknowledged the contributions of the other directly on their map was probably out of the question, as publishers like Tanner and Bradford would have been direct competitors. Crediting another major U.S. mapmaker would have also come across as a tacit acknowledgement that in the race to be first in the production of an updated map, the map's author had lost. Given these concerns over prestige, it is not surprising that mapmakers preferred to use one another's work without credit.

## **Conclusion**

The incompleteness of knowledge represented on nineteenth-century maps was not unique to Texas. United States westward expansion produced many maps based on partial knowledge, earlier influences, and uncredited collaborations with surveyors and explorers. Two features distinguish the circumstances of Texas in this regard. First, the web of possible sources and individuals upon which mapmakers could work was smaller than in other places. Before Anglo American colonization began in 1821, only two prominent maps of Texas existed that had

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<sup>196</sup> Joseph M. Nance, "Republic of Texas," in *Handbook of Texas* (Texas State Historical Association, 1952), <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/republic-of-texas>.

been produced in the prior twenty years.<sup>197</sup> This means that mapmakers necessarily either worked off the same small set of underlying sources, or had to conduct totally new surveys to compile their maps. As a result, the web of authorship and cartographic norms was smaller and tighter in Texas than in other regions. Second, the consistent images of Texas that resulted from the uncredited web of mapmaking sources created a politically significant image of stability. While Texas could be described as unknown and unexplored, it was best defined by its ongoing political upheaval and violent clashes over its boundaries and national identity. This instability, reported to readers in the United States in newspapers and travel accounts, was quelled in the eyes of viewers by the stable, consistent geographic images of Texas visible on maps. Because of these complexities, Texas presents a particularly valuable case study where the dichotomy of stability and instability are on full display.

Though nineteenth-century Texas maps were, by nature, composite images that required collaboration from surveyors, draftsmen, engravers, printers, and publishers in Texas and the northeast United States, audiences consumed them as discrete items, with a handful of recognizable contributors directly credited. To construct authority, mapmakers had to identify key collaborators, and conceal the fractured and often aspirational reality of mapmaking a region largely unknown to Anglo Americans, Europeans, and Mexicans. By presenting maps as distinct, novel, and single-handedly created, the complex webs of inspiration, re-creation, and cartographic invention were hidden from view. The authoritative quality of the maps—which were used for everything from everyday reference to text accompaniment to government reports—was crucial for creating an image of stability in Texas. That stability was integral to the project of mapmaking, as a map was only valuable if viewers perceived it as an accurate

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<sup>197</sup> See *Map 2* (1810) by Zebulon Pike and *Map 1* (1807) by Fr. José María de Jesús Puelles in appendix.

representational image. In the case of Texas, stability was all the more important to empresarios and colonists who sought to bring more immigrants, establish economic relationships with the United States, and eventually, govern themselves independently. The image of the map was a powerful tool to demonstrate Texas' national status and level of colonization, but the name recognition and trust derived from attaching specific figures to the production of maps could cement a map in the minds of viewers as a supposedly objective depiction of a geographic reality. Authority was meant to convince viewers of Texas' stability, but it often rested on a house of cards based on earlier invention and aspiration to create an idealized image of Texas toward a certain end.

Readers then relied on these apparently authoritative images, accompanied by equally inventive and aspirational descriptive texts, to develop and update a mental map of Texas as a geographic and political body. Audience reception of the image of Texas, however, was mediated by limited access to maps and the geographic distance between Texas and the rest of the United States. The intersection of these technological limitations and limited body of geographic description meant that audiences necessarily created composite images of Texas out of only a few sources. The next chapter will turn to this context of production and distribution of geographic description, visual and textual, as well as the kinds of frameworks for evaluating Texas embedded in textual geographic description.

## Chapter 4: Texas Maps in Context

Maps were but one tool used to convince nineteenth century audiences in the United States of Texas' stability and potential for opportunity. Often more accessible and widely-circulated than maps, textual geographic description also provided important mental images of Texas to readers with little other knowledge of the region. Maps were a technology limited by high costs and complex production, and so the public could not uniformly glean its geographic knowledge from the visual form. It was this larger environment of access to geographic information that shaped how audiences understood the space of Texas.

This chapter will examine the broader context of geographic literature and information distribution that carried spatial ideas about Texas to eyes and minds of nineteenth century readers. First, it will examine the question of how maps and other geographic literature about Texas were actually produced, arguing that the sheer distance of Texas from publishing centers in the U.S. meant that all geographic description of Texas, especially maps, were few and far between for most readers, rendering them all the more impactful. Second, this chapter will investigate how geographic *textual* description worked to give audiences a mental image of Texas in the absence of a richly detailed map, or any map at all. The range of rhetorical strategies used in these texts demonstrate how audiences might have layered these textual descriptions onto visual depictions of Texas to create a more comprehensive mental map, without ever necessarily traveling to Texas themselves.

### **Access to and production of maps**

For the purposes of examining publishing and distribution processes, maps of Texas can be divided into two categories: manuscript maps and printed maps. Most surviving manuscript



maps of Texas are the work of Stephen F. Austin, or were created at his request, such as the one created by Nicholas Rightor, which surveyed part of Austin's original land grant.<sup>198</sup> In some cases, additional copies of these maps were produced and shared with a small group of individuals.<sup>199</sup> Some of these manuscript maps might have been shown to travelers and immigrants by Austin or his contacts to orient them to the space of Texas and boost its image. However, tracing the trajectory of personal copies of manuscript maps is challenging, and there is nothing suggesting any of these manuscript maps were used widely to advertise Texas.

Potentially more accessible to audiences in the United States were printed maps, many of which were produced in major publishing centers of Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston. Ubiquitous mapmakers based in Philadelphia included John Melish, Henry Schenck Tanner, and Samuel Mitchell as well as engraver James H. Young.<sup>200</sup> In New York City were the Mesier family lithography operation, mapmaking firm J.H. Colton & Co., engraving firm Sherman & Smith (also known as Stiles, Sherman & Smith), and individual engravers William Hooker and John M. Atwood.<sup>201</sup> Thomas Gamaliel Bradford and engraver G.W. Boynton worked from Boston.<sup>202</sup> Several maps additionally were published out of London and other European cities. These mapmakers and firms represent only a fraction of the mapmaking business coming out of the northeast United States in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Simultaneously, this selection displays the breadth of mapmakers producing maps of Texas in this period. Though there were particular challenges associated with mapping Texas, such as its geographic distance from map

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<sup>198</sup> See *Map 5*; Reinhartz, "The Maps of Stephen F. Austin," 8.

<sup>199</sup> According to Robert Martin, Austin appears to have reproduced by hand his manuscript map in order to send it to the Mexican government, to San Antonio, and to Manuel de Mier y Terán, who is also credited on the map. See Martin, "Maps of an Empresario," 391–95.

<sup>200</sup> Ristow, *American Maps and Mapmakers*, 21, 303.

<sup>201</sup> Ristow, 276, 299, 254, 315–16, 452.

<sup>202</sup> Ristow, 270–71.

publishers, a significant number of publishers thought it worthwhile to undertake such efforts, resulting in a large body of maps being produced across formats and techniques.

The mid-nineteenth century brought numerous changes to both the field of mapmaking and publishing industry writ large, resulting in a wide range of formats and techniques being used in the production of maps. Some map publishers adopted newly available lithographic printing as a means to produce larger quantities of maps, as the printing plates used did not have to be replaced as often and were not as time-consuming to create as engraved metal plates. Others, meanwhile, continued to utilize standard copperplate printing, requiring the work of an engraver.<sup>203</sup> Since the two techniques can produce similar results, it is not always possible to identify whether a map was produced via copperplate printing or lithography, unless an engraver is credited, indicating copperplate production, or a lithographer is credited. Though it did not totally replace copperplate printing, lithography did reduce mapmaking costs, a break that may have been passed on to consumers, rendering maps more accessible—or at least more likely to be marketed—to the average reader.<sup>204</sup> Further, lithography also enabled the reproduction of older maps, which might have created a market for maps previously too expensive or rare for public circulation.<sup>205</sup> Nevertheless, since lithography and copperplate printing continued to co-exist in the nineteenth century, and because both processes were still labor-intensive, overall map prices for consumers were not immediately reduced by a substantial margin. Adding color to maps also represented a significant labor investment, as many maps were hand-colored after initial printing.

Different map formats were marketed to consumers for different uses, and at times the same map was published in several formats as a way of improving its circulation. Atlases, which

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<sup>203</sup> Ristow, 281.

<sup>204</sup> Ristow, 288.

<sup>205</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 43.

included several maps bound together, were one of the most expensive formats, and were not portable. The prices of atlases varied drastically, as differences in size, number of maps, paper quality, and binding method could raise or lower production and purchase costs. In 1855, for example, most atlases listed in one catalog hovered around \$10 each, but some are listed for as little as \$2, while others go as high as \$40.<sup>206</sup> It is likely that the atlases on the lower end of the price spectrum were very small, or contained only a small number of maps. When one of the same maps from an atlas was reprinted, attached to board covers, and folded to be sold as a pocket map, it could be priced more cheaply and advertised to travelers. A single pocket map was typically priced at less than one dollar in 1855.<sup>207</sup> The third common format in which maps circulated in the United States in the nineteenth century were as foldout accompaniments to printed texts, like travel journals. These maps were usually printed on thin paper and attached to the start or end of the text. Foldout maps split the difference between atlases and pocket maps in terms of portability, considering they were transported in the size of a standard book. It is not clear how books with foldout maps were priced compared to texts with no maps and compared to other map formats. Given that foldout maps were printed on less-expensive paper and were usually one to a text, they were probably more affordable than atlases and only slightly more expensive than texts that lacked a map of any kind. Unfolded sheet maps were also sold, but this seems not to have been the primary format in which they were marketed to consumers.

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<sup>206</sup> Note that these dollar amounts are only intended to provide an approximate sense of how maps were priced in the early and mid 19th century. By 1855, map prices were probably lower than they had been in previous years as more efficient mapping technologies took hold. Nevertheless, the numbers provided here demonstrate the gulf in costs between atlases and pocket maps, which almost certainly holds up for earlier maps as well. *A Catalogue of Books, Maps, Charts, and School Apparatus, Published, Imported, and for Sale by Ide & Dutton* (Ide and Dutton, 1855), 21–23,

[https://www.google.com/books/edition/A\\_Catalogue\\_of\\_Books\\_Maps\\_Charts\\_and\\_Sch/gA0CAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Catalogue_of_Books_Maps_Charts_and_Sch/gA0CAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0).

<sup>207</sup> *A Catalogue of Books, Maps, Charts, and School Apparatus, Published, Imported, and for Sale by Ide & Dutton*, 26–28.

Though printed maps circulated widely, they were still expensive for many in the United States. The extent to which maps in any format were prevalent in the print culture of the early to mid-nineteenth century general public is not totally clear. In the early nineteenth century, most map collections were private, and the Library of Congress did not successfully establish a map collection until later that century, meaning that members of the public unable to purchase maps had no opportunity to see them for free.<sup>208</sup> Harvard University held a collection of maps in the 1830s, but it was largely for preservation rather than use, with even students having to pay to use the library collection.<sup>209</sup> However, maps were still sought-after works by academics and the public alike, particularly scientific surveys.<sup>210</sup> Further, geographic schooling grew alongside the larger trend toward more widespread education in the United States in the 1810s, making maps more commonplace for everyday people.<sup>211</sup> Maps were also marketed to the general public in many forms, and the fact that several maps considered here were updated and republished several times supports the argument that they were widely viewed by the general public, despite the costs. The visual representation of space and the locations of natural resources was valued by a wide range of audiences, even when textual descriptions also existed. This suggests that maps were viewed as offering a unique perspective perhaps not available solely from textual forms.

Further complicating the production and circulation of maps and other geographic documents about Texas in particular was Texas' geographic remoteness from the United States, and thus, the publishers. Travel time to and from Texas might have limited the production of

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<sup>208</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 43, 56.

<sup>209</sup> Harvard University Library, *A Catalogue of the Library of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts* (E. W. Metcalf and Co., 1831), [https://www.google.com/books/edition/A\\_Catalogue\\_of\\_the\\_Library\\_of\\_Harvard\\_Un/L94RAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Catalogue_of_the_Library_of_Harvard_Un/L94RAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0); "Library Preservation at Harvard: 1831-1849," Harvard Library, accessed March 21, 2023, <https://preservation.library.harvard.edu/1831-1849>.

<sup>210</sup> Dona Brown, "Travel Books," in *An Extensive Republic: Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840*, ed. Robert A. Gross and Mary Kelley, vol. 2 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 435-36.

<sup>211</sup> Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 11.

these sources, as even travel journals published largely as-is could not be produced for publication until the traveler's account had arrived to a publisher, likely located in the northeast United States. To travel from Natchitoches, Louisiana to San Antonio de Béxar, Texas, a distance of over 300 miles, could take around three weeks, not considering the length of a traveler's actual stay in Texas once arrived. Many travelogues recounted visits to several different sites in Texas, suggesting that most stays were fairly long. In some cases, the resulting published travel journal was published as a series of letters, such as Holley's *Texas: Observations, Historical, Geographical and Descriptive*. Others, like Joshua James and Alexander Macrae's *Journal of a Tour in Texas* were formatted as a travel diary kept by the author or authors during their travels. In either case, publication of the text could not begin until all entries were submitted to the publisher.

Even for the more "real-time" updates from travelers that appeared in daily newspapers such as the *Washington Gazette*, *Richmond Enquirer*, and *Arkansas Gazette*, there was somewhat of a time delay between the letters' dates and the dates of actual publication. As a result, by the time readers in the United States actually accessed information about Texas, it was usually already a few weeks or even a few months old. While much of the geographic description contained in these texts was still accurate even with a time delay, Texas' volatile political situation meant that descriptions of systems of government and the relative levels of peace in different areas might have been upended by the time a traveler referred to a journal or newspaper account. For example, the *Washington Gazette* did not report Austin's August 27, 1821 letter relaying that Mexican independence had won out in Texas until November 15, 1821, seemingly by republishing an October article from New Orleans.<sup>212</sup> Between Austin's writing of

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<sup>212</sup> Hawkins, "Revolution of the Internal Spanish Provinces."

the August 27th letter and its November 15th publication, the Washington Gazette published several other updates from Texas, not making reference to Mexican independence in Texas until October 26th.<sup>213</sup>

Though notable given the volatility of the day, these weeks-long delays are small when compared to the time required for Stephen F. Austin to work with a Philadelphia-based mapmaker to publish a map of Texas. As noted, between 1828 and 1834, Austin worked with Henry Schenck Tanner to create a printed map of Texas, with the help of intermediary Thomas F. Leaming, a business contact.<sup>214</sup> At Austin's request, Leaming contacted Tanner to propose the idea of a printed map of Texas, to which Tanner agreed, setting in motion a years-long process to design, print, and distribute the map. In 1830, Austin lamented in a letter to Leaming that it had been so long since he sent his initial sketch map of Texas to Tanner that he now could produce a more accurate one.<sup>215</sup> Tanner's first Texas map in partnership with Austin was ultimately published that same year in 1830, with subsequent editions over the next several years. Only one direct letter between Austin and Tanner survives, which was a letter of introduction from Tanner to Austin that appears unrelated to the map endeavor.<sup>216</sup> There is no evidence that Austin and Tanner ever met, though Austin did travel to Philadelphia in 1836.<sup>217</sup> Because of the indirect

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<sup>213</sup> "Texas," *Washington Gazette*, October 26, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A1101132308776F48%40EANX-10B37580C4D818D8%402386465-10B375812140D140%401-10B37582C1582978%40Texas>.

<sup>214</sup> Austin to Leaming, "[Stephen F. Austin to Thomas F. Leaming]," June 14, 1830; Leaming to Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, May 8, 1828]," May 8, 1828; Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, October 14, 1831]," Letter, October 14, 1831, Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph216295/>; Leaming to Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, April 7, 1832]," April 7, 1832; Leaming to Perry, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to James F. Perry, October 21, 1834]," October 21, 1834.

<sup>215</sup> Austin to Leaming, "[Stephen F. Austin to Thomas F. Leaming]," June 14, 1830.

<sup>216</sup> Henry Schenck Tanner to Stephen F. Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Henry S. Tanner to Stephen F. Austin, May 6, 1831]," Letter, May 6, 1831, Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Briscoe Center for American History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph217507/>.

<sup>217</sup> Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 343.

connection, processes that might normally have taken only days and weeks took months and years, as each step in the publication process required postal travel time.

Given these inherent time delays in producing geographic materials and the physical distance between the public in the United States and Texas, geographic information about Texas was likely only minimally available for most in the United States. With the particular absence of maps (and expensive price when they were available), descriptive print texts were a valuable and more accessible tool for readers to learn about Texas, not only in terms of its geography but also its political, social, and economic situations. In this information vacuum, readers were primed to latch onto any and all information about Texas, and file it away for future reference. Geographic descriptions were used to build and update audiences' mental maps of Texas, creating beliefs and expectations that may or may not have been born out upon arrival in Texas. Lacking in firsthand experience and stories from real-life connections, geographic descriptions gave readers in the U.S. a sense of Texas, and an idea to conjure up when the region was mentioned. Many texts were descriptive enough that some sort of mental map could be formed based on text alone. Indeed, a lack of actual visual referent could have been valuable for boosters hoping to gloss over Texas' regions with little to offer Anglo immigrants. However, when texts were accompanied by even a sparse reference map, details could be concretized, and a base map firmly laid into the memories of readers. Further, all of these texts worked to establish a vocabulary and rubric by which Texas could be judged if and when a reader arrived in the region. In this way, texts not only substituted for maps but also went beyond them, giving readers specific descriptive terms with associated positive and negative connotations that they could then use themselves.

## Interpretive guidance

On one level, travel texts were practical for nineteenth century readers, providing literal geographic and navigational guidance for readers who intended to visit the described locations themselves.<sup>218</sup> At the same time, they also offered more general insights into how readers could view and imagine a place. Brown cites the use of the term "picturesque" in guidebooks to distinguish more rote geographic descriptions from subjective judgments of natural resources and landscape.<sup>219</sup> Both kinds of geographic writing became expected parts of travel texts, as readers sought to fill in factual knowledge with interpretations and personal experiences of authors.<sup>220</sup>

Audiences in the United States were surrounded by speculative claims of Texas' potential. The idea of escaping financial ruin in the United States by emigrating to Texas, for example, took hold as a powerful narrative, complete with the "gone to Texas" or "goin' to Texas" slogan to bolster it.<sup>221</sup> Later, explicitly stated ideas of U.S. expansion, termed as "manifest destiny," were equally useful for convincing the public in the U.S. that Texas could enter into their political, social, and economic spheres.<sup>222</sup> What these big ideas lacked were direct experiential detail that connected U.S. audiences with the space and everyday life in Texas from afar. Travel texts filled in these gaps, providing real examples from individuals who could recount how their experiences in Texas aligned (or not) with the promises behind "gone to Texas."

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<sup>218</sup> Brown, "Travel Books," 457.

<sup>219</sup> Brown, 454.

<sup>220</sup> Brown, 450.

<sup>221</sup> Joel H. Silbey, *Storm over Texas: The Annexation Controversy and the Road to Civil War*, Pivotal Moments in American History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6–7.

<sup>222</sup> Silbey, 9.



For readers seeking interpretive guidance for understanding and judging a new geographic location, maps were less a central component of travel texts and more a useful addendum. For example, an 1840 first edition of the travel guide *Map and Description of Texas* by Francis Moore, Jr. contained a foldout map.<sup>223</sup> However, the 1844 second edition, renamed *Description of Texas*, no longer contained the map despite having a clear geographic focus.<sup>224</sup> Moore was well-positioned to produce such a wide-ranging text as *Description of Texas*, as he owned the newspaper the *Telegraph and Texas Register* from 1837 until 1854 and served as the mayor of Houston for several terms.<sup>225</sup> These credentials also may have boosted sales and circulation of Moore's texts, as his background situated him as an authority on Texas.

The text is divided into sections by county, with each section describing the boundaries and natural features of the region along with discussion of its population and political organization. Additionally, the county-by-county descriptions are prefaced by a longer essay covering topics ranging from an in-depth geological assessment to reassurance for Anglo settlers and visitors of the supposed weakness of nearby Indigenous groups.<sup>226</sup> Throughout the guide, factual information is interspersed with value-laden statements that enable readers to form opinions about the geography, features, and resources of different regions in Texas.

Describing the overall climate of Texas, Moore writes, in part: "The summer skies are remarkably clear and serene, and are occasionally diversified by towering piles of cumuli or

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<sup>223</sup> I could not locate a copy of the first edition *Map and Description of Texas*. Other sources indicate that the foldout map was the 1840 edition of Austin and Tanner's *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* (Map 31). See "Stephen Austin's Maps of Texas," Bullock Museum, 2019, <https://www.thestoryoftexas.com/discover/artifacts/stephen-austin-maps-of-texas-spotlight-12-1-19>.

<sup>224</sup> Note the subtitle of this text for evidence of geographic orientation: Francis Jr. Moore, *Description of Texas, Containing Sketches of Its History, Geology, Geography and Statistics: With Concise Statements, Relative to the Soil, Climate, Productions, Facilities of Transportation, Population of the Country; And Some Brief Remarks Upon the Character and Customs of Its Inhabitants*, 2nd edition (New York: T.R. Tanner, 1844), <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CY0102276397/SABN?sid=bookmark-SABN&xid=2dbe3428&pg=1>.

<sup>225</sup> Priscilla Myers Benham, "Moore, Francis, Jr.," in *Handbook of Texas*, 2017, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/moore-francis-jr>.

<sup>226</sup> Moore, *Description of Texas*, 15, 29.

'thunder clouds,' careering along the water courses and shedding down gentle refreshing showers."<sup>227</sup> While Moore gives an observational description of Texas' weather and climate, referring to cloud types, he also injects a judgment of how the occasional thunderstorm should be judged by travelers. Such interpretation of the natural landscape primes the reader to form a particular understanding of what kinds of settings and circumstances in Texas are picturesque and ideal, and what is undesirable.

Some of these judgments, such as Moore's frequent descriptions of soil in certain areas as "poor," might be understood less as attempts to prime the reader's interpretive framework and more as notations indicating what kinds of economic potential is found in an area.<sup>228</sup> As Moore comments in some cases, "poor" land is often not well-suited for crops, but could serve as grazing land or pasture, a topic in which would-be emigrants were no doubt interested.<sup>229</sup> Nevertheless, Moore's assessments of the usefulness of certain resources and features take a landscape that is likely entirely unfamiliar to his readers and renders it organizable, understandable, and assessable. In particular, Moore's interpretive guidance also fit neatly into larger beliefs held by his readers about who Texas was for and how its natural resources should be used. Implicit among Moore's descriptions is the idea that potential Anglo immigrants would never waste useful land, unlike its earlier state before the arrival of Stephen F. Austin and the project of Anglo colonization.

The interpretive guidance found in Moore's travel guide is not representable in the sort of map that might have accompanied it. While a map might have helped audiences place the county-by-county descriptions into representational space, it ultimately would have functioned

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<sup>227</sup> Moore, 21.

<sup>228</sup> Moore, 78, 83, 91, 119, 124, 133.

<sup>229</sup> Moore, 91, 119.

more to give practical and navigational information, something that might have been available elsewhere. By the time of the 1844 edition of *Description of Texas*, numerous travel texts about Texas had been published, many of which already contained maps. As a result, the unique value offered by Moore's texts was not necessarily its representational image of Texas, but its interpretive guidance.

### **Giving “place” to “space” through maps**

For travel texts that were accompanied by maps, the map served more as a visual reference point than a unique cartographic representation for an author's geographic description. Two similar versions of a map of Texas engraved by William Hooker were published with the travel texts *Texas: Observations, Historical, Geographical and Descriptive* by Mary Austin Holley (1833) and the anonymously written *A Visit to Texas: Being The Journal of a Traveler* (1834).<sup>230</sup> The map published with the 1834 text includes shaded overlays that draw attention to the political divisions of individual colonies within Texas, and also denotes areas controlled or occupied by Indigenous nations, such as Comanche to the west, and Cherokee, Creek, and Choctaw to the north. These features appear to be additions to an identical base map from 1833, as both maps depict the same grant boundaries, empresario names, roads, and bodies of water. Both maps are printed from engraved plates, likely copper. The 1834 version adds color shading, which may have been done by hand.

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<sup>230</sup> See *Map 12* (from Holley, *Texas*) and *Map 13* (from *A Visit to Texas*) in appendix. Holley apparently requested to use Austin and Tanner's *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States* (*Map 9* and *Map 10*), but was denied by Tanner on the grounds that publishing the map in Holley's book would slow sales of the standalone map. Holley and her publisher seem to have then used the map engraved by Hooker instead. See Leaming to Austin, "[Transcript of Letter from Thomas F. Leaming to Stephen F. Austin, April 7, 1832]," April 7, 1832.

The landmarks indicated on the maps allow readers to attempt to situate the textual description in the spatial representation, but the maps themselves do not actually reflect the descriptions of the texts. *A Visit to Texas*, for example, makes specific reference to the writer's arrival at Brazoria, which is denoted on the accompanying map, as is the river traveled by the author to reach the town.<sup>231</sup> Other natural features, however, like soil described as "black, and 20 feet deep" and a dense surrounding forest are not represented at all.<sup>232</sup> The map served as a mental wayfinding aid for readers unfamiliar with Texas terrain. Once mentally arrived at a specific location indicated by a travel journal's author, however, readers were expected to retain detailed knowledge of the areas described internally, updating their sparse mental maps with richer geographic detail. Indeed, *A Visit to Texas* systematically takes the reader around the base map that accompanies the text, from Brazoria to Anahauc, the Galveston Bay, Point Bolivar, and San Felipe. Each of these locations can be identified on the map, but anything beyond their geographic location and nearby bodies of water is left to textual description.

The writer of *A Visit to Texas*, beyond filling in further detail about the natural features and layouts of particular towns, also goes so far as to minimize the accuracy of maps like the one that accompanies the text. The author writes that readers "might form erroneous opinions of the state of the country, from the number of places distinguished by names, like towns, the designation of mere routes by lines, as if they were well made and beaten roads. The former, with few exceptions, are in fact only large settlements in anticipation, being now the sites of one or two houses; while the latter are often mere trackless courses, such as I have described, laid

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<sup>231</sup> *A Visit to Texas: Being the Journal of a Traveller through Those Parts Most Interesting to American Settlers. With Descriptions of Scenery, Habits, &C. &C.* (New York: Goodrich & Wiley, 1834), 30, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008652815>.

<sup>232</sup> *A Visit to Texas*, 30, 32–33.

through Prairies by the compass."<sup>233</sup> This disclaimer effectively undercuts the stability portrayed by maps, centering the authority of the author's words, rather than the visual depiction on the map. The text and the map, then, are not necessarily coterminous documents, but partially dichotomous, with the map depicting a well-settled and navigable space that is challenged by textual descriptions of sparse populations and unsettled natural terrain. Nevertheless, the map serves to create a baseline understanding of geographic space, and the use of the same and similar maps across multiple texts, including *A Visit to Texas* and Holley's *Texas*, means that readers could reconcile competing geographic descriptions and their consequences for mental maps of Texas.

Further, the addition of the map allows the reader to transform their mental map of Texas from organizational to representational. Without a depiction of the features and settlement names that define descriptions of Texas, the information gleaned from travel texts is atomistic, not interpreted as parts of a whole. The map takes individual descriptions (for example, county-by-county chapters) and places them relative to one another. As a result, the idea of the "whole" of Texas is brought into conversation with descriptions of individual places within Texas. Empty, unexplored "space" then can begin to be imagined as made up, at least in part, of particular places. For Texas' boosters, such a transformation about the idea of Texas could have been a valuable tool in convincing hesitant would-be emigrants about the opportunity and prosperity that supposedly awaited in Texas.

### **Broad boosterism over geographic clarity**

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<sup>233</sup> *A Visit to Texas*, 202.

Rather than giving readers a strong sense of place through descriptions grounded by clear reference points, Joshua James and Alexander Macrae's *Journal of a Tour in Texas*, published in 1835, leaves readers to reconcile the descriptions and narratives of specific locations with their larger mental images of the overall space of Texas. While little is known of James and Macrae's motivations and biases when writing *Journal of a Tour in Texas*, the pair were agents of the Wilmington Emigrating Society based in North Carolina and presumably had an interest in encouraging settlement in Texas. Very little documentation about the Wilmington Emigrating Society exists, suggesting it was perhaps short-lived or exclusively centered on these agents' trip to Texas. From the way it is portrayed in the *Journal of a Tour in Texas*, the society seems to have had a similar mission to the German emigrating societies that brought German colonists to Texas—namely, to assess and promote Texas a site to which Wilmington residents might relocate their lives.<sup>234</sup>

The text freely juxtaposes the "abrupt hills, low creek bottoms, precipitous and pitch pine land" of the "poor land" of Texas with the "rich growth of timber" of another "delightful section of country," with only occasional references to landmarks like bodies of water and the homes of the authors' hosts in Texas.<sup>235</sup> For a reader outside of Texas, these spatial identifications would have meant little for understanding specific regions of Texas as potentially desirable or undesirable, much less their particular topographic features. Instead, *Journal of a Tour in Texas* provides a far more general sense of Texas' features, advantages, and drawbacks and leaves the reader to place these elements within their mental image of Texas as they see fit. Value-laden

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<sup>234</sup> Astrid Haas, *Lone Star Vistas: Travel Writing on Texas, 1821-1861* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2021), 79.

<sup>235</sup> Joshua James and Alexander Macrae, *A Journal of a Tour in Texas: With Observations On the Laws, Government, State of Society, Soil, &c* (Wilmington, N.C.: T. Loring, 1835), 6–7.

adjectives such as “delightful” establish the authors’ points-of-view on Texas, and the vague details they provide a sort of evidence for such assertions in the minds of readers.

The absence of a map co-published alongside *Journal of a Tour in Texas* may have reduced the text's effectiveness for readers in some regards, as without a clear geographic dimension to anchor textual descriptions, would-be Anglo American emigrants might have had difficulty conceptualizing their own futures in Texas. Without a concrete visual component, a reader would not have been able to use the text as a practical guide for evaluating possible settlement sites in Texas.

There is also another way to interpret how the absence of a map alongside *Journal of a Tour in Texas* might have affected its readership and usage. If James, Macrae, or the publisher of their travel journals indeed sought to boost Texas' image in the eyes and minds of their readers, then painting a vague-but-positive image of Texas would have suited that goal. Certainly, James does extensive work in his portion of the text to present Texas' residents as both familiar to would-be emigrants from the U.S., calling their Texas hosts "Americans and men of American feelings," labeling them as kinder than people in other regions, and lauding the "benevolence, hospitality, and friendship" of their hosts.<sup>236</sup> By attaching a specific *national* image to the people he encountered in Texas, James positions Texas as a place sympathetic to U.S. colonists that reproduces the values of the United States. Such an attractive feature is easily articulable both by boosters such as James as well as potential immigrants considering a move to Texas because it builds on an implicit shared understanding the meaning of “American feelings” that readers in the U.S. would likely possess. While a reader might not come away from the text with a precise understanding of where the best land was found and what settlements were most developed, they

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<sup>236</sup> James and Macrae, 5.

could still come away with a broadly positive sense of Texas residents and land, and in turn, a mental map that presented Texas a space of fertility and opportunity. Moreover, James' pairing of natural resources with an Anglo and U.S.-aligned cultural image helps solidify the connection between the two in the minds of readers. After reading the *Journal of a Tour in Texas* a reader might have concluded that Texas has retained its valuable and beautiful natural resources *because* of Anglo Texans' cultivation of it. Additionally, though the text discusses some negative features in certain areas, they too are scarcely locatable on a map, meaning that a reader-turned-immigrant would struggle to articulate any risks or downsides of moving to Texas. For an organization that, by its own name, had a vested interest in emigration, heading off hesitancy before it could take hold would have been a positive outcome of the travel journal.

Ultimately, it is not clear why *Journal of a Tour in Texas* or any of the many Texas travel texts published in the same period lacked a map, despite their clear geographic textual focus. To print and attach maps to the text would have increased the cost of publication, a cost that might have been passed on to the consumer, thus decreasing the text's possible reach. Finding a mapmaker to produce a map appropriate to the regions described in the text would have also been challenging, as it appears that only a handful of map publishers were actually producing maps of Texas at this time. Some texts, including *Journal of a Tour in Texas*, may have also had multiple printings, and a later edition might have included a map, though for this text, none of those copies have survived if they existed. Nevertheless, some or all of James and Macrae's readers would have consumed this text without an accompanying visual aid, and were thus left to treat the text as a descriptive update to a mental image.

### **Structuring the mental map**



In some ways opposite to the in-depth, county-by-county descriptions of Texas in texts like Moore's are the short and broad articles about Texas found in nineteenth-century United States newspapers. In the years immediately following the approval of Moses Austin's Anglo colonization proposal, most examples of published writing about Texas that survive today are from newspapers. Frequently, these short articles took the form of letters or excerpts of letters from individuals who traveled to Texas. Given the time and expertise required to produce printable maps, maps were likely not published by any of the newspapers considered here until the late nineteenth century at the earliest.<sup>237</sup> As a result, any and all geographic information had to be conveyed through the textual, not the visual.

Eager to laud the advantages of Texas to an audience of potential Anglo immigrants, Stephen F. Austin in 1821 did not wait to have the benefit of direct observation of Texas' landscape before writing and sending back dispatches from his soon-to-be established colony. While still en route to Texas and his granted tract of land in July 1821, Austin wrote to an associate in Frankfort, Kentucky, requesting he pass along the message of emigration opportunities for Anglo Americans in the U.S.<sup>238</sup> The letter was published in several newspapers within the span of a few weeks, including the *Washington Gazette*, the *Richmond Enquirer*, and the *Weekly Arkansas Gazette*.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> For an examination of the rise of map usage in newspapers, see Mark Monmonier, "The Rise of Map Use by Elite Newspapers in England, Canada, and the United States," *Imago Mundi* 38 (1986): 46–60.

<sup>238</sup> "Settlement in Texas," *Washington Gazette*, August 15, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A1101132308776F48%40EANX-10B376A89AAB83C0%402386393-10B376A8E48C1440%401-10B376AA14474CA8%40Settlement%2Bin%2BTexas>.

<sup>239</sup> "Settlement in Texas"; "Settlement in Texas," *Richmond Enquirer*, August 24, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A102C8DD28756FF70%40EANX-10F582F4E4BC9E08%402386402-10F582F622AAFC18-10F582F803EF4F18>; "Settlement in Texas," *The Arkansas Gazette*, September 29, 1821, America's Historical Newspapers, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A1066418A38D1E218%40EANX-10FF35E5A1BC5E28%402386438-10FF35E6200F0BE8%402-10FF35E7980692E0%40Settlement%2Bin%2BTexas>.

Given that Austin had not himself seen the land yet, the published excerpt does not contain much by way of geographic description, other than references to the rivers which run through the land. Using that information, however, a reader with access to a map of Texas could have begun to situate Austin's colony in the larger context of the region. Few maps of Texas are known to have existed at the time, and they were not widely distributed to the general public. However, Austin might have included the nearby landmark bodies of water so the colony could eventually be located on a map.

Though the letter does little else to fill in a reader's mental map of Texas and Austin's colony, it does boost the region in other ways. First, Austin suggests that a port of entry will soon exist near his tract of land, a feature that would be valuable to potential immigrants considering the import and export challenges of being geographically removed from the United States. Second, Austin attempts to preemptively quell concerns about political instability in Texas brought about by the ongoing Mexican War of Independence by stating that "the Constitution of Spain is in full effect in those provinces, and recent accounts state, that the beneficial effects of it are already perceptible. The gold and silver mines are getting into more extensive operation than they have been for many years. Money is becoming more abundant, a free trade is permitted, and the restrictive system heretofore pursued in regard to foreigners has been superceded by the most liberal encouragement."<sup>240</sup> These statements offer similar interpretive guidance to readers as other travel texts, but the examples here operate outside the frame of understanding natural landscape and instead seek to neutralize concerns about instability and economic isolation, and even imply that major economic success is possible in Texas. In writing this letter, Austin would have been well aware that such reassuring statements would be beneficial to his own bottom line

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<sup>240</sup> "Settlement in Texas," August 15, 1821.

by enticing more colonist families to Texas.<sup>241</sup> Additionally, Austin's words set spatial expectations about desirability of access to the potential port of entry and proximity to the stability of the Spanish government. Readers of this excerpt who then set out for Texas might be swayed to think that the closer to the future port site, the better, and that settling near a Spanish stronghold would be more stable than in an independent Mexican area. While these factors are not inherently geographic in the way that water and soil quality are, they nonetheless shape the mental map that a reader might one day use to select a tract of land.

Later letters written by Austin and published in newspapers speak more directly of landscape and the supposed natural superiority of Texas. In a July 20, 1821 letter, published in October 1821 by the *Arkansas Gazette*, Austin reports that an individual he encountered called Austin's grant "the richest and best watered part of the province."<sup>242</sup> While the report of a compliment to Austin's grant is a clear advertisement for the grant, the statement also suggests that access to water ought to be a top-level consideration and be thought of as high-value by readers. Indeed, other texts, such as Moore's *Description of Texas*, carefully outline the nearby bodies of water to each county described, emphasizing not only how the bodies of water flow, but also aspects of the water itself, like taste, and in the case of mineral springs, medicinal qualities.<sup>243</sup> The availability of water was attractive to would-be emigrants not only for personal use, but also for the agricultural enterprises likely to be undertaken by settlers on Texas' large tracts of land.

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<sup>241</sup> At the time of writing this letter, Austin had not yet arrived in Texas or negotiated with any Spanish or Mexican official regarding the contract, meaning he was not yet looking toward a time limit to colonize the grant or the minimum threshold to receive his personal compensation for acting as empresario. However, he certainly planned to make money off the endeavor. See Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, 98–100.

<sup>242</sup> Austin, "Extract from Letters Addressed by Stephen F. Austin, Esq. to a Gentleman in New-Orleans."

<sup>243</sup> Moore, *Description of Texas*, 48, 49, 61.

Elsewhere in the letter, Austin lauds the "richness of the soil, healthfulness of the climate, [and] contiguity to the sea" of his land tract as enticements to potential immigrants.<sup>244</sup> In doing so, Austin's letter creates the expectation that soil quality, healthful climate, and water access will be the primary markers of ideal settlements in Texas. For audiences in the U.S. reading the letter, these statements prime travelers to look for these elements themselves on their eventual journeys. If and when they travel to Texas, readers of Austin's letters and other types of descriptive texts like those discussed here will then fill in a mental map of Texas that seeks answers to questions about soil, climate, and water. Despite the lack of detailed geographic description, even these short excerpts ultimately function to shape the mental maps that readers inevitably form of Texas, by offering them a structure to organize knowledge about Texas, as well as guidance on how to judge that knowledge positively or negatively. These expectations of richly-appointed and available land ultimately formed the basis of the Anglo Texan belief that Mexico and Mexicans had failed to utilize Texas to its full potential. For Anglo readers, the fact that Austin was so quick to see the usefulness of specific features in Texas was evidence that Anglos were meant to live in, use, and develop Texas.

## **Conclusion**

While maps are easily overlooked as influential documents that shape readers' worldviews, they are best understood as one piece of a larger puzzle of geographic knowledge. Just as central to geographic understanding is the textual description that adds rich detail, which is often not representable on the kinds of maps accessible by the public. In Texas, a region for which map production was more complex and time-consuming than other areas near the United

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<sup>244</sup> Austin, "Extract from Letters Addressed by Stephen F. Austin, Esq. to a Gentleman in New-Orleans."

States, textual description was a crucial tool by which boosters and other travel writers set expectations for how to view and judge Texas. Fragmented access to information about Texas meant that readers in the U.S. were responsible for creating individual mental maps of the space of Texas, and for filing away the frameworks presented to them for interpreting Texas, should they ever travel there themselves. Elements of this ecosystem of geographic description that flowed between Texas and the United States worked in tandem and in opposition, meaning that no matter how authoritative and objective a text appeared, it could be undermined by competing ideas. Maps are but one component of this ecosystem, offering a particular kind of visual representation that could be imbued with authority, but also could be undercut by convincing textual description.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

For nineteenth-century audiences in the United States, maps did not have the same reach as written texts. They were less up-to-date than newspaper reports, and less richly descriptive than travel accounts. They were prohibitively expensive for most people, and rare to come across, owing to their delicate and involved printing processes. Nonetheless, when encountered, maps were a powerful tool to give audiences an image of space that they could never access through text or direct experience. The only way to comprehend what a geographic area looked like from above, in a bird's-eye view, was to see it plotted, labeled, and shaded on a map. To see a space in its entirety, both as a geographic body and as a political one, maps were necessary. The value of a map was multiplied when it represented a space perceived as far-off and unknown, like Texas. Viewers located in the U.S. were unlikely to have a personal experience of Texas to draw upon, and so a visual understanding of Texas was built largely on maps and texts.

By default, mapmakers held positions of high authority. Maps were presented as based on data and scientific exploration, and mapmakers purveyed that information in digestible, referenceable packages to audiences who had no way of knowing when that representational image was biased, manipulated, or incomplete. Closely linked to authority of *mapmakers* is the authority of maps themselves in this period. Though Texas was amid an immense struggle for political power, economic control, and national identity in the early to mid-nineteenth century, maps presented its space as a set of stable snapshots in time, each map depicting a shifted boundary, new political unit, or redrawn national outline. Paper maps are only ever a snapshot in time, which is why they were constantly updated and re-issued. In the height of Texas' political volatility, however, a map could be out of date before its print run was complete, meaning that lines and markings were made enduring on paper, but fleeting in spatial reality. Texas' removal

from publishing centers in the United States made this gulf between mapped image and spatial reality all the wider, as mapmakers in the U.S. used secondhand reports to try and keep their maps aligned with real-time political developments in Texas.

The differences in Texas maps produced in the same period are also attributable to the interests of the mapmakers and the influences upon which they drew. The image of an independent, governable Texas during its war of independence from Mexico was supported in part by subtle changes to maps. Shifts in outlines, additions of new colonies, and the switch to county-based political organization likely resulted from mapmakers' beliefs that Texas' independence was probable and legitimate, which in turn may have strengthened support in the U.S. for Texas' independence. The growth of Texas by moving its southern border down on the map was no accident, and though all of Texas' boundaries remained contentious through the Mexican-American War, the appearances of these features on maps gave them a legitimacy they otherwise might have lacked. Some of these changes simply reflected political events after they had occurred. However, I have also identified examples where the change on the map preceded the event itself. For example, though Texas' independence from Mexico was not assured until April 1836, Texas was representationally separated from Mexico on the Austin and Tanner map in 1835 or early 1836. Later, in 1838, maps by both Austin & Tanner and Bradford formalized a new norm of shifting Texas' southern boundary southward to the Rio Grande from its previous location at the Nueces River, ten years before that strip of land was ceded by Mexico, thereby aligning spatial representation with the Anglo Texan vision of reality. In making these adjustments, mapmakers wielded their authority to make disputed territory into formalized spatial representations.

As mapmakers reproduced the ideas of one another, as statements of political support or otherwise, cartographic inventions became conventions—widespread representational strategies assumed to be a shorthand for an aspect of spatial reality. Unless they were themselves in Texas, viewers could not test the accuracy of invention nor convention, and so they relied on the images presented to them in maps. Further complicating the interests and biases embedded into the image of the map are the wide range of individuals who might have taken the role of “mapmaker” for any given map. Especially in the case of Texas, a mapmaker was not just an established publishing name in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. It was also Stephen F. Austin, Texas colonist Nicholas Rightor, lithographer Claudio Linati, and any number of other unnamed contributors who put forth both knowledge and aspiration into maps of Texas. Audiences, of course, would never know of most of the mapmakers whose contributions resulted in the composite image of any particular map, further obfuscating the difference between spatial ideal and geographic reality.

The preceding three chapters have broken down the entangled nature of nineteenth-century Texas maps into a framework of three levels: the maps themselves, the mapmakers, and the myriad other forms of geographic description that surrounded maps in the eyes of audiences. It is important to note that this categorization is not as discrete as the chapter structure of this project might suggest. I have attempted this structure in order to get at the many avenues for analysis that maps provide as historical sources. This interpretive framework has produced insights that might otherwise be obscured by the complex nature of map, maker, and context. Equally relevant as the image of the map itself is the question of how audiences received the map (and *whether* they received it), and from where and whom a mapmaker compiled that image, which I have aimed to emphasize by giving these areas their own analysis.



The political events discussed in this project have been written about many times over, using excellent written primary sources that have allowed historians to get at the history of Anglo colonization in Texas from many different perspectives. In this project, rather than looking to shed new light on the actual events of colonization, rebellion, and annexation, I have asked how Texas was visually and spatially communicated to Anglo audiences, and the effects of that portrayal on their understandings of what was for most in the United States an ambiguous and uncertain region bordering the U.S. As discussed in chapter four, maps did not operate alone to create images of Texas in the minds of readers, but they did have a particular staying power, and offered a literal framework onto which additional knowledge of Texas could be anchored. By centering maps in my methodology, I believe it is possible to explore a different avenue of Anglo thought about Texas, one that is mediated through the technology of maps. While they were circulated with printed texts in many cases, maps produced during the nineteenth-century were the result of fundamentally different circumstances of production. The collaborations, inspirations, and inventions that went into the making of the maps that have been examined here are not comparable to those of textual sources, and so to look at the maps as the central source is to come away with a different view of how Texas' political uncertainty was made certain, stable, and claimable by Anglos.

These questions could be relevant to historical study of any period and place, but they are especially central to Texas. The processes of making, publishing, and distributing maps were no small feat when the area being mapped and the publishers and audiences for said map were thousands of miles apart. Further, the stakes were high for mapping Texas, as its political instability and remote location meant that state knowledge of Texas in both the United States and Mexico was lacking. A lack of knowledge also prevented expansive state control over Texas,

which was clear from Mexico's repeated, failed attempts to impose anti-slavery and other laws on Texas. Whether better cartographic data would have helped Mexico exercise stronger control over Texas is beyond the scope of this project. However, it is the case that Anglos wielded aspirational mapping to show how they were and could transform Texas, socially, politically, and economically. Inherent in this strategy was the notion that Spaniards and Mexicans had always failed to cultivate the land *and* failed to produce knowledge about it in the form of maps. For Anglo audiences, such a narrative was digestible, as they were primed to think negatively of Mexicans. By using maps to communicate this stance on Anglo Texan stewardship of the land, mapmakers smoothly incorporated this belief into the minds of Anglo audiences, as maps were already a valued technology imbued with authority.

By working primarily with published sources, particularly published maps, I have necessarily presented an incomplete narrative of early nineteenth-century Texas. Almost all of these maps were published in the northeast United States, and privilege the perspective of white colonizers in Texas to the exclusion of all others, specifically Indigenous peoples and enslaved Black Americans. Women are not entirely absent from these sources, in that Mary Austin Holley's travel text figures prominently into this project. However, the work of white (mostly Anglo American) men was most consistently credited on the maps and geographic texts used here. Before and well past Anglo American colonization of Texas, Indigenous groups lived across Texas and used the land. Indigenous maps did exist, though they were not printed and distributed to white audiences in the United States.<sup>245</sup> As such, these maps are not likely to have had a significant impact on audiences of printed Texas maps. For colonists in Texas, however,

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<sup>245</sup> John Brian Harley, "Rereading the Maps of the Columbian Encounter," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82, no. 3 (1992): 524.

Indigenous land control was an ever-present, complex issue that affected their lives far more than printed maps indicated.

The maps used in this project also do not reveal the extent to which slavery fueled the political upheaval in Texas that ultimately transformed it from Mexican territory to U.S. state. From the first empresario contract in 1821, Anglo American colonists were incentivized to bring enslaved people to Texas for farming with the promise of larger land parcels. Growing opposition to slavery in the Mexican government, combined with increasing numbers of Anglo American immigrants relocating to Texas for the sole purpose of cotton farming using slave labor, were a central driver of Texas' ultimate moves toward independence and later, annexation by the U.S. The opportunity that Texas presented enslavers for building plantations and farming large tracts of land is not explicitly presented on the maps used here. The absence of references to slavery on Texas maps might be attributable to both Texas' technical allegiance before 1836 to the increasingly anti-slavery Mexican government, as well as the fact that map publishers were mostly based in U.S. states that had already outlawed slavery. In short, to include mentions of slavery on printed maps, in a positive or negative light, might have alienated would-be map purchasers in the U.S. and Texas. An important exception is the text *The Life, Travels, and Opinions of Benjamin Lundy*, a travel account by abolitionist Benjamin Lundy which was posthumously published.<sup>246</sup> Lundy had elsewhere proposed that Texas might become an abolitionist safe haven for freed and freedom-seeking enslaved people, if the Mexican government was successful in enforcing abolition as it intended.<sup>247</sup> There is interesting future

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<sup>246</sup> Benjamin Lundy, *The Life, Travels, and Opinions of Benjamin Lundy: Including His Journeys to Texas and Mexico, with a Sketch of Contemporary Events, and a Notice of the Revolution in Hayti* (Philadelphia: William D. Parrish, 1847), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/011601354>.

<sup>247</sup> "Geographical Description of Texas," *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, December 1831, <https://www.proquest.com/historical-periodicals/geographical-description-texas/docview/124016434/se-2?accountid=14696>.

work to be done to examine the geographic image of Texas as presented by abolitionists, in contrast to the many documents that either ignored slavery altogether or boosted Texas as a place for enslavers to grow crops.

This project has aimed to reframe nineteenth century Texas history as a question not only of actual political and territorial control, but of perception and projection. On the surface, maps of Texas might appear to follow the contours of this history, portraying space as battles were waged and won. However, by positioning mapmakers and their collaborators as actors, rather than observers and documenters, I argue that the maps themselves were influential political documents at the time of their publication because they captured and naturalized visions of Anglo nation-building. Anglo-produced maps communicated to Anglo audiences a not only geographic image of Texas, but a national image that aligned with a narrative of Anglos as the appropriate owners and stewards of the space of Texas. Maps made visual the tenets of the Texas Creation Myth, attempting to demonstrate in an authoritative and seemingly scientific way the benefits of Anglo control in Texas. At the same time, they obscured that which did not fit comfortably into the myth of the Texas wilderness rescued by Anglo colonists, including tensions with Indigenous people, relationships with non-Anglo Texans such as Tejanos, and political entanglement with Mexico.

The convergence of political interests, technological advancement and limitation, and physical distance is unique, in that these elements act upon one another in complex ways. As much as maps were a tool wielded for political power, they were also an evolving format, limited in their portrayal and reach by costs and printing volume. Nonetheless, as I have argued, printed maps of Texas were an enduring source for the mental maps that readers in the U.S. formed of Texas, forming the basis upon which textual information was overlaid. By centering maps in this

research, I have hoped to demonstrate that as historical sources, maps offer a distinct point of entry not necessarily offered by textual and other sources most commonly utilized by historians. Further, I have shown that maps present an opportunity to get closer to public interpretations of and reactions to events as they occurred, by way of the visual media that the public consumed.

## Appendix: Maps Cited

This appendix lists, in chronological then alphabetical order, all the maps referred to in this thesis. Where possible, links to the digitized, zoomable maps are provided. When maps have not been professionally digitized, photos or scans taken by the author are used instead, with citation to the institution which holds the map.

### **Map 1.**

Puelles, José María de Jesús. [Provincia de Texas]. Map. 1807. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*.  
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph298413/>.

### **Map 2.**

Pike, Zebulon M. *A Map of the Internal Provinces of New Spain*. Map. 1810. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4295.np000060>.

### **Map 3.**

Melish, John, John Vallance, and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of the United States of America with the contiguous British and Spanish possessions*. Map. Philadelphia: John Melish, 1820. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*.  
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3700.ct003642>.

### **Map 4.**

Austin, Stephen F. *Mapa Geografico de la Provincia de Texas*. Map. 1822. From Texas State Archives, *Map Collection*. <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/apps/arc/maps/maplookup/01413>.

### **Map 5.**

Rightor, Nicholas. *A Map of the Country, between the Brassos and La Baca Rivers*. Map. 1822. From Briscoe Center for American History, *Austin papers*.  
<https://digitalcollections.briscoecenter.org/item/419660>.

### **Map 6.**

Galli, Fiorenzo, and Claudio Linati. *Texas*. Map. Mexico: Claudio Linati, 1826. From Briscoe Center for American History, *Texas map collection*.  
<https://digitalcollections.briscoecenter.org/item/419481>.

### **Map 7.**

Tanner, Henry Schenck. *A Map of the United States of Mexico*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1826. From David Rumsey Map Collection.  
<https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/ruat7v>.

### **Map 8.**

Austin, Stephen F. [Map of Texas by Stephen F. Austin]. Map. 1829. From Briscoe Center for American History, *Stephen F. Austin map collection*.  
<https://digitalcollections.briscoecenter.org/item/420110>.

**Map 9.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1830. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/gmd/g4030.ct001986>.

**Map 10.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1830. From The Portal to Texas History, *Star of the Republic Museum Objects*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph32928/>.

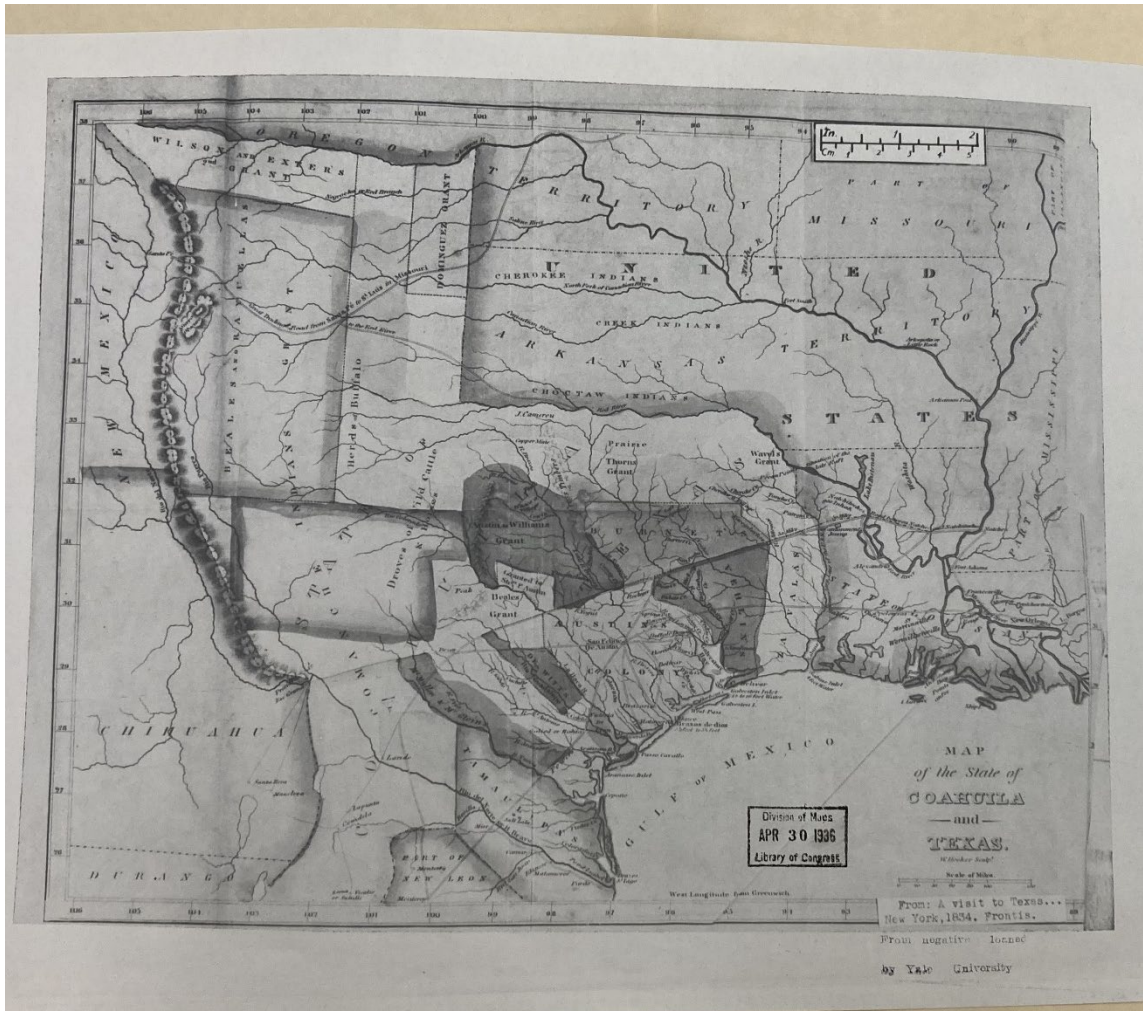
**Map 11.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1833. From Texas State Archives, *Map Collection*. <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/apps/arc/maps/maplookup/00409a>.

**Map 12.**

Hooker, William. *Map of the State of Coahuila and Texas*. Map. In: Holley, Mary Austin. *Texas. Observations, historical, geographical and descriptive, in a series of letters, written during a visit to Austin's colony, with a view of a permanent settlement in that country, in the autumn of 1831*. Baltimore: Armstrong & Plaskitt, 1833, fold-out (scan image #8). <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/102498698>.

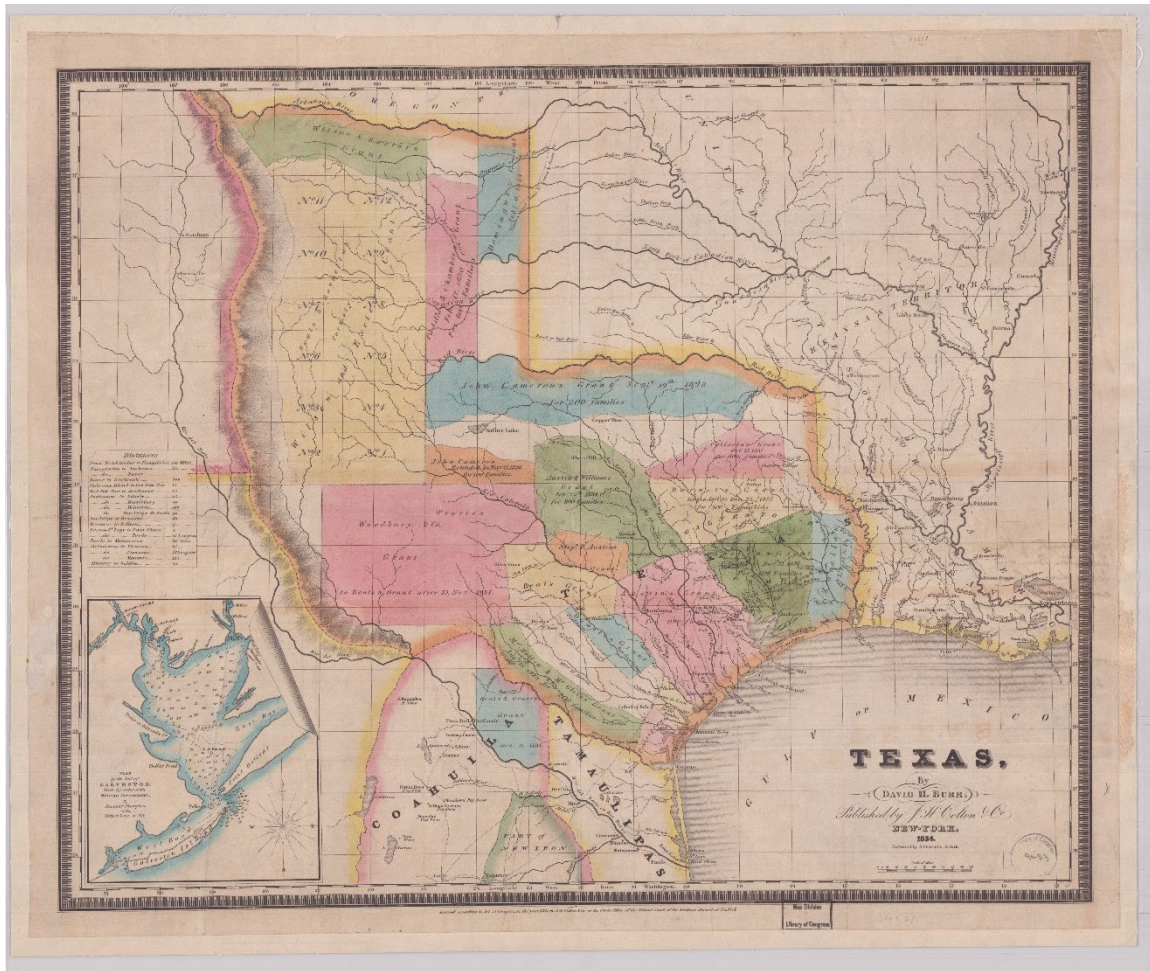
Map 13.



Hooker, William. *Map of the State of Coahuila and Texas*. Map. In: *A Visit to Texas: Being the journal of a traveller through those parts most interesting to American settlers. With descriptions of scenery, habits, &c.* &C. New York: Goodrich & Wiley, 1834, fold-out.



**Map 14.**



Burr, David H. *Texas, By David H. Burr*. Map. New York: J.H. Colton and Co., 1834. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*.

**Map 15.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1835. From Briscoe Center for American History, J. P. Bryan map collection. <https://digitalcollections.briscoecenter.org/item/420114>.

**Map 16.**

Bradford, Thomas G. *Texas*. Map. Boston: W.D. Ticknor, 1835. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph50212/>.

**Map 17.**

Burr, David H. *Texas, By David H. Burr*. Map. New York: J.H. Colton and Co., 1835. From David Rumsey Map Collection. <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/sl15qy>.

**Map 18.**

Desobry, P. *Map of Texas Shewing the Grants in possession of the Colorado & Red River Land Company*. Map. New York: 1835. From Stanford University Libraries, *The Barry Lawrence Ruderman Map Collection*. <https://purl.stanford.edu/zg938vh8550>.

**Map 19.**

Marché, Konen. *Map of Texas Shewing the Grants in possession of the Colorado & Red River Land Company*. Map. Brussels: 1835. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth251693/>.

**Map 20.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1836. From The Portal to Texas History, *Star of the Republic Museum Objects*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth31277/>.

**Map 21.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1836. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth298324/>.

**Map 22.**

Yeager, Joseph. *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*. Map. 1836. From Museum of the Big Bend, *Yana & Marty Davis Map Collection*. <https://www.museumofthebigbend.com/project/texas-mexico-and-part-of-the-united-states-joseph-yeager-1836-3/>.

**Map 23.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1837. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4030.ct000530>.

**Map 24.**

Yeager, Joseph. *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*. Map. 1837. From Sam Houston State University Newton Gresham Library, *Map Collection, 1499-2005*. <https://digital.library.shsu.edu/digital/collection/p243coll3/id/2297/>.

**Map 25.**

Bradford, Thomas G. and George W. Boynton. *Texas*. Map. Massachusetts: 1838. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth50324/>.

**Map 26.**

Bradford, Thomas G. *Texas*. Map. In: Bradford, Thomas G. *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commercial*. Boston and New York: William D. Ticknor, Wiley & Long, 1838. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/95x7ie>.

**Map 27.**

Bradford, Thomas G. *Texas*. Map. In: Bradford, Thomas G. *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commercial*. Boston: American Stationer's Company, 1838. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/6sjf40>.

**Map 28.**

Bradford, Thomas G. *Texas*. Map. In: Bradford, Thomas G. *An Illustrated Atlas, Geographical, Statistical, and Historical, of the United States, and the Adjacent Countries*. Boston and New York: Weeks, Jordan, and Company, Wiley and Putnam, 1838. <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/ep0kup>.

**Map 29.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1839. From Stanford University Libraries, *The Barry Lawrence Ruderman Map Collection*. <https://purl.stanford.edu/jk304gh9549>.

**Map 30.**

Bradford, Thomas G. and George W. Boynton. *Texas*. Map. Massachusetts: 1839. From The Portal to Texas History, *Map Collections from the University of Texas at Arlington*. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth50215/>.

**Map 31.**

Austin, Stephen F. and Henry Schenck Tanner. *General Austin's Map of Texas With Parts of the Adjoining States*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1840. From University of Houston Libraries Special Collections, *Rare Books and Maps Collection*. <https://id.lib.uh.edu/ark:/84475/do29698712m>.

**Map 32.**

Yeager, Joseph. *Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*. Map. ca. 1840. From TCU Mary Couets Burnett Library, *George T. Abell Map Collection*. <https://repository.tcu.edu/handle/116099117/11490>.

**Map 33.**

Arrowsmith, John and William Bollaert. *Map of Texas compiled from Surveys recorded in the Land Office of Texas and other Official Surveys*. Map. London: John Arrowsmith, 1841. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4030.ct000006>.



**Map 34.**

Tanner, Henry Schenck. *A Map of the United States of Mexico*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1846. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. From David Rumsey Map Collection.

<https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/v28zei>.

**Map 35.**



*California, Texas, Mexico, and part of the United States*. Map. In: Lundy, Benjamin and Earl Thomas. *The Life, Travels, and Opinions of Benjamin Lundy: Including His Journeys to Texas and Mexico, with a Sketch of Contemporary Events, and a Notice of the Revolution in Hayti*. Philadelphia: William D. Parrish, 1847, fold-out.

**Map 36.**

Tanner, Henry Schenck. *A Map of the United States of Mexico*. Map. Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1847. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. From David Rumsey Map Collection.

<https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/4xfgk1>.

**Map 37.**

Gilman, Ephraim and P.S. Duval. [Map of the United States Including Western Territories]. Map. Philadelphia: 1848. From National Articles and Records Administration, *Record Group 233: Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, 1789–2015*. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/2127339>.

**Map 38.**

Gilman, E. *Sketch of Texas with the Boundaries of Mexican States as shown on General Austin's Map of Texas, Published by H. S. Tanner. 1839*. Map. Date unknown. From Library of Congress, *Geography and Map Division*. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4030.ct000090>.

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